

MY

MARINE MEMORANDUM

B O O K.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY HARGRAVE JENNINGS.

"Wherein I speak of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field."

SHAKESPEARE.

VOL. I.

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TO

CAPTAIN, THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD ADOLPHUS FITZCLARENCE,

R.N., G.C.H., K.R.E., ETC., ETC. ETC.,

THESE VOLUMES ARE,

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S SPECIAL PERMISSION,

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S

TRULY GRATEFUL,

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

IN compliance with the usual custom to offer some sort of apology for the appearance of a work, the Author wishes that his preface should, at least, completely explain all he has to say :—

“ .ving nothing at the bottom of the inkhorn.”

He is well aware, that, in numerous instances, although much has been to be said, and so intended, the preface works on to its conclusion silently and gradually, and even perhaps unconsciously to the author's self, leaving a certain floating body of matter at last to slide over slipperingly and insidiously by its own weight. It will then suddenly occur to the author that in his prefatory flourishes, and elaborate in-

troduction, that which he wished and which it was his intention to attract notice to, and present in the best manner, has, in some strange way, disappeared.

For fear, then, that what he has to say should in like manner slip through his fingers, the writer will make haste to express himself.

It has been attempted in the following conversational narratives, to make Jack talk in his own strain ; certainly not to invest him with an air to which he can lay no claim, and which would violate reality even if allowed.

The author, as far as possible, has endeavoured to think as common sailors think ; and, with some extra touches of extravagance and grotesqueness, to express himself in their own fanciful, and certainly original, if not remarkably elegant manner.

Some of these anecdotes may strike as being so pertinaciously and pantomimically humorous, as to border upon, if not absolutely run into, the extravagant. It might partially recal those who doubt, to quietly point out, that often more is true of the eccentric but noble class of men who are the author's characters, than would be readily believed by those who square

their notions by shoregoing proprieties, and townish, nay, terrene, sharpness, sophistication and incredulity.

Sailors are children of nature, who believe, to speak the gentlest of them, very much more than people on land. They have not yet grown out of their fairy tales. Their notions are new, and natural, and owe nothing to art or conventionality. They are as nature's simple outlines, unobliterated, it may be said softened, by the officious fingers of factitiousness, and uncoloured with the tints which the world lends. Sailors are truly the sons of Neptune ;—and they are just those sons who have not yet grown out of their jackets.

Intermixed with his humourous tales, are some really serious sketches of sea sights of the author's. These all are drawn from that memorandum book, which he indicates as having been kept by him for the purpose of beguiling the weariness of ship-life by perpetuating his impressions. For their brevity, and unfinished meagreness, the author offers the apology of his random method of writing, and the necessarily discursive and fugitive character of that depository in which it was his custom to enter these little attempts at sea painting.

And now one word on another point. Since his comic narratives were written, the author has become aware that two incidents which he has worked up into shape, which are "Jack in a Church," and a scene in the Second Part of "Between Decks," strongly resemble too hits of no less unexpected a person, at least, in sincerity, on the author's part, than the immortal Joe Miller. For a voluntary participation in such free and easy, latitudinarianally-conscienced transfer, he tenders that which he thinks, certainly not rashly, ought to be a sufficient exculpation; the fact that he never read Joe Miller in all his life, nor ever encountered anything of this disciple of Momus, except perhaps in conversation. For the germs of these particular stories, the author owns that he is indebted to the circumstance of one or two of George Cruikshank's little pictures catching his eye, where he imagined the ideas were at least original and not suggested. He believes that there is all the difference in the world between a pictorial sketch, and a tolerably extended narrative. A hint, perhaps borrowed in such manner, has been evolved, altered, remodelled, dressed out with circumstances altogether differ-

ent, and merely made the pin upon which the card circles.

That the liberty of taking up any stray fact, or hint as a foundation;—that the license so universally acknowledged, and so constantly and very reasonably made use of, that of taking history or otherwise, as pegs on which to suspend your own drapery, has in this instance in its most limited, its barest sense been exercised, the author on his conscience—*sur son honneur*—advances: and had he imagined, at the time he wrote, that such a framework was not original in the source from which he derived it, and when nothing was easier than to reject foreign alloy and mould out of his own native metal, such as it is, he would have begged to have made his bow with all acknowledgments, and given all such a wide berth.

MY

MARINE MEMORANDUM

B O O K.

CHAPTER I.

THE SEA-SHORE SUMMER-HOUSE.

SOME strength of imagination, where there can be no remembrance, is requisite to paint the splendour of a sunset on the shores of Cuba in the West India islands. On our in com-

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parison cold coast, so little offers itself to assist the industrious fancy in its endeavours after a notion at the brightness between the tropics when the sun is above the sea, that we are referred back to that division of the earth's surface for revelations which would be looked for in vain amongst the natural beauty of portions of the globe of greater latitudinal inclination and less fervour.

The sky was one unclouded glory, for the straggling, distributed clouds which spotted the blue, faint in its brightness, were swallowed up and melted in the universal sunshine which alone seemed to possess creation. The east was the freest of this intensity of light, for there the deep, clear blue, until where it was concealed by the glowing mountains and dark green forests, strengthened as it descended; but more than two thirds of the arch of the heavens was yellow with the sloping orb, and in the west itself was a golden blaze, which poured and flashed on the clear azure sea, as

its breadths reached down to the flickering light green levels of shallow water, half bright sand, and half of innumerable tongues of wavering flame.

The sea-shore stretched along for miles, and the green slopes came bending down, with their tufts of high trees, and cottages of dazzling white, and stray blue smokes, and patches of plantation, till the little capes of land run nose on into the waters, and the sparkling pebbles mingled with the fantastic twining roots of a profuse tropical undergrowth. Close abroad, as a sailor would style it, was a straggling town of West Indian houses. Some were broad, and presented pretensions to roominess and display; but the greater number were shallow timber affairs, with shingle roofs, or roofs thatched with the vegetation afforded by the climate. Green blinds, canvas screens, ornamental tarpaulins, and less permanent and more readily converted if not so efficacious defences against the sun, were abundant throughout; and

on the wharfs were some indications of trade, so far at least as barrels, cordage, cranes, and 'longshore litter could impress a beholder with the imagination that something more was going forward than the idle folding of arms under the shelter of broad-brimmed head coverings, and a nod perhaps in the lee of a house with an extending roof.

In an odd looking building which appeared not dissimilar to a Chinese summer-house, but built a little more sturdily and ponderously, not so likaly to be blown away, or a Turkish kiosque, so great was the exhibition of a width of window and so curious were its spiring roofs, were signs that some species of worldly enjoyment apart from the duties of weighing goods or weighing anchors was in progress. There was a gallery with high, odd wooden posts, and some steps descending to the hot beach, where the ripples, as they broke on the glaring stones, seemed converted into fire. A gay green boat lay here, with her oars inside

ber, working uneasily in the water, and jerking her painter as the small waves swept her about like a bucket.

This little water side house, if house it was, contained a room facing the water, and two enclosures behind, with a resemblance to closets. The room was pleasant enough ; it was furnished with green lattices, which qualified the light at the same time that they excluded the heat ; it had an oil-cloth on its floor, and some cane-seated chairs, as well as a couch of faded blue calico. A table must not be omitted, on which were displayed some bottles and glasses, and, singularly enough, an old green bottle of cigars.

As for human furniture, the little sea side house was not so badly provided as its bare, crazy outside might have seemed to betoken. At what might have been designated the top of the table, if top that had which had all sides alike, sat a short, fat man, with a breadth of stomach which seemingly had been borne

carefully in mind when the huge, many-folded waistcoat had been fashioned, which, being of dingy nankeen, with gilt buttons, served to point attention to it. This gentleman had a square, flat face, with an eye which seemed to be set, like the hands of a watch, in the centre of a circle of marks, for nothing but the pupil itself appeared to be in motion when he rolled this singular and twinkling, though self-possessed feature. His nose was not small, which is saying much for it, considering that it had somehow been flattened at its point, and his lips were full and hearty. A straw hat was hung on a peg behind him, and he was smoking a long pipe with great gravity and deliberation.

At his right hand, and occupying another square of the mahogany table, which creaked and whined every time a hand was laid more energetically than common upon it, reclined, with an air of satisfied ease, a taller man, with a long face. The lower part of his visage

was embrowned as duskily as sea sand, and the angularity of his chin and the sides of his face lent a determination and fixedness to the lengthened curves of a mouth habitually compressed? but, when open, disclosing a set of good, straight teeth. His forehead was high and good, much paler than the other parts of his face; eyes deeply set, and careful and calculating, and a show of dark hair, sprinkled with grey, imparted a respectability and weight to his appearance you looked for in vain in the aspect of the man with the pipe. The dress of this creditable-looking individual was the blue waistcoat and trousers of the maritime profession. He had a white frill to his shirt, a black neckerchief, a ring on his finger, and wore a long coat of a dark colour, wide in the skirts, and with a deep collar, in an exaggerated version of the last fashion prevalent in England when he shipped for his recent voyage.

The third party in this scene was an entirely

different character. He stood in the relation of first officer to the seaman, the master of a large West India ship, then in the roadstead. This young man was tall and well proportioned, with fine, intelligent features, and a good natured, beaming blue eye. His hair was dark and long, his mouth particularly good, with teeth even and white. His habiliments were of superior make, and of different material to those of his companions, as if appearance had been studied not only in their construction, but in the wearing of them ; his blue and white striped shirt had its collar turned over a black silk neckerchief, the ends of which were fluttering in the light air which found its way inside the little room. A jacket of blue, with blue buttons, sloped away, and disclosed a snowy white waistcoat, with buttons of white. Loose sailor's trousers of white jean, descended to pumps and striped stockings. His cuffs were doubled back, and over them were brought the deep wrist-bands, with a couple

of silver studs. A yellow hat of stout grass, with a binding of blue, and a blue ribband lay on a chair by his side, with a pair of gloves.

A large Newfoundland dog, more black than white, was seated in a lionlike attitude, towards the right foot of the young man who, by the close neighbourhood of the dog to him, and the placid satisfaction of his position, seemed to be his master, a fact which was placed beyond a doubt by a broad brass collar, with a binding of leather to save it from hurting the neck of the dog, bearing the inscription, " Bolt, belonging to Edward Staunton, Barnstable, Devon."

CHAPTER II

THE STRANGER.

“WELL, I never imagined,” said the gentleman with the fixed eyes, “that a Cuba sun could pour down, much as I supposed of it, such a dreadful, eternal heat as has been roasting the ribs of this old feverish dog-kennel.”

"And yet we lie here," returned the seaman, "with all doors open, and our mouths ready to catch the first of the air. There's confounded little of it, you see, sir, and this strong sun is enough to burn the wind out of old Badger-bag's bag. But I don't complain, nor would you, I suppose, unless you fear some of your bottles might crack. We've done the sun's work upon some of 'em already."

"I ordered Cupid to bring us down a double round," said the first speaker, looking round somewhat discontentedly and distrustfully, "but, plague his nigger laziness! I think he's only hung two before and two behind: another time I'll never move 'till the bottles are off before me."

"Aye, aye, Mr. Rosebud, never weigh anchor till you've got your stores aboard," replied the seaman, "that's good sea logic. But whatever may be your own private opinion, Mr. Rosebud, and whatever you may think of the young man's and my demolition

of the good stuff, and your own lee way—I calculate and reckon that empty bottles are something to show.”

“Empty bottles!” answered Mr. Rosebud, “show me the man who wouldn’t find his way to the bottom of a bottle, such drying, scorching, sponging weather as this. It’s Cuba religion, sir, to see your way clear down to the mud of a double bottle, and I never doubted my orthodoxy yet. It runs in my mind somewhat, my dear Captain, that those dingy devils of mine have been feeling their way, like the cats along the glass, without a lantern down my Madeira. One’s sorry enough when one’s swallowed one’s own wine, and there’s no more; but, plague it! ’tis enough to make a parson swear, when one’s cheated of it by one’s own lazy hounds.”

“Don’t be afraid, sir,” replied the Captain, “if you misdoubt it, call up your ebonies, and let us tax ’em with it.”

"Did you ever see a nigger own his fault?" said Rosebud, "in a handsome way like a gentleman? Their skins are too thick for conscience to come out of 'em."

"With your permission, sir," said the young man, joining in the conversation for the first time, "I'll finish my duty to your bright wine, in drinking thanks to it in water. 'Taint perhaps so cheering a liquid, but at all events I can see my way clear through it."

"This is just how I'm served," said Rosebud, "always abandoned when I'm warming into my stuff—Come Captain, you won't fight shy of your bottle, will you? I'll just do what I said, now, and leave you all free to do as you please, to drink wine or water, or to leave off altogether, but I don't like whiffing without a sip to take the smoke out of my mouth, and I'm ashamed of kissing bottles without somebody to keep me in countenance at it."

"Shorten sail, air, in time," said the Captain, "and, for the look of the thing, don't sweep your hold regularly out, but leave a taste of weight for your tenders to carry back, if it's for nothing but a little ballast. Remember I've got a long voyage to make, and must keep myself steady as the mainmast, and sober as a judge, at least three days beforehand, to get in proper sailing trim. We've drunk already, I think, all the spars of the Columbus, from the flying jib-boom end to the gaff peak, bless her old bones, and at least half a dozen happy voyages; suppose we wind up with luck to the little sea-shore house at Cuba."

"Very well," returned Mr. Rosebud, who with much quietude had been fixing his sleepy eye upon the hard countenance of his marine friend, and, without thinking of what he was doing, grasping the neck of the water-bottle, "won't our young friend join us in

such a reasonable, sociable, out and out christian toast?"

"Vast there! Mr. Rosebud," called out the Captain quickly, "you've got your hand in the fishes mouth instead of on its tail; or are you deserting your colours?"

"I really didn't see it, I didn't see it, sir," said Rosebud vacantly, and nodding his head with grave and distant politeness to the water-bottle, "I'm right this time, I suppose. Come Staunton, my boy, hands up, fill bumpers."

"No use hailing there," said the Captain, "Staunton's deaf on one side; Staunton's in tow, you must know, sir. There's a young lass t'other side the Atlantic that's got a double turn round his heart, and now blue peter's up, he's thinking how soon he can draw in the leading line."

"Aye, aye, is it so?" said Mr. Rosebud. "Well, I hope she's fond of the sea, for it would be a pity to take a sailor from his na-

tive element, and love's like fish-hooks. Well, gentlemen, I'm satisfied my ship's in good hands, spite of an officer's being in love aboard her."

At this point of the dialogue the party was disturbed by the sound of some footsteps below, which sounded distinct in the silence of the great heat. Presently the slipshod clattering of a negro, it was evident by the peculiarity of the tread, in old slippers, over the stones, was heard, and a voice, husky, though in sharp, tones, wailed out—

"Who you, gemman? 'sturbing folks when they is enjoying dere peace and quietness. Habn't you the politeness, sare, to know that folks is smoking his pipes atop out in the attic here?"

"What's that, Sambo?" cried the captain, who was near the window, and popped his head out to see what had interrupted the equanimity of Mr. Rosebud's negro.

"Dere, you hears him," continued the negro,

not attending to the seaman. "Don't you come nearer, but, tard yourself where you is, for we're private here, and don't want no 'lopers."

Sambo intended to have said that he, on the part of his puissant master, wanted no interlopers, but he probably imagined that half a word would very likely answer the condition of the stranger, whoever he might be.

The captain took advantage of the first pause in Sambo's objugatory tirade, to cast an eye about for the strange sail, and he at last lighted on him, advancing steadily and picking his way along the beach within a few yards of the snug sea-shore summerhouse.

The dress and appearance of the new comer were odd enough. A large, Panama hat shaded his features ; but what was discernible of them shewed that they were of a dark, swarthy hue, almost rivalling those of Sambo himself. The general cut of his face, and his sharp chin and characteristic nose, intimated that the man

was, in all likelihood, of Brazilian or Columbian origin. When he came nearer, he showed an eye like that of a fox for cunning ; but it was black as a coal, and was screwed in under a black eye-brow and a low, contorted forehead. His raven hair hung straight and lanky down the sides of his head ; his teeth were white as ivory, and he wore long moustachios, which depended like those of a Chinese.

The dress of this worthy was something remarkable. He wore loose, white drawers, straggling half way down his legs, black shoes and plated buckles, and a light-grey jacket, with flying skirts. A great, coarse sash, of some woollen material, and red in colour, was bound round his waist, with the ends hanging down, and a blue shirt displayed a muscular chest, covered with hair, and resembling that of a bronze of a llie size.

Mr. Rosebud come here, sir," said the captain, leaning with both arms on the window-

all. "Here's some neighbour of yours has run in scent of the wine, and drops down to pay you a visit. Call in this bow-wowling nigger of yours, or he'll be into the skirts of his jacket before he can heave round and show his teeth."

Mr. Rosebud, thus called upon to step forward, could do little less than mumble something about shocks of earthquakes, making floors unsteady, and rise and stretch himself, and walk to the window. When he arrived at it, there was some uncertainty as to the how much of the opening he was to occupy, till the captain turned his head in and conceded the whole.

"Why now, how, Sam," said Mr. Rosebud, who not unfrequently shortened his negro's name by a syllable, to reduce it, as he imagined, all the nearer to English plainness and propriety, "what the devil have you been about, that I can't be suffered to keep quiet up

here? I thought I'd got out of the way enough."

Sambo hustled forward at hearing his master's voice, and with ten fold importance muttered—

"Why, massa Rosebud, here be dis strange chap of a gentleman in de broad hat, an' me tell um you got comp'ny, and him to stop; but he won't stop, and um come on like a race-horse."

During all this time the stranger kept on his way, looking at his steps, and from all appearance paying no attention to, or not hearing Sambo's hints.

"I say, sir," said Rosebud, "I say nothing as to the beach being free, but you look as if you were coming here, and I don't know you."

"Me say, sir," calls out Sambo, much more loudly, but following on the same side as his lord, "stop where you is; nobody know you, or I'll shy one big stone at you."

At this the stranger raised his head and stopped short, looking with some surprise at his unceremonious arrest.

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen, but you needn't make so much noise about a stranger steering your way. *Per dios*, I was about to head in and swallow something."

"Swallow something here?" said Rosebud, "why I don't know you, and you've not been invited."

"He ain't no friend o' Sambo's," cried Sambo with much unnecessary readiness to disclaim any knowledge of the visitor. "He don't come with no invite. Sambo's got no pitcher behind the door."

"Plague you, Sambo," called his master, hold your tongue down there! Take in your black carcase, or you shall have a green bottle on your head, to christen you into christian sense, you sable heathen."

"There must be some mistake," said the new comer, taking off his huge hat, and making

a careless bow. "I'm not the best acquainted with places hereabouts, and perhaps have made a mistake in supposing this summer-house a public one, with a name and a master."

"The summerhouse has both a name and a master, sir; but, as to its being public, it's not public yet, and you certainly have made a mistake. But as we're some distance from the town, I shan't send you away empty, and you shall have all the use of my little house on this occasion as you could if it were really a public one. Sambo!—where has that ugly black dog hidden his snout?"

"Here he is, sir," said the stranger, seeing how much at a loss Rosebud evidently was, in the midst of his appeal to Sambo, as much to speak as to conjecture in what quarter of the heavens he was to look for him, "here he is behind the door, peeping out from the opening. Sambo, come out; your master wants you."

"Here be Sambo, massa," said Sambo with the utmost good nature, stepping out airily from behind the summer-house door, but keeping cautiously under the protection of the overhanging gallery, "me hab been a gathering the corks together, massa, and been trying me eye in at de necks ob de bottles to look after um."

"Fortunate for you, Sambo, you may be assured, if you've confined your efforts to the eye alone. Step out from under the balcony, Sambo. Out with you!"

"Here me be, massa Rosebud," said Sambo, coming in a jerking sort of fashion with the utmost reluctance into the presence of his master.

"Then why didn't you come before? Lazy devil! Run in and see what we've got below there—rum, or some good stuff or other. I'm sure I ought to have enough. Get out a bottle and a glass for this good gentleman," continued Rosebud, looking with a somewhat doubtful smile at the strange-looking new comer, as if he a little mistrusted his claim to

be rated as anything but "person," but willing to give the devil his due on this occasion, to make up perhaps for the sharpness and shortness of the one he adopted in "bringing him up" in his way to the house.

"Take him in, Sambo, and make him comfortable and see you don't get fingering the bottle and glasses while he's looking another way and fidgetting about him with your damned black fingers. My man, Sambo, mister," repeated Rosebud in his hearty, familiar style, "will give you some stuff if you'll walk in. We've got a parlour below here, and plenty of shade, and I don't see why we shouldn't enjoy ourselves and smoke our cigar all under the same roof. I and my friends here have got some private business which we are obliged to discuss apart."

At this the captain and the young sailor, as if they had heard enough to satisfy their curiosity, drew their heads inside. The stranger received Mr. Rosebud's invitation with an

uncertain, half smiling air, as if he was not altogether clear as to his sudden change of position with regard to the good graces of the curious little master of the small beach house, nor understood how far his courtesy was to be taken as extending. He stood a moment in irresolution with his arms folded, and then said,

“ Really, Mr. Rosebud, if that is your name, I am sure I am very much obliged to you, though I scarcely know how the mistake, I have most certainly made, should earn me the offer of what I was going to seek elsewhere and pay for. But this sun will scorch up over delicacy and stronger scruples than mine at accepting your draught ;—so, if Sambo will play pilot-fish, in I steer and heave to under the lee of your liquor.”

Without stopping for any more, and as if glad to get out of the burning heat, the stranger walked into the lower chamber of the house, the walls of which were as bare and

unpleasing as those of the apartment above. But there was an old wicker arm-chair, standing aside with a hard, horsehair cushion, promising some ease, and this accommodation Sambo, who suddenly made himself very industrious, drew forward with much gratuitous ostentation, and then lifted gingerly upon its hind legs, as if he would more fully display the comfort he possessed the power of placing at the service of the person committed to his hospitality.

The stranger threw himself without ceremony into the chair, and then watched Sambo, who got out a stool and rose upon it to lift some bottles and glasses out of a crazy, dry-looking cupboard which hung on nails on one side of the room. The negro pushed aside, with marks of dissatisfaction, several large-looking affairs which did not seem to answer his purpose, until he arrived at a small, promising-looking flask. This he took carefully up between his finger and thumb, and as he approached the table, gazing with a depreca-

tory sort of affection upon, pressed with both hands the globular sides of, clasping it to his breast and casting up the whites of his large rolling eyes with an absurd leering gratulation.

"Ah, Massa Broadbrim," said Sambo, probably in allusion to the stranger's wide-flapped hat, "some ob dis stuff console I for all de troubles ob dis wicked world."

"I'm glad to hear it, shipmate," said the stranger, "'cause it promises well for what's inside; but, I say! you can be quite as laudatory, you know, and not keep such a loving gripe upon the neck of the thing."

"Me only rub him to take the dust off him for massa," said Sambo. "Sambo scrub him in his bussum, and then he shine that you see um face in him. There'ee he be, massa. Stay, me get one corks."

"Corks!" echoed Mister Broadbrim, "what are you up to, blackie? We don't want any

corks, for the cork's in the bottle, and I only want to get it out, you know."

Sambo, when he had carefully laid down the bottle, had turned away as if to get something, but this remark of his guest caused him to stop short and to turn round.

"Me no mean corks, Massa," rejoined Sambo in explanation, "me mean the fingering thing what persuade the cork out;—just so."

And the black, with much closeness, imitated with his finger and his lips, the *twcees twceesting* of the drawing of a cork, ending, after a moment's pause, with its pop and the gurgling of the liquid out of the neck of the bottle.

"Ah! you're right enough there," said the stranger, "fetch your corkscrew and let's see what the inside of this stuff is made of."

The guest then took off his jacket, placed

it in his seat and sat upon it, and, rising immediately after, went to and quietly closed the door, the wood of which was so hot as nearly to scorch the hand.

CHAPTER III.

GOOD FELLOWSHIP AND CURIOSITY.

As soon as his arrangements were complete, Sambo brought himself directly in front of his new friend, surveying with great placidity and very attentively the dispositions he had made to render himself comfortable with his bottle, and watching with interest the minutest of his movements.

"Well, Sambo," said the stranger, "I find that the character you give of this liquor has not been discredited by it. But how is it that you are able to speak so positively as to the merit of your master's drinks? You must have a brilliant imagination, Sambo;—for I won't calumniate you by supposing you've settled the question by the test of sense."

"Me might have smelt 'em, massa," said Sambo.

"So you might," returned the stranger, "but taste is better for deciding," and he exemplified his position to himself by filling up a bumper and conveying it to his mouth.

Sambo stood as still as stone. He first fixed his large round eye on the bottle, and then on the glass when the latter was filled, and then travelled after it till he had followed the contents faithfully and intently down the gullet of massa Broadbrim.

" Ah, very good," said the last named gentleman, heaving a sigh and at the same moment corking up the bottle. " I won't tempt you, Sambo, against your own right judgment and praiseworthy obstinacy in always resisting such dishonest and illicit drink."

" Me berry honest, Massa Broadbrim. Me like to have one leetle drop of master's wine to see the quality and know that massa nebber be cheated of the excellence of what he pay for. Oh, Sambo be one dam faithful negar! He always drink first that massa nebber be poisoned with the horrid stuff." A

" There's no occasion, however, for you to dip your nose into this," said he who seemed to have been safely dubbed, so far at all events as the persistency of his black acquaintance could secure the appellation to him, massa, or mister Broadbrim—" to satisfy your very tender conscience, and most amiable anxiety, O most transparent Sambo! for I have penetrated it, and pronounce it the real

infallible, wholesome and palatable in the highest degree. But you shall have a drop just to make you wink, for you stand staring there like a great black image with two china eyes which are only to roll when the clock strikes. Come, are you hot, Sambo ?”

“ Berry hot,” answered Sambo.

“ Very well, drink this off, and don't leave a drop in the bottom.”

Saying this, Mr. Broadbrim seized the bottle, took one of the largest glasses, and poured his sable friend out such a bumper that the precious liquor topped the edge and dropped pattering vivaciously down.

Sambo waited for no second invitation, but raised the glass to his broad lips, and gradually declining his head backwards, at last became fixed in an intensity of contemplation of a small wicker bird-cage, variegated red and blue in the native taste, which hung from the ceiling.

“ Ah ! dat good stuff,” sighed Sambo, giving

back the glass with marvellous celerity, and wiping his lips with the knuckle of the forefinger of his left hand, whilst he performed a quick, beating sort of movement on his breast with his right.

"You like it, blackie, do you?" said Broadbrim. "You recognize the taste. Well, I've tasted worse rum myself."

"Rum, massa," cried Sambo, opening his eyes wide. "Dat no rum. He be fine Portuguese wine."

"Aye, aye, is it Portuguese wine?" repeated the stranger with affected doubt and a sharp leer at the simple Sambo. "Well, you ought to know, since you're acquainted with the place of your master's where it comes from. Old Rubicund hasn't a cellar here, has he?"

"Who, sare?" repeated Sambo.

"Your master, I mean. I beg his pardon, Mr. Rosebud. What are you lifting your leg for, woolly-head? Is the floor hot?"

"Me can't stand on two legs now, massa Broadbrim."

"Ah, you're tired, I see, and the sun's fierce. Well, make a bow, and you may sit on the barrel there in the corner. But mind your toes don't touch the floor, for you must be 'tention' with me, I assure you, and no lolling. So this wine's come a long way, has it? brought, I suppose, in one of your master's last ships."

"He come in de Atalanty, sare."

"Ah, in the Atalanta. Now, does Mr. Rosebud ship back his wine, or what does he fill his ships' holds with?"

"Me s'pose um ships' holds carry de West Ingy produce, massa Broadbrim," said Sambo very gravely, "me suppose so."

"To be sure," said the stranger. "What else should they carry?—sugar, coffee, and indigo, and such like. Your master sails some ships, doesn't he?"

" Massa Rosebud own ships, not sail 'em— t'other scraper sail 'em," returned the black.

" Who do you mean by t'other, Snowball?" queried the stranger. " You've your eye on the cork, Sambo; out with him, and fill up."

" Massa Broadbrim berry good— oh! too good," answered Sambo, complying. " T'other gentleman hab all de pulling and hauling. He be here—up dere," pointing with his chin to the bird-cage.

" Up there, you mean," replied the stranger correcting his new acquaintance by pointing at the floor of the apartment above them, " he's the gentleman who looked out of the window with your master, and he commands the ship in the offing. Now, I suppose you've all edged down here to drink luck to the voyage, for it won't be long before they'll be going. Probably next tide, or to-morrow when the land-breeze springs up. She's got

her foretopsail loose, I see, and she's over her anchor."

"If Massa Broadbrim know what de captain intend, why he ask I?" said Sambo. "Me poor black—me nebber meddle with tacks and sheets."

"But I'm in doubt, you see, about the ship, Sambo," said the stranger. "I'll be bound you've had enough hard work in getting the sugars aboard—she's a big ship."

"She big enough to carry her cargo—she six hundred ton; she carry gun too, for there be dam plenty of privateers in these seas, Massa Broadbrim."

"But they'll look after better game, Sambo, —innocent Sambo," returned the stranger. "Sugar hogsheads are not handed out as easily as you'd hoist over the side a bucket of pease."

"She carry freight," interrupted the black. "The people here send specie and precious

metal in her. She's Massa Rosebud's best ship this year."

"Ah, indeed, then I'm rejoiced to hear that she's armed. But I don't suppose she has more than a gun or two, just to make a show and give a pop for a pilot. Guns are lumber on a merchantman's deck, you know—or rather you don't know, for you understand nothing about it."

Sambo had indeed so availed himself of the permission of the strange gentleman to seat himself, as to not only make his body comfortable by leaning back in an easy, indolent attitude with arms folded against the wooden wall of the parlour, but to also rest and raise his limbs above the floor by slyly drawing with one foot a chair towards him, upon which his large flat feet were now extended with all the *nonchalant* indifference and self-possessed gravity of the Great Mogul or an eastern rajah, at least.

The reply he gave to the stranger's undervaluing of the style and the means of defence of his master's ship, was to turn himself on his shoulders impatiently and uneasily, as if he were too lazy to bring himself upright into a posture of more fixed attention. He then after a pause grumbled out,

"Me dare say Massa Broadbrim know all about the 'Lumbus better than him own boatswain; but him hab no sharp eye, or he would have seen the necks of the guns a-sticking out ob de port-hole. When de ship inshore, he could count with him naked eye, one, two, three, double-ports—that be six, and ships mostways don't hab all him guns on de one side. Wid de spyglass massa might tell jost as many gun with de 'Lumbus two or tree mile off shore."

"I'm much obliged to you really for assisting my eyesight," said the stranger, "for I didn't believe she carried half as many barkers. And so she's bound for Bristol,

and I imagine she takes over the same crew she brought out, or have they slipped their cables and is your captain looking out for hands along shore?"

"'Long shore!" ejaculated Sambo with edifying disdain. "Do massa suppose Captain Hudson pick up any blackguard chap what he find picking up pebbles this side of the wharf? no, he overlook all the 'long shore customers, what understand no more than to work off a drogher and dip one oar in de water at a time. Me, Sambo, be as good sailor as dat; me know which way de wind blow when I cock my eye at de wane, for me tell de point from de tail any day in de week, Sunday included."

Sambo's self-conceit did not meet with any check in his new friend, who seemed disposed to make him talk; but whenever he slid away, which was constantly, from the subject of the ship in the roads, her captain and all particulars relating to her,

with as much information as he could supply respecting his master, Mr. Rosebud — the stranger caught him up and directed him again into the wished-for channel, with less appearance of art and more regularity and abruptness than he might have thought it advisable to exhibit before sharper faculties. Broadbrim, in fact, seemed to take a singular interest in the proprietor of the place where he was being so liberally entertained, whether in sheer gratitude for the straightforward and ready kindness offered him, or to indulge mere curiosity, was not as equally clear.

By this time Sambo had lost much of his consequential stiffness, and had fallen in with the stranger upon, on his part, as willing and agreeable terms as could have been desired. His head gradually declined, and he was knocking the back of it on the hard wooden wall, as if to keep time with sundry mysterious waves, and flourishes of the hand, which might have reminded

one of some black enchanter. What he was about, or what he meant was difficult to interpret; and all the time he kept muttering and mumbling some strange noise, neither song nor speech, but a sort of patchwork of articulation or rather, in-articulation.

Broadbrim was as clear eyed as a lynx; his hat was off, and he was watching 'the innumerable ants which crept over the floor and into the corners, and swinging himself slowly in his chair, while his lips worked as if he were cogitating something very keenly.

At this time heavy steps were heard descending the outside of the staircase, which was the only means of access to the upper room and its appurtenances, and in the gallery.

"Sam — black Sam — Sambo!" called out the voice of Sambo's master, who was on the move with his more favoured guests upstairs; and presently the door was pushed open, and Rosebud himself appeared, looking in a great

beat, and adjusting, as well as uncertain fingers would permit, his voluminous white neck-cloth. He was followed by Captain Hudson, who was smoking a cigar, and young Staunton.

"Well, I hope," said Rosebud, "that you've not forgot yourself while we've been busy above. There was plenty of bottles down here, or ought to have been, and not empty ones either."

"I've done very well, Mr. Rosebud, thanks to you," returned the stranger, "and my mistake has not proved an unlucky one for me. Here's your health, sir, and success to you with all my heart."

While Broadbrim paid this compliment to Mr. Rosebud, he glanced his eye sharply at the captain, as if he took the opportunity to inspect him with a deep understanding look, which conveyed a perfect measurement of his character, capabilities, and in short a complete penetration of the whole man.

This observation was seemingly unnoticed by the mariner, who only gazed upon Broadbrim with the amount of interest which he might be expected to expend upon a stranger. But with Staunton it was something different, whose eyes were expressive of greater attention to the outside of him, and who perhaps in that exterior saw more to form question to the mind than the duller perceptions of his friends could encounter.

Sambo, at the sound of his master's voice and at his presence, seemed impressed with the presentation of an object of more than ordinary consequence, and fixed his grave eyes abstractedly upon the foremost figure he saw coming in at the door, with a clumsy contemplation, and hypocritical bewilderment which was ludicrous.

"I don't want to hurry you in your drink," said Mr. Rosebud to Broadbrim, "but Sambo must pack away the glassware which we have done with. The boat waits, and he shall remain for you to lock the summer-house."

"I'm off, sir," said the stranger. "I was bound along shore to the town, and there I am going, but" he added, mischievously, "I don't see blackie!"

"Sam!" bawled Mr. Rosebud. He instantly saw him, and seemed puzzled to understand what could make him sit so lackadaisically. "Why, Sam! who told you to sit down upon that barrel and to take such care of yourself! Why, as I'm alive, he's dangling an empty glass as cool as a lord! What's the matter, Sam?"

"O, massa!" ejaculated Sam, raising his eyes like a methodist parson.

"O, massa; what does that mean?" repeated Mr. Rosebud, his eyes a little swimming in his own head, whether in alarm to see his faithful black in such a strange state, or from sympathy, or from any other reason, we do not attempt to specify, "what the devil ails the fellow? Are you sick, Sambo, eh? Do the walls go round?"

"Oh, massa," groaned Sambo, sinking suddenly back and letting his lower jaw fall, "me berry ill."

"Very ill!" cried Captain Hudson, "a likely story. Much more likely to be very drunk. Where's your pain, Sam?"

"Oh! all over—you swim about, massa captain, like de buoy in de sea—sway—sway. Sambo so dam sick that he be giddy."

"Here comes your wife—Mrs. Sambo, to help you up."

As Captain Hudson said this, a black woman, who had been brought down from his house to attend Mr. Rosebud's commands, in common with her husband and the black boy, Cupid, entered, and it was curious to observe how quickly Sambo seemed to recover his senses at the sight of her.

He raised himself into a sitting posture, and his feet with uneasy precipitation after feeling about in the air for a moment or two, soon

found the floor, with their owner bolt upright.

Whether the disquietudes of Sambo had been too much for him or not, or whether he was tired with his descent from the room above, Rosebud sank softly into a chair ; but as if the direction of the party in the emergency rested with him, and to prove that he was equal to it and above suspicion, after some effort he brought out,

“ Now, I should hardly have supposed this of the black. To drink here out of sight ; and I’ll warrant he’s forgotten my orders to take care of this strange gentleman. ’Pon—’pon my honour, sir, I’m very sorry, but I intend—I intend to have a grand blow up of Sambo the first favourable opportunity. If you’ve not had enough, sir, drink—drink, if I send down to the sea.”

“ Greatly obliged,” said Staunton, “ this gentleman would be with the fulfilment of your last offer. Mr. Rosebud, are you for home, for the boat waits.”

"Aye, and the ship, too," said the captain, "we're losing time."

"Off, then—off," drawled Mr. Rosebud, "I'm your man

"Off—off, said the stranger."

and Mr. Rosebud, with great carefulness and a sort of maudlin joy began to sing in a low tone, while all the time he nodded his head very thoughtfully to the tune.

"Come, Staunton, give your arm to Mr. Rosebud and let us be jogging," said the captain.

Thank'ee, Staunton. I'll do as much for you another time. The air is very heavy, isn't it? I feel as if I were, now, a ton weightier than I was when the boat brought me. Sambo, you're drunk, sir, and if it wasn't for the hot weather I should make you remember it. Is the boat ready?"

To expedite their departure, the captain ordered Sally, Sambo's faithful partner, to temporarily desert her sable lord, and to go

down and haul in upon the line upon which the green boat was easily riding. When this was done, and the boat's nose was rasping over the beach, Mr. Rosebud, whose faculties were only slightly obscured by the carousal, and who occasionally woke up to as distinct and reasonable perception as could be expected of the state of affairs, ordered Sambo to remain behind with his wife, and charged the latter, as a prudent woman, to cork all the empty bottles and bring them away, sweep up the house and lock the door. With these injunctions, leaving the rest of the party behind, including a mule with large baskets swung over its sides, Rosebud the Magnificent embarked in all state, with his retinue of captain, and *aid-de-camp*, in the person of Edward Staunton.

CHAPTER IV.

TRAMPING TO TOWN.

It was not long before all remaining at the summer-house were also in motion towards the town. When the boat had attained a reasonable distance from the shore, Mrs. Sambo's remonstrances to her husband on the impropriety of his lying extended in that semi-stupified fashion, with the flies careering and now and then settling so impertinently about

his nose, while all the consciousness of their presence he deigned, was to favour the company with a long-drawn, unaccountable noise, something between a sigh and a snore, became more frequent, and more frequently pointed, as his state of wilful, supine oblivion provoked and prompted her, as it seemed, to repeat her applications to his sides. When she adventured a more energetic poke than usual, he vouchsafed a polite acknowledgement of her attention in giving a short, discontented grunt, as expressive as might be of the inconvenience he conceived himself suffering under at her ill-timed though earnest solicitations to get up.

By the repetition of such reminders as these, she at last succeeded in arousing Sambo to a half sense of what was passing around him, and she at last managed to bring him wide awake, by using no ceremony, but seizing a large cloth and thrusting it to his face, extending it in her fingers, and rubbing it round and round with such hearty good will, and such deter-

mined assiduity, that she nearly stopped his breath. In fact she applied it so fiercely, that if Sambo had been a man of mahogany his face would have been beautifully French-polished when the cloth had been withdrawn.

Such violent excitation—so vigorous a rub, would not have failed to arouse one of the seven sleepers, or a man over head and ears in slumber, whether natural or artificial, which as ordinary rest and the consequence of imbibitory indulgence may be discriminated.

The black started up at this, after making sundry vain attempts to remove the veil which his considerate helpmate sought to place before the direct revelation of his delinquency.

It was soon after that Mrs. Sambo convinced her lord and master it was high time that he should be stirring, and both set to work jabbering all the while and scolding at one another to gather the wrecks and remnants of the festival, both above

stairs and below. The mule was disturbed in the midst of an examination of some green vegetables, and persuaded, very reluctantly, by dint of pushes and some cuffs, to step to the front door and await his burden.

In a little while, the seaside house was clear of all that had been brought. Sambo put on his white jacket, stuck on his head his broad brimmed flapped hat, and took a long piece of sugar cane in his hand. With a smart touch on the hinder quarters, he started his steed, who tumbled into a high trot for about a score of yards, shaking up his baskets and making jingling music of the glass bottles deposited in them. But when our sable dignitary had advanced into the sun, he seemed to think that he had done enough for the present and ordered his wife forward, to follow at the rear of the beast and with her bare feet over the sand to keep up with him if possible, contenting himself with sauntering lazily behind, hoisting his shoulders, jerking the in-

sects out of the path with the end of his stick, and now and then, when he looked up and thought that the head of the procession was slackening in pace, touching up first the animal, and then applying a delicate stroke to the partner of his joys and his sorrows and the soother of much more than a good half of his cares. Be it known, however, that Sambo's persuasions to his black lady were made with caution, and on those parts that she could keep her eye least well over, as he stood in some wholesome dread not only of her tongue, but also a vigour of fist, and rigour in the exercise of it, which, if rumour did not do her injustice, she was considered as laying substantial claim to.

As for the stranger—Mr. Broadbrim, as Sambo, in his fertile imagination, had so aptly and facetiously characterised him, when the house was abandoned, and the door locked up, as if he had had enough of Sambo's company, and looked for no greater improvement of

mind than he had already succeeded in extracting from him, after a good humoured good bye, and a small piece of money, he fell in the rear, and, at some little distance from the scene of their meeting, where a path led across, by a shorter cut, to the town towards which they were both bound, he separated from the solemn cavalcade of horse, man, woman and boy, and though he long heard their laughter, or Sambo's shrill shouts to his wife and the beast of burthen, growing fainter as the rocky slopes serpentine forward and partially hid his party, he gradually drew away, and, walking briskly, first entered the straggling street of the little white town.

The square, white-walled houses, with their shining roofs, built with scarcely any pretensions to regularity, their wide, gaping windows and curious-looking, arcade sort of excrescences, extending to green palings, covered with foliage, and enclosing perhaps some rich, spreading fruit trees, were scattered

about, some on one side and some on the other, in groups of two and three, or dotted singly, close to the wide sandy road which descended into the glare and heat of a West India street a little more carefully kept and smoother than most ways in the island, excepting, of course, those of Havannah, Trinidad, Mantanzas, Santiago de Cuba, and the principal towns. Farther in the town, the houses thickened ; balconies and sunshades increased. Numerous stores whose low fronts and uncertain outside, except for the names written up and the intimations of the articles kept and sold withindoors, and perhaps a tub or two, ropes, boxes, bags, and the usual litter which retail establishments in such places may be supposed to turn into the public path in front of the houses, might have troubled a stranger to understand their destination—such diversely charactered shops interrupted the dulness of uniform wall and prolonged pales which might have been followed out up the side ways and

rectangular turnings. The middle of the pathway on either side was paved with square stones, imparting a neatness to the appearance of things very unusual in Spanish settlements. Some large houses were to be seen above the town, embowered in trees. Yards, wooden enclosures, one or two dingy wharfs, with bright pales and yellow boarding, neglected, though small warehouses, from the trade of the port being necessarily limited, and old fashioned and obsolete maritime accompaniments, mingled with gaudily painted shops, with bandannas and crockery, silk stuffs and wooden vessels, calicoes and red caps, and all the miscellaneous matters which fill up the heterogeneously assorted stock of a transatlantic shop in remote towns. These things indicated the centre of the town, where boats of various kinds, some belonging to the shore and some ship's boats, and, a little farther off, a few small vessels of simple rig and inconsiderable

character lay quietly washing in a tide which was slowly sinking.

At the farther end of this little Cuba town there seemed a grand slope where the clustered dwellings sank, with a staring church and bell tower and old bell, not very high, however, intermixed with flat roofs and tall, spreading, tropical plants, whose close neighbourhood to the houses qualified all commercial appearances with the wildness and rusticity of streaming branches and the gayest greens indiscriminatingly interweaving with gleaming walls, and paint, and white wood. Back from the town, and ascending widely, were small savannahs, profuse of trees, and here and there enlivened by great plantation houses, with their constant appendages, and perhaps a tall staff, from which floated the crimson and gold bands of the old Spanish monarchy. Farther on, rose forest and cultivated grounds, tall, woody masses, thick as clouds, dim and

line in their luxuriant stretches, clasping and oversweeping blue rocks, and the whole scene beheld under all the ardour of a flaming, flaring, West Indian sun, broke away into the gigantic ridges of the inland mountains, whose towering precipices in some places were advanced before heights of the reach of eight thousand feet above the level of the sea. These mountains, though seen at an extraordinary distance, shone clear blue, a colour which melted into pale mist, as it descended from the distant summits, in a sky whose light seemed the effect of half a dozen suns.

It is by no means easy for a European to estimate the fertility of an island similar to this, where every foot of ground is constantly throwing out its increase, and actually alive under the active influences of a climate so luxuriant. The natural productions of all the West India islands are nearly alike. The sugar cane is the principal production of the

West Indies, and is the commodity which has always given the colonies their commercial importance. There are four varieties of the sugar cane, two of which, the Bourbon and the transparent cane, are those chiefly cultivated. The next plant is the coffee, which was introduced in 1728, and is extensively grown in almost every island. Cotton, indigo, cocoa, and various kinds of spices, are also more or less cultivated. Of late years, many proprietors have been in the habit of planting cocoa trees on their estates, which it is thought have been too much neglected. Almost every kind of fruits produced in tropical climates grow in one or other of these islands; the vine, the pomegranate, the pine-apple, the water melon, tamarinds, oranges, the star apple, the bread fruit tree, (introduced by Captain Bligh, in 1793) and numerous others. The pimento of commerce is also produced in these islands, the avocado pear, the papaw tree,

and the banana, or plantain of which Humboldt says that it is doubted whether there is another plant in the world which on so small a space of ground produces such a mass of nourishing substance.

The best description of the vegetation of the West Indies is that given by the Rev. Lansdowne Guilding in his account of St. Vincent, from which we quote the following :—

“ The ground is overlaid with plants, which have scarcely room for their development. The trunks of the older trees are everywhere covered with a thick drapery of ferns, mosses, and orchideous plants, which diffuse into the air the richest odours, and almost conceal from sight the noble stems that uphold them. Their growth is favoured by the great moisture of the air, and these lovely parasites, sheltered from the direct rays of the sun, are seen ascending on every side even the larger

branches. So great is the variety of vegetable beauties that sometimes decorate a single trunk, that a considerable space in a European garden would be required to contain them. Several rivulets of the purest water urge their meandering course through the brushwood ; various plants of humbler growth, and which love humidity, display their beautiful verdure on their edges and are sheltered by the wide-spreading branches of the mango, mahogany, teak, mimosa and other woods remarkable for their stateliness, and clothed in wild and magnificent pomp. The vegetation everywhere displays that vigorous aspect and brightness of colour so characteristic of the tropics. Here and there, as from contrast, huge masses of trap, blackened by the action of the atmosphere, and decayed tremellæ, present themselves ; those blocks which in colder climates would be doomed to eternal barrenness, or at most would only nourish the pale and sickly

lichen, here give support to creeping plants of every form and colour, which cover with yellow, green, and crimson, the sides of the sable rock. In their crevices the succulent species are daily renewed, and prepare a soil for larger tenants ; from their summits the old man's beard, and similar weeds, which seem to draw their nourishment from the air, hang pendant, floating at the pleasure of the winds. At a distance is seen the trumpet tree, whose leaves seem made of silver plates as the blast reverses them in the beams of the mid-day sun. In a solitary spot rises a wild fig-tree, one of the gigantic productions of the torrid zone. The huge limbs of this tree, covered with perpetual verdure, throw down, often from the height of eighty or ninety feet, a colony of suckers of every possible size, from that of pack-thread to the vast cable of a ship without any visible increase in their diameter and without a joint ; these, reaching the ground,

become other trees, still remaining united. At other times the suckers, blown about by the winds, are entangled round the trunk or some neighbouring rock, which they surround with a net-work of the firmest texture, as if the hand of man had been employed. Above the rocky summit of the hills, the tree ferns, which are the principal ornament of our scenery, appear at intervals; convolvuli, and other creeping plants, have climbed their high stems and suspended their painted garlands. The fruits of our country, scattered within our reach, and the green leaves of the bananas and heliconias, planted beneath, serve to minister to our refreshment and to convey water from the neighbouring spring. On every side innumerable palms of various genera, the cocoa-nut, date, cabbage palm, &c., whose leaves curl like plumes, shoot up, majestically, their bare and even columns above the wood."

Although the foregoing description was

written for St. Vincent alone, the vegetation of these islands is so much alike that what is said of one will apply equally to the rest.

CHAPTER V.

THE CUBA SHARK—A BOTTLE-NOSE.

As the gentleman whom we are compelled, for want at present of any better designation, to call Broadbrim, passed along the street of the little island town, the signs of bustle, at least such bustle as might have been looked for therein, increased and multiplied about him, until he brought to, as perhaps he might

have said significantly in his own language, in the middle of the wharf.

As the heat was partially abating, here might be seen the symptoms of re-awakening industry which had been modified, or moderated, if not suspended, during the sultry earlier hours of the afternoon. Still the sunshine remained fierce enough ; shadows were strong and deep, and the slenderest shelter, such even as the stocks of upright anchors, sticks, and poles, and frames, and such other slight and inconsiderable bodily objects offered an agreeable relief, and some approach to a haven of refuge. The glare and stare of burning light was nearly intolerable, and can only be imagined in the hottest of hot summer days in our own clime, but would certainly fall feeble and false if sought in notion to be approached in a temperate autumnal day or in wintry or winter time.

Tongues were busy enough amid the confusion of objects which the eye encountered. Span-

ish of course was the prevailing language, and this was uttered in all variety of tones, shrill and sharp, grunting and guttural, pure or provincial, quick or slow, as temperament seemed to differ, or the particular temper in which each speaker found himself at the moment.

But not only was Spanish to be heard, but English, and good English too, intermixed with some very barbarous imitations on the part of the negroes, who seemed to think that they improved its quality, as they undoubtedly did its copiousness, by working in a due infusion of the indigenous dialect, sprinkled with some of their own ugly, incoherent inexpressives, wherein everything might be imagined since nothing could be made of them. Spanish niggers, or black Spanish property as they might more properly be distinguished, of course possessed the second-hand telegraphics of their not usually talkative masters, and seemed disposed to make up for the slowness and de-

liberate dignity and economy of speech which their dominators employed, but which they condescended to compensate for by most meaning and changeable looks.

The principal of the bustle appeared to concentrate around the reigning occupation of the wharf, which testified itself as being the shipment of some latter goods destined for the tender lying off shore. These consisted of some lighter packages, as well as barrels of provisions and general sea store, and those weights ordinarily taken in last in merchantmen. A few whites, whose sallow or pale countenances presented relief to the black faces of the bustling, mumbling, grumbling niggers, who made up in noise what they wanted in method or dexterity, were engaged in assisting and directing the efforts of the sable helpers.

These last with their woolly heads bound up in handkerchiefs of staring showy colours, or

coloured caps, and dressed in white jackets and sail-cloth trousers, and with bare feet trampling about in the sand and amongst the lumber, tallied on to the ropes, or handles of the wheels of the cranes, and "yo hoed," and sung and kicked to measure, with a forgetfulness of and insensibility to the heat, though their faces shone like varnish, that appeared unaccountable and tantalising to the pale, panting, perspiring whites. A large barge, or boat, was alongside the wharf, and down with a heavy plump went a bale, or something of the sort every now and then scattering the dust, and suddenly relieving the complaining chain, which ascended up with lightsomeness as the men at the handle revolved the clanking cogs and the machine swung inwards.

Mr. Broadbrim, finding himself so unexpectedly in this active scene, gave his hat a knock which sent it over his little stars of eyes, and then betook himself into a corner,

where, leaning against an upright of wood, he could make his observations without being in the way, or perhaps what he more desired, without liability to notice.

His eyes travelled away from the labourers on the wharf, across the intervening sea, till they rested on the noble ship in whose service and for the advancement of whose clearance the crowd was engaged.

She lay a short mile from shore, head to tide and riding at a single anchor. Some curious, unexplainable sort of thought appeared to occupy this man's mind as with a twisted species of smile he scanned her beautiful proportions, dwelling on them with an interest and a familiarity which would have been strange enough in a landsman, or that, at least, which he appeared to be, or of which he seemed desirous of assuming the character.

Having her cargo on board, which sank her proportionably deep in the water, her

length shewed itself great. The black sweeps of her wales and her bulwarks which were broken with the regular line of her square ports and the juts of her guns, with their solid rectangular sea-carriages, her chains and her heavy anchors, and her picturesquely piled anchor apparatus and the usual deck furniture, curved delicately up at stem and stern, and ended relatively in the sharp cutwater and bulging quarter galleries and quarter boats, between which run a broad white ribband spotted with black. Her bowsprit and jib-booms ran sharply out, white as the tall, tapering masts, which, growing slenderer and slenderer as shrouds climbed and yards crossed, terminated in three piercing, long black lines, faintly seen in the dazzling blue sky. Her fore and main rigging was thick and massive, meeting pyramidically and claspingly around the doubling of the spars, and the raking mizen and its long pointing gaff, stayed

back in lines, edging softly off from the complicated web of cordage to the bright red flag, which flauntingly floated as if a dot in a picture, and appeared to terminate the fancifully discursive outlines of the beautiful ship.

After a long look at the vessel, as if more than admiration mingled with it, the stranger turned on his heel, and when having walked some little distance up the town, knocked at the door of a sort of counting-house and dwelling combined on the bank.

"Anybody at home?" quoth Mr. Broadbrim, finding that there was no ready acknowledgement to his intimation of a desire to enter, and slowly opening the door.

"I ought to know that voice," said some person in the interior, "but you were not wont, Mr. Crowsfoot, to knock as gently as a 'prentice in his first month. There used to be more show and more substance in your knock."

"I can knock hard enough sometimes," returned Crowsfoot, sulkily, "when it suits my humour or lies in my way; but I didn't know whether you might not have company."

"And as I've no porter—not a nigger in our outskirts," replied Crowsfoot's friend, "I suppose you thought that opening my door, you would be obliged to ask of myself if I was at home. Well, I'm at home. Come in, shut the door behind you, and give me your hand."

"As to shutting the door, I will, but as to 'giving you my hand, I don't know, for I'm not in a good humour."

"*Per dios!*—sorry for that; but I hope your ill-temper does not include me. I have expected you, and got something to eat."

"If you had had something to drink, it would have squared better with my notions of a Cuba afternoon and deal walls, for, though

I've been drinking, I was engaged about some business that you've an interest in, and only looked at my liquor."

"You shall do more than that with me, then," returned his friend. "Come, let me shut up the door, and shoot a bolt, too, for we mayn't want to be disturbed in our confabulation."

Saying these words, this hospitable person shut his door and fastened it, after putting his head out a moment when he had seen his friend indoors, to satisfy himself that no curious person had been seized with a whim to examine the peculiarities of the entrance of his *dulce domum*, or amuse himself with the appearance of strangers entering it.

Meantime Crowsfoot had walked, without ceremony or hesitation, into the back parlour and seated himself, whither he was followed by the master of the house.

The latter was a small, dark Spaniard, of

peculiarly sinister and suspicious look, if the little he suffered to be seen of his eyes, and the unobtrusive and sensitive haste he testified to avert them when he caught the gaze of anybody settled on him, may be construed as countenancing such an impression. His height was nothing extraordinary, and he was of a spare, meagre build, well answering to the sharp, shrivelled aspect of his face. He wore a slight, irregular moustache, black as the short hair which he boasted in no very pretending quantity on the back of his head and at the sides, where it scrupulously avoided interfering on the domain of either temples or forehead. His jaws were hungry and angular, bare and smooth ; closely resembling the peculiarities of the conformation of the faces of the Malay tribe, or inhabitants of the remote eastern seas, or rather the savage coasts intervening between the Chinese territories and the great Indian continent.

He was dressed in a flannel jacket bound with faded worsted binding, and light blue trousers, like a Moor or Turk, slippers and white stockings ; but the cleanliness of his jacket was much diminished by patches of dusty colour, which he had contracted by rubbing himself against articles of loose merchandise, either in his own regions or other people's. Besides himself in the little room at the back of his counting-house, or whatever he might have pleased to call the apartment which opened into the street, our friend Broadbrim, or Crowsfoot, found a middle-aged, rather handsome half-caste female, the dark brown of whose African predecessors had in her person been lightened and qualified into an even and softer tint of the same foundation, at the corresponding time that her features, retaining the character, had emerged from negro coarseness into a less definite form of the same impress.

On the table were some bottles and glasses, some carbonadoed meat, yams, and a goodly loaf of bread, while a saucepan was on a small wood fire, in which were hissing and bubbling a few fish. The first thing which our friendly disposed Spaniard did was to hasten to an old elm-tree cupboard, secured with an ancient brass lock, dry and sharp when the key turned in it, and which was found to contain a thin, green bottle of spirit, which was produced, and before Crowsfoot had time to interfere either one way or the other, a full glass was poured out for him.

"Now, Mr. Crowsfoot," said his friend, "this is really some good stuff which I will give you before you fall to upon what Margarita and I have got to offer you."

"Much obliged to you, signor," replied Crowsfoot, "but I didn't come in to drink your liquor; besides I don't think day-time altogether the season to tickle throats with

the hot stuff in. If I earned anything by hard work and tumbling weather, with mayhap some blows in earnest given and taken now and then, I don't know that it oughtn't to be something better than such devil's water, which hisses in our gullets as if it trickled down hot brass. Grog's good stuff in its way, but it's a seductive, deceitful demon that smiles and tempts, but gives us the lie, and melts to air in our grasp, if not something worse, leaving us nothing to reap after it but the stump ends of disquietude. Pass a ploughshare over such, you'd notch your metal."

Crowsfoot's friend looked not altogether pleased at these remarks and his dissatisfied allusions, and the more than surly manner in which his advances and hospitable invitations were repelled. He took his hand off the glass, though with reluctance, and fixed his eye quickly and penetratingly on his visiter.

"Why, my dear captain, you're all gloom and disquietude; nothing but clouds when I expected this sunshiny day would have brought you here with an open brow and a laugh, and a joke for poor Margarita here, who looks quite surprised to see her old friend so unaccommodating and querulous. What's the matter?—what's in the wind?"

"Oh! I've got the squall all on my side," returned Crowsfoot. "It's all very fine for you to sit with your nose over your desk here, turning over the leaves of your log and running up your figures, when you know the profit and loss and balances are of my making, whose pen is a marline-spike, and whose paper is the hard black clouds through which I'm forced to write my way. Lightning and tempest, the howling wind and the washing water, are the gusty dealers, hard-hearted as they are, *I* have to manage. My deck is my counting-house, my wheel my ledger, and heaven's angry gleam my lamplight.

While the golden pistoles tumble into your treasury, whilst I keep the stream a-going which turns your mill, while I am the horse, or the ass, rather, which carries your panniers of shining stuff; what is the reward of the real worker, the fetcher and carrier, the grand wheel of your grinding machine? I take with one hand what cowards can't keep, and give it you with the other. Have I wages even?—or, if I am to have them, are they paid?"

"Bless my soul, my dear friend, I can't understand to what you can be referring," answered the wily Spaniard, "I wished to see you relative to some particular transactions, but I certainly didn't expect such unpleasant recrimination, and, I must say, entirely undeserved and unaccountable reproaches. Something has put you out—I'll wait till you are cool, and have arrived at a proper remembrance of things; but I am sorry and perplexed to see you in Cuba in such a disposition."

"'Tis always the way," retorted Crowsfoot, "I'm continually in danger, and I'm not to have my money's worth for it. You take the best care to keep yourself out of reach; and I suppose when I swing you'll be at the foot of the gallows, and if you don't hiss with the multitude you'll cast up your insinuating, hypocritical eyes, and thank your stars, [and bless your government's good fortune too, that the world is rid of a rascal. I do the lion's work—run down the prey, and the jackal makes off with the lion's share."

"Crowsfoot you are unreasonable," said the Spaniard; "you speak blindly and like a man without a recollection of what he says. What could I do more? would you not be the most useless man in the world without the assistance I am able to be to you? It is so easy to run into port, when your hands are full, and dispose of a harvest—land the proceeds of a successful cruise, I suppose, and pay duty on it—with the bloody flag streaming

at your mizzen. What have I received of yours? and what have I not accounted for in the proper way and at the fitting time?"

"The proper way and the fitting time!" echoed his friend with contemptuous indignation. "Has that fitting time ever arrived?—do you suppose that I am to head on, running my neck into a hempen tippet until at last the drawing string is pulled in truth, and I am caught from trusting myself too far, and in your service, and for your benefit too; a great deal further, I assure you, than I am disposed to go. We've an account to square which you, as a prudent merchant, as I fancy you'd style yourself, cannot but be sometimes in doubt respecting; and as I never keep books, except my log, and not that sometimes, I must rub up my memory to turn up the particulars. My men are grumbling for wages—they are like half-starved wolves in a floating den, the sparks

of famine are lighting up in their hungry eyes, and I must have money—no words, for I must have money.”

“You shall have whatever is reasonable,” answered Crowsfoot’s friend. By St. Paul and St. Peter, and all the saints, I never refuse you what a punctual man ought to grant, one who never receives without acknowledging, and who only acts as a sort of steward to your gang—I mean,” he added, correcting himself, “your ship’s company. I have not been in Cuba thirty years without having been at some pains to acquire a character.”

“By Jove, then, you’ve overlooked somebody, for it has not been with me,” returned Crowsfoot.

“You seem to make an immense mistake in the value of what I’ve received from you from time to time,” said Valdegas, which was the name of Crowsfoot’s estimable and placable correspondent, taking no notice of the taunt.

"I've had nothing of you of consideration—I mean anything useful, or what has turned so out—for these six months."

"'Tis a lie I" cried Crowsfoot.

"Gently—gently," said Valdegas.

"I say again 'tis a lie I" repeated Crowsfoot.

"I transmitted you specie, which I couldn't get rid of myself, ivory, spices, silk—all sorts of things of value, except a bottle of poison for you," he added spitefully.

"Be not warm, Captain—nor so loud, let me remind you, for your words are dangerous, and, let drop here, the consequences might be serious to you, if any portion of your questionable cavilling and your inconsiderate remarks were overheard.

"Dangerous to me!—to me, *per dios I*" repeated Crowsfoot, "your ankle is as deep in the mud as I, and, if I'm sucked in, ten thousand devils but you shan't find hard sand! Swing one, swing double! any day in the christian year, sunshine or storm. I like your

affected security mightily, signor Valdegas. We've run in harness at a pretty even pace, I think. I never found you lagging, but, on the contrary, alert enough, and tugging me on, rather, at the sting of the whip of our common driver, I suppose, the devil. But I've breathed free air, and have had sea-room for my sins, while you only inhale the tainted atmosphere of your smoky roguery in a dry den of deal boards, which, to say truth, wants a hearty brimstone fumigation—a regular rat-trap, where you've hugged yourself with the thought you were nibbling the cheese all to yourself, I've had no knife on my tail yet, thanks to my heels, and have not scampered here to testify to my own disaster; but now come to look for a little of my own, which you are to be supposed to have had only in care, signor Valdegas."

"I disdain your imputations," returned Valdegas. "I disclaim your position. I have nothing but what is my own, and nothing of

yours. You forget you are imprudent in addressing this language to me. Where are you?—what are you?—I should scarcely imagine there was a need of reminding you of these circumstances, though you seem singularly disposed to overlook them. Remember you are ashore, captain, in a town alone, and bring to your recollection that your calling—your doubtful, though I own profitable profession is that of a—”

“Curse of Cain!” cried Crowsfoot, aroused, and with flashing eyes, “Beware, paltry trafficker in other men’s property—maker away of stolen goods, battenning on the profits of the blood and sweat of a hundred bold and honest hearts. You would do well to pause and bethink yourself of the man you are talking with. I am over apt to make a sharp point speak for me, since its argument is not so circuitous, and yet more silencing than words however strong, and though impregnated with all the bitters which ever burnt steel brown.

You shall hear me, and give me money, and own me master, or my visit shall be a serious one for you."

"Talking of drink," retorted Valdegas with a cold sneer, "if it were likely at all that you should get it anywhere, I should say your nose had dipped deeper in the pottle-pot than you would make me believe. But I don't want to break with you, though I might be a dangerous enemy. Throw not upon me the necessity of keeping no terms with you, or not going a length in your company sometimes, for, whenever you do it, depend upon it 'twill be a bad day's work for you, at whatever period that happy time may arrive. You've a name, I presume," continued Valdegas, quietly resuming his seat from which he had a minute or two before with some perturbation arisen, "and though your *aliases* may be multitudinous, and your shifts and disguises as many, I know you through all, and I may be seized with a compunctious longing to impart the little informa-

tion I possess, through philanthropy and a mere love of the circulation of useful knowledge, for which I should get well paid, too. You are an object of interest in these parts, Captain Crowsfoot, and nowhere more so than in this beautiful little island ; large as it is, your notoriety—your fame, shall I call it ? fills it.”

During this threatening dialogue Margarita had remained in a frightened attitude, gazing first at her husband and then at Crowsfoot ; but without daring to utter a word, though she watched the motions of the disputants keenly.

One of Crowsfoot's hands clenched nervously, while he extended the other mechanically, though it trembled with his suppressed passion, as if his will had scarcely a part in the movement, towards a large-bladed knife which lay on the table amongst the other requisites for eating. He however only took it up in his fingers and balanced the blade

lightly, and in another humour it might have been imagined playfully, upon the dinner cloth. He was compressing his teeth upon his lower lip as if he would have driven them into it.

“Cold coward!” muttered Crowsfoot, “you know I have a name, and not that of such a sculking, back-biting, mean hound as you are.”

“I am much obliged to the saints for keeping me out of such brave doings as would have rendered that name something so hot that I couldn't have handled it,” returned Valdegas. “I am averse to quarrelling. It is not my *forte* neither my business. But remember, captain, gallant captain, that yonder is a door, not over thick, and beyond that a street, and nearer still,” continued Valdegas, knocking his fist against it as he sat, “a window, and that I have only to creep to it and whisper a name that you are perhaps not altogether ignorant of, to make the very stones rise against your

escape from my house. Don't suppose from this that I'm not proud of my lodger and wish to keep him."

Crowsfoot slightly started at the mention of the door, and his sharp eyes rolled round with some alarm, as the sudden ghastly paleness of his face indicated that his cunning friend's hint had not been altogether ineffectual nor was ill chosen. Finding however that no officer of justice was standing behind him with the irons ready for his wrists, as by his movement he seemed to anticipate, he abandoned the handle of the knife and thumped his left fist on the table till the glasses started again.

"Snake!—traitor! Dare to throw out such a word again and these fingers are in your throat," cried Crowsfoot, "before your lips can part to breathe, much less hazard a syllable. Stir hand or foot; take that eye off me for an instant, and my sharp knife shall be buried in your heart. I've scaped scot free

before now before less likelihoods than stabbing you as you sit, and bounding to escape over your prostrate corpse."

As he said this, with an eye like a piercing arrow fixed upon the cool, unmoved, settled gaze of Valdegas, he thrust his hand into his bosom, felt about for a moment, and displayed an inch of bright steel from a dark sheath of leather, which seemed rudely hove up from the depths of his sea shirt.

Valdegas's sallow face appeared scarcely to change ; he kept perfectly still, and maintained a steady gaze at Crowsfoot, with more surprise and reserve expressed than kindling rage or even anger, much less alarm. But before Crowsfoot had quite finished his headlong menaces, Margarita had started up and clasped his right arm.

"Do you suppose," cried she, "that I'm going to sit still and see you, Crowsfoot, assassinate my husband ? Silent I've been so far, but I suffer no more. I know my time, and

I'm then prompt enough. Do you remember where you are, or fancy that you are alone here to do your butcherwork, or that I shall stand to see it?"

"The woman's right!" cried Valdegas. "Crowsfoot, you've a bad chance, just now, if you want to kill me, and I'm not an easy dier by any means. But we've made ourselves a couple of fools. The notion of knives being out between us except to cut and eat what may lie under our noses, is an absurd joke. We're not crowsmeat yet, captain, or at least I don't reckon myself such at the present moment, however ambitious you may be of playing pendulum to the music of the winds, a human acorn dancing in air, or being shot earlier out of hand in stabbing a citizen on his hearth and being started for it like a fox by the soldiery. Why I might have been as wild to have attempted to stick you on your own deck."

Margarita did not yet loose her hold on

Crowsfoot's arm, though he did not exhibit any attempt to immediately bring his threats to execution. He continued glaring at Valdegas with vengeful disappointment, and with much about the same sort of dumb, partially subdued or mitigated ferocity, which a tiger might betray when suddenly encountering some unlooked for interruption to its deadly spring or its escape.

"Crowsfoot you are wild," said Margarita, firmly, as if she was not afraid of him, "I don't think that you could have meditated such a headlong outbreak, so opposed to the cool cautiousness of your disposition, before you came in, but at all events we have said and done nothing to provoke you since you've entered our door. Valdegas is a tantaliser, and an idiot in saying much that he says, but you mustn't mind him. Remember as a dealer he's fond of words, and a great amount of what he says must go for nothing."

"I'm sure," rejoined Valdegas with an at-

tempt at conciliation, "Crowsfoot ought to know by this time that his interest is mine."

"I do know it well enough, since you take care to make me find it so," muttered Crowsfoot sarcastically.

"Let him consider," continued Valdegas without noticing this irritated interruption, which broke in, in Crowsfoot's deep tones like a rumble of distant thunder on Valdegas's pacificatory assuasives, and addressing his wife and speaking of Crowsfoot in the third person, as if he were, however indirectly, communicating with him, but adopted Margarita as the circuitous means for the purpose, "let him consider that we both pull the same way—that it is just as wise in one of the fellow-horses that he compared us to a minute or so ago, to rebel against his destiny and to drag out contrary to his companion, and by getting out of temper to tumble the carriage over the precipice and to go smash at once, as for us to come to a rupture. He thinks himself

ill used. Why, I can't see. We've done business together ; books are books, let him see mine if he so desires, and he'll find the regular debtor and creditor account.

"Let go my arm, Margarita," said Crowsfoot to Valdegas' wife, who had not yet released him, and had interposed herself so that the disputants would have found it almost impossible to have indulged their desperate humours even had they been inclined to have pushed them to extremity, of which there now seemed less decided and alarming appearances. "I don't intend to nail him, and s'death! you women have such art of your own, that you would throw a wet blanket over the most promising flame whose hostility ever spirted up. You hamper one's arms and muffle one's fence with your perplexing embraces, and your aprons, and skirts, and smothering draperies, and what not, when we are going at it as sharp as shears, and as fierce as a fox. I fancy I shall never be

safe till I get some strapping wench, that a man can't well strike though little particular as he may be, to start up before me whenever I snarl and show my rasps. I suppose you'll say you've been doing as much by me, just now, old woman. Well, never mind, I'm cooler now, and so let Mynheer Merchant speak."

"You're a good fellow after all," said Margarita. "You listen to reason, but I'm afraid of your temper, you're so dreadful hot. So you must give me out that ugly long knife, or I don't sit down; and I shall clear away all the carving implements until I see you and Pedro shake hands."

"Bravo, bully Margaret!" cried Crowsfoot, laughing, "I'd rate you aboard my schooner as a famous handler of the whip, and put down of mutinies in ordinary; devil a one of the disaffected could stand up against your squeezes! away with the knives then, but leave Val and me a couple of forks, that if

we are inclined to tumble in upon one another, we may have something to make our chance calls impressive. We may have worse weapons before Pedro's hanged and a ball whips off my head or I'm choked with sawdust."

Valdegas' countenance brightened at the word Pedro, being pretty well persuaded in his own mind that when his fiery friend the captain favoured him with that familiar and endearing appellation, the most dangerous part of his irritability had subsided. His eye lost its fixed reflective sharpness, and the lines of his face became less rigid, as a grim sort of good humour smoothed away the asperities which had spread over his unprepossessing lineaments. Abandoning his guarded, collected, attentive manner, he relaxed his limbs, and an easy cheerfulness infused itself into his voice, not occasionally, however, unmingled with some, certainly not perceivable to his hard-minded associate, traces of latent suspicion,

"Margarita, you're a brave woman," said he, "and you can always speak when you're wanted, and hold your tongue when you are to leave the field to more masculine debaters. Leave Crowsfoot alone, for by this time he must be tired of your attentions; and bring us something to drink, for this sort of work that we have had this moment, makes the throat parched, and mine is as dry, I confess, as a Carolina garret. Come, I'll meet you at once, captain, and many thanks for your able assistance. I should like you to be convinced that I am always willing to be of use to you. Our league ought to be a friendly one, for I detest being on such arms-length terms that I'm not to know whether my coadjutor is going to fight me or hug me. It won't do for us. You say you want money and money you shall have, *Madre de Dios!* if I clear out my money-box, not that there's much in it just now. Say how much it is to be, and you shall leave this house

with it; only give me your fist and let us be friends. This quarrelling is boy's work."

"No man that's not a regular built jackass is fond of jaw," returned Crowsfoot, "and I'm for plain sailing whenever I'm not fouled. But I'm not one to be made haul my wind without smoke. Hand us over the shiners, and be reasonable, and promise me fair play for the future, that when I'm sick of my hard-working knocking-about life, I may have a bag of doubloons to rest my head upon for a pillow when I can't plough the salt seas any longer, and I'm your man to the end of the chapter—till the devil makes up your balance and claps you under hatches, which he'll do, depend upon it, one of these days in his fiery ship. Give us a jorum, Margarita, and gulp down all crossbiting. How do you hail, comrade of customs and broker of botheration."

"You shan't complain of me," answered Valdegas. "I will give you the cash, or an order for it, with all my heart."

Saying this, and while Crowsfoot was filling himself up a mixture of two-thirds spirit and one water, and deep in his attention to bottle and glass, Valdegas reached pen and paper and wrote an order on a house in Jamaica for four hundred dollars, which he handed to his colleague.

“ Why what the hell is this ! ” cried he with much displeased astonishment, while a frown gathered over his but very lately cleared brow, “ a piece of paper, master Valdegas ; you must have known that no bills were of use to me. You might just as well give me a handful of the original rags that your paper came from, since you understand fast enough I can’t poke myself into port to get it changed, nor have I anybody harlequin enough to leap in, take, belt, and not stop to answer any ill-timed questions. No, you must tumble down a bag of real solid tinklers, such as I can get aboard and no fuss made about them. Stuff ’em as tight as you like, and there’ll be less chance of

a jingle, to let curious people know Dick Crowsfoot's a packhorse of the precious. I'll get them aboard, if I swim with golden corks."

"Oh, if you think it is as handy, I'll clear my cupboard for you, with all my heart ; and so there's one, two, three, four bags of money for you. I'll take your receipt, if you please, not that I doubt you, but I am a man of business and adhere to all its forms, even with my best friends, and I preserve all these things. Let us have everything straightforward and aboveboard," continued Valdegas, "and now my dear captain, since we are cronies once again, I'll tell you of a little piece of business that I've got for you, which shall put six hundred English guineas into your pocket. You know already that the affair I sent to let you understand I wanted to see you concerning, related to the ship lying off here, and I dare say you've run your eye over her outside already."

"Aye, aye, signor, I've logged her looks," returned Crowsfoot. "You shan't slip me from my spy by putting another ship upon me for her."

"That's all right," resumed Valdegas. "She's a tight ship, isn't she?"

"Not a doubt of that, signor, and a fast one too, if there's any credit to be given to those raking skyprickers of masts of hers and the hungry sheer of those lanky bows. She's through the water like a champagne bottle, take my word for it, all neck."

"Now you must listen," said Valdegas, "her owner is Mr. Rosebud of this town, a wealthy Englishman settled here, who has a very fine estate, as his father had before him, bought with their own English bank paper or something as good."

"Aye, I've heard of him," answered Crowsfoot, "and, as I wanted, fell in with him this morning. I've had the offer of some of his brisk stuff, though I only swallowed as much

as might have filled a thimble, just for form's sake. Like a cautious fly I didn't so much as wet my wings in his tempting looking stuff, since I'm looking for the treacle. But who is this round-faced, rosy beer-barrel, with the gleam in his eye and the friendly goblet in his hand?"

"He's, I believe, a very respectable gentleman, and a very honest man, with whom I have sometimes dealings, though not much," said Valdegas, "He has contrived with his English perseverance and attention to business, and all that, to work ahead of us Cuba merchants, natives of the island, and subjects of the magnificent Spanish monarchy to boot. He's much looked up to and greatly respected."

"Glad to hear it," said Crowsfoot, "for his own sake. You haven't got a dozen of cigars to let me puff while you're giving me the build and rig of this piece of business of yours?"

"A dozen! say a hundred, *capitano*," re-

plied Valdegas, " Margarita, bring us in some of the best !—pick 'em out, and after you've handed us them you can leave us, my dear."

Margarita did as she was bid, and then retired.

" Valdegas drew his chair much closer to Crowsfoot, and when the smoke of the cigars was fragrantly beginning to thicken its curls around the heads of this amiable couple, he pursued his disclosures.

" The ' Columbus,' captain, will sail to-night or to-morrow, as she's all tight for her run except the , little stray sea-store which you well know comes last, and don't take long either in receiving or getting under hatches. She's a strong ship, well armed, with a good crew, and a man who is up to his duty, and who don't set his ship too ways at once, for her skipper. She can fight as well as fetch and carry, if need should be, I can tell you for

your instruction, and she's not likely to stand much nonsense."

"Well," said Crowsfoot, finding his companion pause, with a whiff of indifference and then taking his cigar out of his mouth.

"I throw out these hints as proper warnings, so that there mayn't be any mistake between ye. She's six hundred tons, and has a superb cargo. But what is more to the purpose, she carries a right royal freight of specie."

"That will make her worth running after," said Crowsfoot, "for I don't want to strain my little vixen for nothing, and it's not encouraging to hammer after a big, hulking, floating warehouse, and find her nothing but dead useless weight. I've been lured often in that way, and found my peacocks regular lumbering humbugs, with not a speck of gold in their tails. Well, what next, my Grand Duke of Difficulties."

“ Above everything take care to make your communications with this port as secret as possible—place such detection beyond the possibility of doubt.”

“ And also the curious calculations of a certain respectable gentleman, who squares his neighbour's property with his own plummet of perpendicularity. You're not altogether so particular, though, sometimes; you don't always want 'em right up and down. Don't fear; I'm possessed of a great cloak with two eye-holes, in which I shall move stealthily and unobserved, like a crow in a cloud, as infallibly secret and unsuspected as an emissary of a holy brotherhood or a grand inquisitor, mantle, and moonlight, and all the rest of it. I'm a gliding shadow, man, that you can no more make speak than a sulky ghost; you could as easy conjure a key-stone, locking in its fixity the very arch of dumbness, and make it blab. I've already gleaned some information about our

Argo, and I've been in company with her captain and first officer."

"Did they offer you service aboard her, or did you pretend to seek it?"

"Neither—my rencontre was only reflective as far as they were concerned. But is this all the business you are about to indoctrinate my simplicity with?" interrogated Captain Crowsfoot, slyly.

"No, but that you shall hear anon," answered Valdegas, "you have already made up your mind to be after her, and to divide the product as an acknowledgement of my having furnished you with the fact that such a ship hove up out of our bay. Have her well at sea before you attempt to forereach upon her—but you'll make sure work, I'm persuaded."

"I hope I shall—give me the chart, and I'll handle the compasses for myself," said Crowsfoot. "I shall give you a good account of her, depend on't, Signor Valdegas, and send you

her manifest to overhaul in your own honourable and precise person. But time wanes—this hot sunshine has got much less yellow. Let me know what else remains at the bottom of the inkhorn. I hope you'll set me no more difficult task than the capture of this gold—ribbed argosy of ours."

"You know, captain, I have an old friend, and estimable correspondent, and faithful ally in the island yonder with the white cliffs, and towards which our ship is journeying," said Valdegas—"his name is Lockwood—Michael Lockwood, and he's settled as a farmer, or something of the sort, as they call it over there, in the north side of Devon. We've had many snug bargains and quiet treaties between us, that we didn't want all the world to be cognizant of and talking about till it scarcely mattered whether they did or no with the little of circumstance they could stumble upon, from which transactions we have mutually derived some profit and much satisfaction. Are you

acquainted with the names of the officers on board the Columbus?"

"No, I'm not," answered the captain, smartly. "Hobbs, Dobbs, or Moonshine, I don't see it much matters to me. That's more in your line, comrade."

"There's a young man rated as the first officer, who bears the name of Staunton—Edward Staunton."

"Shouldn't wonder if 'tisin't the young spark that cast such an inquisitive eye upon me, when I was looking as honest as my neighbours, with a double coat of whitewash on my devil-dyed physiognomy. I owe him one for it already—fiery end to his meddlesomeness!"

"That's the very youngster," returned Valdegas. "I'm delighted to find you know him and have marked him. Somehow he's a thorn in the side of poor Lockwood—a very phantom of horror—an abomination—a spoiler of all his pleasures—a poacher on his preserves, and he

wouldn't be sorry to toss a handy man a bagful of gold, who was, by mere accident, you know, to cry *pace* to him."

"Aha! I see what you're coming to," said Crowsfoot. "There's something to do, and money to be paid for it. But I like knocking about old wood and iron better than meddling with men, except in open combat and in fair defence. What comes in the way of trade is all very well. Pioneers must hew away impediments, and tit for tat is just as it should be, but one needn't go out of one's road to have a cut at a stray wing which happens to drop your way."

"Why, you knock down men every day like nine-pins," rejoined Valdegas, "for nothing or perhaps for a broken head yourself, and now here is a chance to turn in the yellow with no risk of a compliment in return, and the recollection that you needn't begin till you're all sure. If you come to close quarters, can't you give a stroke by mistake — write your

name on a lubber's skull with a hard nib that another man lends you. And I don't think that your conscience is such a very tender one that this little profitable affair should shock it, and, if you should grow sore a bit over it, you've a golden salve which ought to soothe worse wounds than a quiet tap on the head on a dark night."

"What does this friend of your's want?" asked Crowsfoot. "Is the young sprig a left-handed son of his, towing heavy, somehow a drag upon him, that he's in such a hurry to book his passage to the other world, and to borrow my lantern to light him the dark way, or is he some lost heir or stumblingblock, or what, that he wishes lifted?"

"My friend, Lockwood, is not a very young man, nor quite so winning as he might wish, and from some private reasons of his own, which I could tell you if it were necessary, he dreads youthful attractions over his own, above everything anticipates with alarm the return

of this young gentleman to England and to his part of the country. But, captain, you needn't pull a long face at the job I'm putting in your hand. The instructions of my principal are to get this chap removed if possible—anyway to be quit of him, so as to prevent his turning up again when and where he's least wanted. So if you can blindfold him, tie his hands behind and set him a swimming, or run into some snug little isle made on purposo, of which there must be plenty scattered about in your track, and which you know better than I, and there set him ashore to pick up shells and pop at parrots, or sell him to a nigger king on the coast of Guinea, calabash in hand to wash for gold dust, it matters not so much which. Remember, for ourselves, that by doing him this service, putting out of sight the reward you yourself are to have exclusively, we bind him to us for ever, and make him such a close connection that mastery is established over him to drive or lead as it may suit our

subsequent pleasure, convenience or interest, and he's worth having, either as ally or tributary."

"Well, what am I to understand, signor," said Crowsfoot, after some pause, during which he seemed weighing the arguments of his friend, and filling up a glassfull of liquor; which he drained off at a draught, as rapidly as if it were physic and he wanted to dispatch it.

"That this young man must be removed," answered Valdegas—"mind, *must*. For all the rest concerning the ship, do as you please, but remember this, respecting Edward Staunton—make no blunder in the man—is fixed—positive, decided."

"Don't fear—I'll give you a good report of him. And now, good day," said Crowsfoot, rising and putting on his hat. "As to this money, I have tolerably capacious pockets, and as I don't intend to swim, shall get it off about me. I should be too heavily ballasted for a

run, however, should they try to bring me to."

At this moment Margarita re-entered having, as she concluded, considerably afforded quite time enough for any private conference, which the necessities of their occupations not infrequently gave occasion for between the confederates.

Having stowed away his freight of gold, Crowsfoot prepared to depart. He was let out not at the front door but through another entrance, which was much more shielded from observation, and enabled the captain to prosecute his walk to the sea-shore for the greater part of the distance on Valdegas' own private territory.

"The saints watch over you, captain, and your craft!" said Valdegas in bidding him adieu—"saints with firebrands, and much more like devils, would be your most appropriate protectors," he continued to himself, when Crowsfoot with wary looks had arrived

at some distance. "There goes as arrant a rascal as walks Cuba unhung! I don't know which would be best for me, to have him living, and sound, and well, and labouring in his vocation, or strung up on some good West Indian gallows, a present to the vultures. But he must do this little piece of business, and then I'll see if I can't slip the plank from under him and silence that tongue of his, which hooks off my cash-bags something too nimbly for my taste and inclination, reluctant as they are."

CHAPTER VI.

WEIGHING ANCHOR.

THOUGH Mr. Rosebud had intended to dispatch his ship with the greatest celerity consistent with the embarkation of her necessary stores, and the opinion of her master, he found that from the various delays incident on the departure of a vessel for a long voyage, and the much more comprehensive time than in the mere enumera-

tion of them, that a reception, arrangement and permanent stowage of what is to be carried as well as her own particular preparations, consume when encountered *seriation*, and to be actually laboured through, the Columbus could under no circumstances leave port until the following day.

Accordingly time passed on—the noble ship still remained at her anchor, but the activity reigning on board brought her much nearer the time that she should quit her hold of the bottom. The sun rose bright and glorious as on the preceding day, and held his way through the great clouds, which, though the day before in some measure present, had manifestly increased in number, bringing with them a promise of some welcome wind, to counteract and allay the intensity of his direct and unintercepted beams.

A greater degree of silence gradually grew around the vessel, as, all in readiness, and only waiting for the land breeze to set in, she

swung unsteadily and impatiently at her anchor, with the tide, which was near the turn, flowing around her, and heavily heaving her massy bows.

The evening was brilliant in the extreme. The sea was a cloud of light, except where the rich purple clouds, floating in laborious pomp, intercepted the clear deep blue of the sky, and the broad shadows softly descended over the breadth of the expanded element. The town was distinct as if lighted by artificial illumination, and the mighty hills swelled inland, till their blue peaks and the tabled summit of the highest isolated themselves, seeming to stand apart in their height and distinctness, and to rise out of faint sweeps of heated mist instinct with a dim green panorama of profuse luxuriance and inexpressible vegetative richness.

Delay had been so far of use to Captain Hudson, that there had been time to stow away and make clear decks, an advantage not usually found in combination with the depar-

ture of a merchantman, however brisk may be her crew, or prompt and active her captain and attached to order and regularity.

The Columbus lay now clean and gay, all *ataunto*, with royal yards crossed and ready for sea, with only a shore-boat or, two at her side, which were detained in attendance upon the necessary business of those individuals they had brought, and who were at that moment present and actively occupied upon her deck.

Among those who were present, of course upon an occasion so interesting and engrossing in the number of the visitants, was Mr. Rosebud, who was busily engaged with his captain, discussing all such points of importance and settling such late doubts and ultimate questions as had been overlooked or procrastinated to the latest moment. Perhaps a lagging seaman was mounting the side in tardy obedience to the ship's recal, but who from the pressure of graver occupations or pleasure had found it

difficult to quit the shore, until such time as his presence was absolutely necessary in the initiatory employments of a parting ship. On the forecastle, the men were congregating ready for duty, in momentary expectation of the word from the officers to heave upon the anchor and prepare for the final leavetaking in anticipation of a long and arduous voyage, with a heavy and valuable freight.

Besides such as had an immediate interest and concern in the ship's proceedings, there was Valdegas on her deck, of whom it might be difficult to say what amount of stake or connection he professed to have with the starting of her, or in her destination. There was little leisure, even had there been inclination, for such close enquiries, for all was conversation and activity and bustle aboard, so far as the shaking clear of the shore and harbour arrangements, and intruders from the land could allow.

Rosebud and his right-hand man, a trusted clerk in his house, Captain Hudson, and one or two of the chosen intimates and fast friends and partisans of the goodly vessel, occupied the quarter-deck, and near them stood Valdegas, conversing in not particularly distinct tones with the Second Mate.

“ Well, a happy voyage to you, Captain Hudson,” said Rosebud. “ It is time to go. I shall have no recall or after signal to make to you, so you can stand fairly out, nor bring to off the point—no passenger falling late upon one’s hands and that I might be anxious to do a service to, and no second thoughts, so when I quit you I see the last of you till you telegraph me on your return.”

“ I’m sorry to learn,” said Valdegas, stepping forward and making himself one of the group round Mr. Rosebud, “ that Captain Hudson touches nowhere at one of the outer

islands before he makes his grand stretch. I'm not so deep in your charter-party, Mr. Rosebud, as might have been desirable to me, or serviceable to my undertakings, and, not being in a condition to decide the point on my own knowledge, I apply to those who are best able to satisfy my doubts."

"There would have been no difficulty in doing that," answered Mr. Rosebud, "if you had been pleased to have possessed yourself of our course. I imagined all Cuba knew that the Columbus was bound to Bristol without touching anywhere."

"I didn't for one, then," said Valdegas. "I wish you were running in to one of the eastern islands, for I should have taken advantage of the circumstance and given you more weight of my own. Mr. Hudson, you'll have the speedier voyage."

"I believe the ship's papers specify that what we have of yours, signor Valdegas, goes

to Bristol. Isn't it so, captain?" said Rosebud.

"It is, sir," returned Hudson, "but had our voyage coincided with his plans we should have had more of Signor Valdegas' shipments, though we could scarcely have found room for them. But, pilot, isn't it time we were moving?"

"As soon as you please, Captain Hudson," returned the pilot, stepping promptly forward from the position he had occupied in listening to the last communings between the owner and his master.

"Very well—we'll put the ship in motion. Patterson, tell Mr. Staunton to come aft."

Staunton was forward, issuing his orders among the seamen preparatory to letting the canvas fall and getting up the anchor. He came aft.

"Staunton, the tide's on the turn, and here's the pilot who says 'tis time to be

moving," said Captain Hudson, "How do we lie?"

"Not far short, sir," returned Staunton. "Shall I man the windlass and heave in upon the anchor?"

"Call the men—heave in, and let the canvas fall. We'll get her head round with the first of the tide. Come, Mr. Pilot, set us in movement. Here's the ship—take her in hand."

There needed no prolongation of the hearty and enlivening cry, "all hands, up anchor, ahoy!" to give life and activity to the crowd of men who filled the forecastle. Bustle was instantly perceivable in every part of the broad deck of the noble merchantman. The men forward stretched eagerly to the immediate duty of getting the ship under weigh. An adequate number of muscular and hardy seamen manned the windlass, and, waiting for the order to heave away, bent their sinewy

frames to the task of bringing the vessel the small distance she had to advance to be a trip, or over her anchor ; others made for the rigging, and started up with the readiness and alacrity of men glad of the opportunity of exertion, fresh and energetic, and anxious to quit the last hold on the shore, and to exchange the monotony of their confined and uncongenial duty in harbour, for the constant employment and severe industry of sea life.

The pilot now, with the first indications of a stirring crew, abandoned the listless, unoccupied air with which he had occasionally mixed in the conversation going on in the privileged precincts of the quarter-deck, and assumed command with the resolute manner and self-possessed reliance on his own knowledge looked for from him, proclaiming that he knew his responsibility, and was at home in his duties. The mass of men who had now mounted into the tops and were scattering

themselves in all parts of the rigging, lay smartly out upon the yards, cast off the gaskets and loosed the cumbrous folds of the sails ; light ropes were cast flying off, blocks rattled, and a sensible agitation was imparted to the hamper of the swinging ship. Meantime, the rest of the crew of the vessel were assembled at the windlass, and, to the accompaniment of a cheerful chorus, sent round the clicking cylinder, as the bows of the Columbus evidently drew weightily and reluctantly on her ponderous anchor.

“ There’s some life in the old ship’s spars,” said Rosebud, who seemed to enjoy the scene, and cast his eyes aloft with great good humour and much complacence ; “ a long pull, and a strong pull, and a merry pull. It sounds cheerily for the luck of the voyage.”

“ Ready the fore-yard !”

“ Ready the main !”

“ Crossjack yards all ready, sir,” completed

the circle, announcing that the canvas was in hand, and ready, at the command, to let drop.

“Down with it, then,” cried the pilot, “let fall!”

In a moment or two the broad, sweeping folds of the courses and the topsails fell from the yards, now disclosed in their black, slender extension, and precipitated in graceful though heavy festoons, throwing broad shadows over the decks and greatly circumscribing the light of the evening. Above, the lighter sails were quickly following the general example, and covering the alighter spars with snowy draperies and tangling tackling.

The cable was now coming rapidly in, hand over hand, as the redoubled efforts of those previously employed, and the added force of portions of the crew now descended from the yards, thickening the crowd forward, gave deeper power to the quick revolutions which

announced that labour and numbers were doing their work. Trampling feet and loud orders, the buz of discourse, hasty movements in every part of the ship, the slow washing of the water as the Columbus progressed, and, above all, the lively "yeo, heave ho!" which resounded far over the harbour, and broke the sunny silence now fading into the rapid approaches of evening, soon introduced to that period, that, anchor aweigh and dangling at the cathead, her broad sails outspread and her head to sea, the rolling tide setting strongly out, and the land-breeze safely and surely puffing up, the gallant vessel was in the commencement of the long and solitary travel destined her.

It was now time that the deck of the Columbus should be cleared of all visitors, and that she should be left to those alone who were intended to make the voyage with her, as composing her proper and inseparable fa-

mily. To this end, the shore boats were hauled up, and without much difficulty as the ship was proceeding at but an easy rate, not just yet feeling the wind, for the present in a manner as if uncertain of her freedom, dubious of its continuance and unwilling to make use of it, Rosebud embarked. At the same time, Valdegas and others, who had accompanied the voyagers thus far, entered their boats, and fell off into the wake of the moving fabric.

“ Good bye, Hudson !” said Rosebud, standing up in his boat, and waving his hand to his captain. “ Good bye, old boy ! Luck to the Columbus, and a happy and a quick return.”

“ Aye, aye, God bless you, Mr. Rosebud !” returned the captain.

The returning party waved their hats and caps in the air, as the ship drifted on and left them falling behind, decreasing in size with

their growing distance, and then rose a quick, lively cheer, to which the seamen aft raised their heads, and waved acknowledgment as they glanced over the quarters, or sprung, perhaps, upon the taffrail to catch a last look of their departing friends.

CHAPTER VII.

SHAKING CLEAR OF THE SHORE.

SHORTLY after quitting their anchorage, the crew of the Columbus found the land-breeze, as they anticipated, gradually increase its strength. It filled the sails evenly and steadily, first testing its power on the light upper sheets of canvas, and then descending till topsails

and courses, and all between deck and tops partook of its influence. The anchor still remained suspended at the bows, though the parting waves which slid back and separated from their breasting timbers, and the surging foam which started up under her forefoot evidenced that she was rapidly gathering way, and leaving the distant town and shore and hills and green mountains fast behind her. The broad ebb tide, setting forcibly from off shore, was exchanging its short, indecisive impulse for bolder sweeps and heightened power, and the streaming waters were darkening in colour. The multitudinous grey rocks, with their gorgeously discursive and abundant covering, and their verdant canopies, and the sands, either in strips, or patches, or miniature slopes, or creeping bays, or dotted coves, with a profusion of seaside vegetation, intermingling and distributing themselves together in a kind of general accumulation, withdrew

in the sunset glow and comparative indistinctness of lengthening remoteness.

With all sail set, and a tolerable breeze over the quarter, the gallant ship stood away. The bustle of quitting an anchoring ground had sunk into temporary inaction; she had shaken off the interference and the interruption of visitants from shore, and now her smooth bright decks began to exhibit something like welcome order. All loose ropes were coiled away, her sails trimmed so as to meet the full force of the steady though gentle wind, the crew distributed themselves about the deck in watchful readiness, and holding themselves in preparation for the first word from the careful pilot, who had but to see the ship in safety some certain distance further, before he should forego his temporary command, and resign his commission to him more permanently entitled to exercise it.

"Fairly at sea now Mr. Staunton," said Captain Hudson to his young subordinate, with an expression of pleasure and cheerfulness in his voice, which was somehow partially contradicted by the thought and heaviness of his eyes, and their too determinately quick movements, as if he endeavoured to shake off some unaccustomed feeling, in the restlessness at the same time of an acknowledgement of its presence and the effort to free himself of it. "Standing out we are in pleasant style, and under all prosperous auspices, but 'tis singular that I do not feel greater gaiety than I boast, at a prospect which has never failed to delight me. I've a light and unexacting freight as far as passengers are concerned, so if you'll attend Antonio Pintados, our estimable pilot, and till he leaves us to our own government, which won't be long first, I'll descend a moment to the cabin, and see if my wife Lucy is as well

satisfied at her prospect of going to England as she expressed herself six days ago.

With these words, Hudson descended the companion, and left his mate to watch the movements of the pilot.

CHAPTER VIII.

A MEETING IN THE DARK.

THE very short twilight of the West Indian seas had now deepened around the solitary vessel. The sun, a globe of lucent red, had suddenly sunk with a rapidity and of such a size, as might have persuaded an individual new in experiences at sea, of a not very considerable distance from the spectators. The cliffs of Cuba, with the ragged edges of the

mountain ranges in its innermost districts, were now low and blue but clearly visible in the north-west, the line of coast stretching itself sharply and flatly, like a serrated rampart, whose upper edge alone visible, would have showed as suggestive that its base was concealed by the plain dark line, the level horizon of the intercepting waters. Already the large green waves were sweeping regularly with an increasing rise and a weight in their majestic heave which betokened that our mariners were now fairly emerging into the broad ocean, and quitting the defences of the circumscribing, protecting land. All was silent and beautiful; shadow after shadow seemed to settle, at first more distantly, and then to unite and close around, throwing a veil over the parts of the transparent plain, but leaving the gorgeous clouds and glorious suffusion of the yet bright west, as the wide last rays penetrated upwards shooting to the zenith, and poured life in one quarter of the

heavens to retard the jealously sullen approaches of the dim and gloomy night. The sky in one clear soft arch, free and cool, assumed as the light waned, and the indirect beams slanted in, as it might be called, to the perpendicular, a steady warming blue, strengthening and darkening in its tint until points of wavering flame, slender and silvery, flickered into their places and grew into the radiating semblance of steady stars. Over the sea, from the ship to the horizon outwards, the light seemed to be withdrawn, leaving the hollow incalculable void on every side, to be filled by darkness, and the saddening eye to follow out and track space with a thousand sparkling lamps above.

Hudson was now again on deck. The pilot had quitted the ship when she had attained an offing of a mile or two, and the crew had descended to their quarters, leaving the usual watch on deck with the second mate as officer of it.

Little now of the land could be discerned on either side; and, aided by the still favourable wind, the ship urged on her course towards the trackless, boundless waste, over which the gleaming stars were scattering their constellated groups. There seemed notwithstanding the darkness, a certain dubious and unnatural illumination palely pervading the lonely scene, sufficiently clear to permit of the long reaches of sea and the nearer agitated billows being in all their parts and wildness discoverable. With her head to the southward and eastward, shadowed by her extended jibs and the inclining sails of the protruding bowsprit, and her vast yards extending her much more pretending square-sails in retiring and regular array; the smooth mellow light of the intertropical evening fell softly and sadly on the lofty pile of towering canvas, whose diminishing elevation might have seemed, in its width and shooting height, to confine and wall the night, leaving

all beyond as an universe of doubt and chilly profound unsubstantiality. The seamen were scattered about the deck in listless vacancy, as yet half distracted by their recent parting from the shore, the impressions of the land, and their late contrariety of habitude to their professional current of mind, having but scarcely subsided and settled into, and given place to the ordinary routine and wonted condition of feeling.

Staunton was up on deck, though the watch was not his, and pacing the accustomed place—the quarter deck. There was a liveliness in his eye and an elasticity in his step, as he walked lightly to and fro, and almost at each turn gave a glance over the taffrail. It seemed as if he was by no means dissatisfied with the progress they were making, and felt a variety of cheerful and exhilarating sensations at finding himself once more in his occupation, and safely on a ship's deck with the land

fast sinking under his stern. Leaning over the rail, and near him, stood the officer of the watch, occupied in carelessly looking out ahead beneath the lower edges of the swelling sails.

“A pleasant sight this, Mr. Stapleton,” said Staunton, as he paused in his walk within a foot or two of him, rubbing his hands with an appearance of animation, as well as through a sort of natural action, “a pleasant sight. A fine night, smooth sea, clear sky, and the land behind us. May we see no more, little or big, till we sight the Land’s End, heaving up like an old man’s grey nightcap, out of the distant sea.”

“You say nothing about the breeze,” returned Stapleton, “and with a well-meaning, considerate delicacy about it, I suppose, since it won’t be long, if I’m in my reckoning, before it puffs fainter and fainter till it dies out, just as many a good spell of wind has

expired before it. How the stars shine ! they are as bright and large as so many little suns."

Stapleton's prediction was not long in being favoured with certain indications as to its not distant verification, for the breeze never very forcible, though sufficiently constant, took slowly off, and then gradually diminished into less steady continuation, till some puffs supervened with longer and longer intervals when wind at all was a matter of doubt. This failing of the wind was signified among the sails by the heavy topsails sinking inwards deliberately, and then perhaps filling out again, but with reluctance, whilst the upper and lighter sheets of canvas, though swollen from their elevation with more constancy than the lower sails, would slightly flutter and then sink off again to silence as the breeze overtook them and expended itself. In a few minutes all the lower sails exhausted their wind,

and fell flapping uselessly and heavily with the monotonously heaving motion of the swaying ship.

"There it goes," cried Stapleton. "The land-breeze has been kind enough so far, and has helped us to sea, and now we must wait for the game to be taken up by some fresh and eager puff just let loose."

"But the question is, where shall it come from? and it is a point upon which I have some suspicion no vote of ours will be taken. Captain Hudson," continued Staunton, as Hudson, accompanied by his wife, who as well for fresh air as for the purpose of complying with the usual nautical custom of taking a last look of the land, from the sight of which there was to succeed a banishment of so long duration, ascended the companion steps and appeared on deck, "Captain Hudson the wind is failing us."

"That's discouraging, Mr. Staunton," re-

plied Hudson, "for I had hoped we should have been run farther before it gave us up entirely. How do we lie?"

"South and east, sir, as nearly as may be," returned Staunton.

"The sea is rising too," said Captain Hudson, "and these long sweeps seem to tell of more wind somewhere than we have lately seen. But we are now working out into the bare and open ocean. How about the land? Where is it, and how much is there of it?"

"I hope Mr. Staunton," said Hudson's wife, "that in announcing the agreeable intelligence that the wind was leaving us, you have reserved me, for one, an opportunity of gazing once more upon some of that dear land with all its faults, the burning island of Cuba, as I dare say you found it. Remember I leave a boy there who I don't doubt is watching earnestly that which he fancies remains of the track of the Columbus."

Mrs. Hudson's natural recollections were

directed to the circumstances under which she was leaving her only son in the island, where he was fulfilling the earliest duties of an assistant to the eccentric but benevolent old gentleman, Mr. Rosebud, who with characteristic kindness had consented to take Philip Hudson under his own care, and educate him for a merchant in his own important establishment. Besides this young son, who was a great favourite with her not only on account of his tractable and winning, yet energetic disposition and high qualities, but his being reckoned a close resemblance to herself, she had a daughter on board, and accompanying her mother to England, a child of about eleven years of age.

“I should not have been so thoughtless as to have neglected a sight which I must have known should be a pleasing one to you,” said Staunton, “and there is the land, madam, at least all that remains to us of it, stretching along like a dim cloud on our larboard quarter.

But where is your little Caroline, with whom I have as yet had but small opportunity of cultivating acquaintance, but whom I intend to show all sorts of interesting sea sights before we have reckoned a fortnight at sea."

"Caroline should be up," returned Mrs. Hudson; "at least she is generally not backward at being in my track, especially when there is an expectation that something more than common is to indulge her curiosity. Caroline, my love," called Mrs. Hudson down the companion, and in answer came a small, gentle voice, which might have proceeded from a fairy or an infant angel.

Caroline soon made her appearance, ascending the steps by the help of her mother, with the slowness attendant on the novelty of an ascent so narrow and perpendicular. She soon put her foot on deck, and displayed herself as a child of singular beauty, her fair hair falling in rich ringlets around her brow and over her

shoulders, while the little white muslin frock she wore, and blue ribbands, set off the graces of her slight and elegant little figure.

The occupations of the little party on deck were soon interrupted by the discovery that a ship was in sight and standing their way. The look-out reported her as a full-rigged vessel under easy sail, but apparently heading in for shore. In a few minutes she became distinguishable even to those occupied, with other eyes than professional ones, in observing her movements. She rose and fell on the regular heaving of the broad sea, surging up nearer at every dip, and with the enlargement of her majestic yet mysterious outline, stealing silently and gradually on the starboard beam of the Cuba merchantman. The solitary dark fabric beneath the spangling stars, only seemed to remind the voyagers of the Columbus of their separation from life and the loneliness of their estranged position, ploughing the dark waters of the inhospitable and inter-

minable ocean, by presenting a lifelike representation of the precise similarity of their own state.

“ Probably from Europe, and bearing in to the Cuba coast,” said the captain, examining the stranger attentively. “ She shows a broad sail and stands firmly to her canvas on the solid swell as it rolls her up into the starlight. She sees us of course, but she makes no indication of swerving from her course to edge to us.”

“ Will you leave her alone, sir, or shall I touch the wind and make our neighbourhood more intimate ?” enquired Staunton, with an anticipatory movement as if he were prepared to issue the requisite order.

“ Let her be, Mr. Staunton, she does not want to speak us,” returned the captain, “ or she would have stretched more in our line of direction, and she has perceived that we were indifferent about it. We have nothing to say nor probably has she.

All on deck were watching with interested attention the movements of the ship, as she softly glided under her tall black sails which darkly intercepted, in sharp outlines, the transparent blue of the midnight sky. She eventually began to fade amidst the obscurity in the wake of the merchantman, and gradually disappeared astern in the shadows which rested on the distant sea, now hiding the last glimpse of land, and leaving nothing but the wide, incalculable waste duskily visible under the stupendous arch and its quivering fires.

CHAPTER IX.

A STRANGE SAIL.

THE next morning was clear and beautiful. The red sun rose magnificently over the wide expanse of ocean, heaving up his resplendent sphere out of the waves and increasing his light upon the distant sea, until his wavering track of flame, at first a glowing spot upon the horizon, quivered, and expanded itself, and

strengthened, becoming brighter and brighter, and firmer and firmer as the moving clouds broke scattering away, and resigned the sky to the warm beams which were shooting and multiplying laterally and towards the zenith, and pouring over the whole east and two thirds of the watery plain.

Things were settling down now comfortably enough on board the West Indiaman, everything was in its proper place, and though the wind had been somewhat unsteady, a great amount of progress had been made. Mrs. Hudson, too, at the commencement of her long voyage, with the remembrance that she was separating herself for an indefinite period from her only son and favourite, although she had the consolation, important as it doubtless was, of being accompanied by a daughter, and a child of a most truly affectionate and engaging disposition, was beginning to lose sight of that intense anxiety and natural regret at parting with the scenes to which she was accustomed,

and enjoyed, as much as was to be expected, the exhilarating and novelty of a sea passage aboard a ship commanded by her husband.

Little occurred to mark the time, or break the routine of sea-duty amongst the ship's company and officers of the Columbus, and the daily occupations and limited amusements of her scanty number of passengers. The vessel had now considerably increased her distance from the port whence she started, and was holding her course fairly through the Carribean sea, between the English islands of St. Kitts and Antigua.

Days passed in this manner—few sails had been met, and those descried were steering at a wide distance from the voyagers. The weather remained beautiful, the sky clear, and the wind on the whole a favourable one.

The Columbus had now measured the distance of about a hundred and fifty leagues, according to her reckoning, from the easternmost point of the island of Barbadoes, in latitude

12° north, and longitude 55° 303, west. At four bells of the forenoon watch, or ten o'clock, on coming on deck for a second time, Captain Hudson, on the sixth day out, found the larboard watch busied, in some doubt, attentively regarding a strange sail which hung in the south westward.

Unlike the previous mornings of the opening of their voyage, the breeze was steady and strong, fixed, or nearly fixed at south by west, with an inclination to westing. The sky was filled with straggling heaps of clouds, rolled one on the other, some dark portions shadowing the fleecy curls of cloud which, presented to the light, gleamed brilliantly. These were in slow and stately motion from west to east as they moved through the sunshine which shone out and suffused the azure of the tropical sky. The sea was rolling in extensive waves, which possessed a parallel kind of grave and mighty motion, totally different from the quick, unpretending billows of a more confined sea.

Alternately dark and light, shadow and sunshine, as the wheeling circles of water swept into the broad illumination or sank in the thickening green shadows of the unsubstantial hollows, where the general light seemed withdrawn, and the sloping sides precipitated threateningly, the ocean appeared to urge itself from its verges forward, an universe of solitary movement. Unchanging as the surface of the sea may be considered, and exhibiting in itself in any particular state so little of variety and such an expanse of sameness, on this morning every quarter of the extending element seemed to be alive with its own particular expression, and offering as the eye turned and sought new points, a changeful series of marine pictures, in which colour, and movement, and aspect seemed each repeated, but every one dissimilar and restlessly altering.

“Now, Mr. Staunton,” said the captain, “what is occupying your eyes? How’s her head?”

Staunton turned round at this, and observing his commander, addressed himself to satisfy his professional demand as to which way the ship's head lay.

"East and by south, sir. Here's a strange sail in the west board, sir, which I was just about to report when I had become certain that it was a ship and no gleaming wing of a sea-bird."

"The eye of a look-out, Staunton, ought to be able," returned Captain Hudson, "to arrive at the distinction as soon as the object at all meets the sight. You've probably been willing to understand something of her character before you disturbed me. Mind your helm, my lad," continued he to the steersman, "and don't be taking your attention off to try *your* luck upon the stranger. There's plenty of eyes to read her without your assistance—halt a point out of your course you are, sir:—up with the spokes."

The seaman blushed at the quick rebuke of

his vigilant commander, and set to work to remedy his error with much more alacrity than was strictly necessary to repair it.

“ Now, Staunton, where’s the sail ?” questioned the commander.

“ Hanging in the western board, sir,” answered Staunton, “ west by south, on our starboard quarter, if she be a sail, for we’ve had some doubts whether the white dot be one or not,” he continued with an attempt to justify the uncertainty of the positive announcement that the speck in question was sail or no.

Hudson turned himself to the place indicated, and ran his eye along the horizon until it lighted on a small white speck, so dim and remote that it might have puzzled the keenest and most practised vision to decide whether it was not a white streak of foam, or a bird marked on the edge of the sea though its actual place might be much nearer.

“ That may be any thing or nothing,” said

Hudson, after a look which brought with its intensity the tears into his eyes. "Let us have the glass."

Staunton, with an eagerness to satisfy himself of the character of the object, procured the glass, which he handed to his superior, and then, watching his face, anxiously waited to hear the result of the long, steady examination which the master commenced.

Hudson's look was long. He would hold the glass in an unchanging attitude for some moments, then shift himself, and after a shorter glance perhaps suddenly drop the glass from his eye and squint at the place where the object had been remarked, as if he could make it better out with his unassisted vision. After some few further seconds of perusal he appeared suddenly to receive conviction, and turning hastily to Staunton cried,

"Staunton, my man, it's a ship—no mistake about that. He's certainly opening his wings to a strange tune if it's a white bird. Here, take

the glass and inspect yourself ; and forward, there ! George Wilson, who has the eye for long sights, into the mizen rigging and to the topgallant-yard with you, and tell us what you make of this stranger."

George Wilson, a handsome young seaman with bright, dancing black eyes, tall and active with a cheerful "aye, aye, sir !" as if he was delighted at the opportunity at once of satisfying his own curiosity and resolving the doubts of the master and all on board, sprung lightly into the mizen rigging and was half way to the yard before the words were well out of the captain's mouth. Staunton meantime was employed, with his hand on the rail, in taking a steady look at the wavering liliputian object.

"Well Staunton, what's the move?" queried the captain, "what is she, little or big, ship or sloop, or cockleshell ? I say, Wilson ! have you done your survey ? Do you make

anything more of her than has been come at on deck?"

"She's a ship, sir," called down the look-out, "but what her rig is, would puzzle a better man than I am to pronounce upon."

"I make her out," said Staunton turning to his commander, "a light vessel, standing our course. Her canvas must be uncommonly bright to shine so at such an enormous distance."

"She's got the sun strong upon her," returned Hudson, "and he must make us out too as we spread wider from your account."

In the uncertainty as to the character of the sail, and almost of the course she was steering, Captain Hudson paced the deck, employing himself in occasionally looking over the side and watching the billows and bubbles as they swept astern, and when an opportunity

struck him for improvement in the trim of his ship, ordering sheets to be taughtened and sails to be stretched and braces to be rounded in, as one or the other of the multitude of the squares of cloth spread, slackened or lost wind, or there seemed a chance of more being given them. For some time proceeding in this manner, a perfect silence prevailed on deck except for the subdued conversation forward, where the sailors were congregating together and hazarding in turns, in the intervals of their contemplation of the new comer, various opinions as to its character, rig and designs. The quarter-deck was the scene of eager glances and speculative discourse concerning the same subjects which were agitating those divisions of the vessel appropriated to the subordinates. Hudson, Staunton, Stapleton, and the rest of those privileged to offer opinions, were quietly waiting until such time as the greater nearness of the dot of light should settle all doubt as to what she

might be put down. In the uncertainty discussion was animated, and embraced all the idlers of the ship and her female freight, Mrs. Hudson, a woman servant of hers, and her child, who with the talkativeness and buoyant spirits of her years, was overjoyed at the sight of a distant sail.

The eyes of the interested occupants of the deck of the Columbus, not alone those who were to be seen grouped on the privileged portion of it, but those also whose avocations called them to the working of the vessel in the inferior grades in which their several duties were cast, and who paced the fore-castle and waist, and looked over the weather bulwarks, wandered, if they moved at all, but for short seasons from the mysterious sail. Swift as was the progress of the Columbus before the fresh impulses of the steady breeze, and speedily as she clove the solid waves and rose triumphantly above their curling surges, the white, small object in the west, the only

mark of attention for the calculating observers in all the wide expanse opened to their view, rose gradually but perceptibly higher, until it enlarged sufficiently for Captain Hudson again to pause in his walk and to call for his glass in order to resume his delayed re-examination. This movement on his part drew on the scattered attention of the occupants of the quarter-deck, and all advanced again around him, looking from him to the sail, and back again as they sought to collect from the expression and the changes of his countenance an explanation of what he thought of the probable history of the stranger.

"She rises fast," said Hudson, "but she's a small one, if she's a ship at all. I make her out a smart driver, under a precious quantity of canvas. If she lay our way when we first caught a glimpse of her, she's changed her course now then, for the glass shows

her standing north-east by east, and opening sail much too broadly for a heading this way."

"She'll be a lovely object, Hudson," said Mrs. Hudson, "if we see her nearer, for do observe how beautifully the sun falls on her snowy sails, as she hangs movelessly on the broad, blue line of sea."

"That's poetic I suppose," answered Hudson, "but both Staunton and I, and honest Stapleton here, must be puzzled if she shows us the square of her canvas, supposing that she stands on and heads an hour or so longer in her present direction."

"The Columbus must have sadly derogated from her character and her usual fleet practice," returned Staunton, "if such an event were to come to pass, Captain Hudson. I should think in that case that we were suspended in air, and the sea only was speeding on beneath us. Strange things do sometimes

happen, but that would seem a remarkable one, and I fear Mrs. Hudson, spite of a want of interesting objects, with the exception of our mysterious stranger who certainly excites us all, will be disappointed in beholding pretty lights, and artistic arrangements, and picturesque positions result from a nearer neighbourhood of yonder strange sail."

The clouds were now moving scarcely so fast in the sky, and the wind seemed to flag; but to occasionally arouse and exert itself in irregular puffs. It was evident that some change in the weather was approaching, whether to be limited to a harmless shift of wind, or to mount into a state of circumstances more unfriendly still to the desired advance of the goodly ship, the mariners found it baffled their ingenuity and experience to determine. The sky lost much of that brightness of blue which had so beautifully contrasted the white fleecy masses of clouds and the darker

mountains of vapour which were to be discerned ranging up out of the long horizon. Opposed to the transparent illumination which hitherto had appeared to fill the sky and cast a softness and purity of gleaming reflection on the changing bosom of the ocean, leaving but small parts in shade and much in clearness, the surface darkened, even seeming of itself, without visible agency, to wreath dimly and sadly, as if its borrowed light were sinking and fading within itself in deliberate and melancholy consumption. The smaller clouds, brought up by the westerly wind, and which scattered themselves in glowing groups in smooth and parallel strata at an elevation above the rounded and rolling continents of cloud, if by such a name the solid tracts of vapour may be designated, though still swimming in soft azure light which seemed to be shutting itself in, in the upper region of air, as the gloomy curtains beneath closed and

joined their scrolled edges, looked as if a pause was spreading amongst them and extending to the advanced fragments as sheets of vapour passed on below, regardless apparently of the general indolence of movement over them which was arresting the still slowly drifting passage of the very highest.

CHAPTER X.

SPECULATIVE OF THE CHARACTER OF THE COM-
PANION OF THE COLUMBUS.

THE sudden pause and then gradual lull down of the breeze, and the strange appearances amongs the clouds, whose movements had grown eccentric and difficult to be accounted for, hinted to the mariners in language of which there could be no mistaking

the purport, that something unpleasant was in store for them. The sky generally dulled down, and nearly the whole ocean became shadowed, leaving only a certain tract in the eastward where the sun seemed still exerting his strength in a flood of golden light, showing all the more brilliantly for the eclipse elsewhere which had shrouded all the rest of the far-extending scene in gloom.

In a minute or two the wind left the *Columbus*, and she lay rolling on the troubled bosom of the ocean with no steerage way. The eyes of Captain Hudson and his vigilant subordinates were directed with great curiosity at the condition of the distant sail. She was almost indistinguishable amidst the thick and depressing darkness which spread over the whole sea in her vicinity.

"I can scarcely see her," said Hudson.
"Staunton, do you make out her situation distinctly?"

"There she lies, sir," answered Staunton,

"heading as before, and standing along like a drifting corpse-boat in the gloom of all about her. She's distinct enough now as a square-rigged vessel, and I should decide that she's a topsail schooner under a press of sail."

"So be it, then," said Hudson, "and now, boy, these clouds and this change of weather portend us something I'm thinking. See, the ship rolls as helplessly as if her masts were out of her. We must strip her a bit, and ease some of these flapping sheets of canvas which clatter as the ship sets over one side or the other. Call the men, send them up, and shorten sail."

"Aye, aye, sir," was the response of the young sailor, and at the call the crew who were distributed about on deck watching the weather and trying to penetrate into the mysterious character of the stranger, though she still hung apparently motionless without having noticed the ship, started into the chains

and sprung on the bulwarks, and were half way up the rigging before one might have imagined the summons had reached the head of the vessel.

“How much will you have taken in, Captain Hudson?” asked Staunton.

“Clear away the studdingsails; in the light duck, and down with the flying jib. I’ll have more in if I see this fellow behind me do as much.”

Staunton walked forward to the break of the quarter-deck, and called out—

“Away with the studding-sails fore and aft! in skysails, stand by the royal halliards, run down the flying jib; brisk now, men, and in with it, and clear away!”

In a very few minutes skysails and royals had come in, the studdingsails had descended on both sides, and the booms were rigged in, the flying jib was run down, and the ship was reduced to her heavier and securer canvas, in anticipation of the next

rise of wind and the further pleasure of her commander.

Now reduced to courses, topsails, topgallants, driver, fore-staysail, fore-topmast-staysail and jib, the West Indian trader lay rolling on the long swells, in a gradually darkening atmosphere which was creeping on and swallowing up the sweep of blue sky, and the illumination which enlivened the far distance and its width of gleaming waves.

"It's settling down so dark, Staunton, and this is all so ominously quiet after our pleasant breeze," said Captain Hudson, after giving a general but assiduous attention to the appearance of the weather, and ending first with a careful survey of his own vessel and the sail she lay under, and then a suspicious and yet curiously speculative glance at the stranger, who now held on plainly visible under a cloud of sail, her dark hull rising over the gloomy billows, now concealed amidst the washing water, and then struggling

manfully into view as the swell appeared to roll from under her, leaving her distinct and stationary above the weltering masses.—“This is such a sudden taking off of the wind, and those clouds look so wild,” continued Hudson, “that I really think we must strip further. Hands by the topgallant sheets, in with the topgallants, furl away fore and aft, and run down the forestaysails!”

The necessary orders were issued, and the crew, though just descended from the duty of striking royal masts and skysail yards and furling royals, besides clearing away the studdingsails and getting them out of the tops, now addressed themselves with readiness to the newly-imposed obligation of securing the topgallants and reducing the sail over the bowsprit, vaulting on to the bulwarks and into the chains, and leaping up the rattlins with an activity which soon displayed its effects in a limitation of the canvas within the prescribed bounds, very nearly as readily

as the sail of a man of war could be reduced. Indeed so high was the state of discipline aboard the Cuba trader, so well chosen was the ships company, and so thoroughly were they versed and practised in their duty, and prompt and dexterous in the multifarious employments of their perplexing calling, that with a commander like Hudson, and so intelligent and active a first officer as Staunton, the Columbus was close upon vindicating her boast that she was as quick-handed and as much under command as a sloop of war or any royal vessel of her class, making all due allowance for numbers.

"Now we are prepared," said Captain Hudson, "and let the wind come, and I shouldn't be sorry to see a little of it. Provided it does not come out too strongly and in the wrong direction, we shall do very well. But, Staunton, that fellow is an unaccountable gentleman. Though we have stripped twice, and played the part of the extremely

prudent, since we have nothing at present to justify our fears except the large swell and the threatening sky, he has held on as if he were taking it quite regardlessly, not a change is there in her appearance, not a flutter in her sails, and all on board her are seemingly asleep or dead, one would be puzzled to say which."

"He expects, very probably," returned Staunton, "that the wind will come out here under that light lift of cloud slanting up in the south-west by west, and that we shall catch it first. Until it overtake him, he settles he shall run on, deeming it quite time enough to start sheets when he sees us touched and lying over from it. 'Tis bold counsel, and fearless management, and a brave face upon it, which should hint him none of the feeble or calculating, but one hungry for wind, and ready to swallow all he can get of it. He's in a hurry depend upon it, sir, and don't like losing time in letting ropes run and yards descend."

"I really wish, somehow," replied Captain Hudson, "that this wind would come if it's to come, and let us know on which hand we are to expect it. Look, Staunton! Yon pair of shears which slices into the wind so sharply has probably got more of it than we've had for some time past, for see how he slides along and won't part with one of his sails, spite of the very excellent example which we have set him."

"Our caution is natural, sir, with a deeply laden ship, a broad deck and a heavy hull," said Staunton. "I'm somewhat puzzled to understand what he can be, or what course he lays on. He's plainly not tracking on the same line with us, nor does he appear to be heading against our westerly breeze, bound in to some one of the British islands. He could sit much nearer the wind if that were his object. On the contrary, I seem to catch every moment as I look at him a disposition to incline hitherward, as if his head slipped slyly, almost

involuntarily in, in anticipation of some change to take place at some short time forward."

"'Tis true, Mr. Staunton," said Captain Hudson. "I've watched that movement myself, as if I expected every second to see his head close in upon itself. See how silently and artfully he seems to draw to windward of us. My own opinion is, that he's a man of war, bound with dispatches to the Bermudas or some of the northern provinces. Maintop crossrees, there!"

"Aye, aye, sir," answered the look out promptly, in answer to his captain's short, stern hail.

"What do you make of the stranger now?"

"She's a large schooner, sir, standing north-east, as nearly as may be. She lies under as much sail as she can well stick up to; but the wind is leaving her."

"She must be a cruiser, Staunton," said

Captain Hudson, "bound up from the admiral of the station with orders. She's not for the Atlantic, depend upon it, and a half fear which I was almost inclined to entertain, though I haven't suffered it to become distinct in my own mind—no, by God! Staunton, she's heaving round and quitting the wind."

Captain Hudson's announcement was correct; for the distant schooner, whose rate of progression had visibly fallen off to the mere drift of her unexpended force, as the wind in her turn abandoned her, gradually inclined her head inwards, closing the length of her low, dark hull, and shutting in the late breadth of her white sails, as she fell off from the wind and changed the line of direction in which she was advancing. Beyond this almost imperceptible change in her position, all remained still as mysteriously motionless and inexpressive as before.

"That means something, Staunton," said Hudson. "There goes my notion of its being

a royal cruiser for the north! She's bound out, as sure as I'm master of the Columbus, and we are to have her dodging at our heels and sticking in our skirts half over the Atlantic, perhaps, if she does not fetch us up, and that I wont let her do if I can help it.— She must certainly be a ship of war—I'm strangely deceived if she isn't. Now she's nearer, there's no mistaking her sharp low hull and sneaking sheer, cunning as the devil and as insidious, those raking masts, thin and tall, and the square cut and broad hoist of her smart sails. She'll want to overreach us to know who we are, and to overhaul the ship's papers."

"Begging your pardon, Captain Hudson," said Staunton, "I cannot agree with you in your conclusions as to the character of our neighbour. To me there is a much more dangerous look about her. Her movements are so extraordinary, and so equivocal, that I distrust her greatly. The more obstinately

we maintain a long distance from yonder saucy fellow, depend upon it, sir, the better will it be for the luck of the voyage. There's something under that affectation of indifference ---something malignant in that circumspection. She's no trader, you'll admit with me, Captain Hudson, and as to her being a cruiser, though it is possible, I fear that it is but barely possible."

"What is it you are whispering about there," said Mrs. Hudson, "certainly I hope something not connected with the threatening appearance of the weather, and that I am not to hear. Hudson, do you expect a gale?---no, you surely cannot. Your eyes, and Staunton's too, are too attentively fixed on yonder beautiful vessel, and occupied with her change of position, to justify the supposition that there could be anything questionable as to the security of our state, and that you, slighting the condition of your own ship, should be exclusively occupied about a stranger.

What is it? Must we expect something? Consider I have some reason for my anxiety."

"Nothing, Lucy, so be not fearful.—Staunton and I are amusing ourselves, that is all. But this heavy motion is not the most agreeable or beneficial exercise for your tender sex, and least of all for you. Remember our dear Caroline is new to the ocean, so if *you* might desire to brave it on the strength of being a sailor's wife, and your sea experience, do not forget that there, is another beside you, to whom a cushion in the cabin, if not the state-room itself would be a more appropriate refuge. Caroline my dear, are you not weary of this rolling sea, and this gloomy sky."

"Not at all, father," answered Caroline, "when you and mamma are present on deck with me. I like the cloudy sky, it is a change, and the clouds look so very—very pretty; and yonder lovely vessel, I could

gaze upon her for ever. Will she come nearer?"

"Aye, she may, my love," said Staunton, "but I hope not.

"Hope not!" repeated the child. "Why do you wish her not to come nearer? If she does, I shall see her. Let me stop with you."

"Another time, my dear, but not now," said Captain Hudson. "Lucy, descend to your berth and take the child with you, and let me see which way we are next to have the wind. Bid Mr. Staunton good bye, my dear, and wish us a good wind, and give me a kiss."

"Good bye, Mr. Staunton," said Caroline. "You'll come below, I suppose, when you've done here. Don't be a long time with the sailors, for I have such a number of things to ask you, and I want to hear what you say about all of them."

"Good bye, my love," said Staunton, as he stooped to kiss the soft, rosy cheek of the little maiden, "good bye, and take care of yourself till I come below."

Mrs. Hudson and her daughter now descended the companion-way, leaving the deck to the possession of her husband and his officers, and the gallant hardy seamen concerned in the management of the goodly vessel.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SQUALL.

THE attention of our adventurers of the ocean remaining on deck, was soon withdrawn from the strange ship, in the fresh face which appearances were putting on in the sky and ocean in the opposite direction to her. The sea had continued for some time ominously undisturbed by air from above, while the clouds had gradually resigned their rapidity

of advance, and seemed to be impelled in varying and irregular directions. All movement, in its turn, ceased in the sky, exhausted in the heaviness of the atmosphere and the sultry weight which oppressed the the ragged sheets of thick and blackening vapour.

This state of calm was not destined long to continue. In the east and north-east, where the vapour had now accumulated heavily and droopingly, there crept, beneath, a narrow rift, like a long and widening slit in the murky curtain, and behind were disclosed in awful pomp, and in a sort of unearthly light of their own, the rolling masses of the surcharged clouds, their edges whitening and lightening. In a moment or two they began to smooth and glide into each other and spread out perpendicularly, which display ended in a steady, well-defined, pouring down of a close sheet of rain, presently precipitating in a slightly inclined direction,

yet with a parallel descent to itself as straight as an arrow from heaven to ocean. This revelation continued for about five minutes of duration, and then the rain cleared and the circling clouds appeared to be in motion, wheeling together and climbing each other in a preternatural and extraordinary manner. An awful stillness supervened, more imposing from the vast space it seemed to fill—so intense and general, that one might have fancied the noise of the clouds rushing together and tossed high in revolving masses, to have become audible, compensating for the quiet below by a strange, and unheard of, and unimaginable sound in the heavens. This total hush in heaven and beneath, was succeeded by the commencement of a mutter of thunder, which begun in the black to the east, and then, beginning to move, deepened its heavy rumble as it seemed to slide rolling along and along in a straight line through the dense dark clouds, and waking up hollowly

the sounds that might have been fancied to be sleeping in them one after the other, till, increasing in strength, and swelling magnificently in its mighty circuit, it passed awfully on, dropping and rolling, and crashing and careering, until it swept through the entire circle of the horizon.

With the last explosion in the south after the thunder had gone right round, passing behind the strange vessel and returning circuitously towards the point from which it had started, there seemed a long, white cloud, lashed to foam and watery mist, extending and extending, and embracing the whole horizon, to stretch out fiercely from a misty spot which hove up out of the distant billows. In a very short time the sea to the north eastward was gathered into the cloud of spray and driving vapour, which, like a long, shadowy curtain, dim and dubious, its lower edge resting on the sea, and its upper lost in the streaming clouds, crept down towards the ship, at first

progressing slowly and cautiously as it appeared to do from its vast distance, but afterwards hurrying on and transforming a third of the scene into one sheet of mist.

“ Here comes the wind at last,” cried Captain Hudson, leaping on his weather bulwark and casting a hurried glance to the rigging of his ship.” We are to set example to our lazy companion what amount he is to sweep in of his pile of cloth. Touch her with the helm if she has a show of life, and let us take some of this coming sea obliquely. Bear a hand upon the lee braces—gently, not too much ; round with them, or we may chance to get struck aback before we can sweep her head round ! She’ll not lie to under this puff, Staunton. By that heavy drive down there’s more wind in that sheet of fog than I bargained for. Hands—call all hands, and shorten sail ! Clue up fore and main courses, and double reef topsails !”

Staunton’s quick, encouraging cry started

the seamen, and as if with the determination, quick as they saw the wind coming down upon them, to reef away and make snug, and be down on deck again before the squall overtook the Columbus, a chosen few of their number manned the halliards, sheets and clue lines, and hauling away, soon caused the ascending folds of the canvas to crowd together. Others bounded up the rigging, laying out on the yards, and reefed and furled, handing the sail and knotting the reef-points with a quickness and activity which was considerably sharpened by the hasty orders of their superiors to bear a hand, and not a little by their own perceptions of the rapid advance of the wind, and the tokens they beheld of its strength and the probability of their vessel's being laid under.

Sweeping and tearing along with all its full force, rousing up the sea into wilder fury, and smoothing and beating down the hitherto monotonous and deliberate swell, came the

wind with a hissing and rushing noise. It hurried on a cloud of spray and mist which hid all objects on one side, and threatened to devour the haughty fabric which worked and pitched uneasily, as if trembling at the combat or the fiery assault, rather, that menaced her, since the violence would be more properly proceeding from and confined to one side. Extensive as had been the precautions adopted, and greatly reduced as now was the sail of the noble ship, the result proved that the necessity had not been miscalculated or over-rated, nor that the small show of sail was less than was actually rendered imperative. The squall rolled on ; sea, wind, and cloud, in an indistinguishable and overpowering amalgamation, and, with a heavy sweep, over the vessel lay to the combined efforts of a racing sea, tossed high in spouts and fountains and cataracts of spray, and the furious gust. She was borne solidly down on her side like the wide slant of a moving mountain rudely loosed from its

foundations. As her head bowed down before this violent attack, and the vessel swung in reluctant and compelled obedience to the new direction given her fabric, the water on the other side of her seemed to sink away, and to be pressed in by the superincumbent weight, and to fail her at the moment when the ponderous hull and sloping spars needed the greatest support.

For an instant the well appointed ship was concealed in a cloud of driving sleet and enveloped in a sheet of mist so dense that her shadowy rigging seemed to climb, and her broad yards to extend, more as a traced pageantry dimly drawn in a faint expanse of pale and watery light, than as the real and solid proportions and the true hamper of a stout vessel. As the helm had been assiduously laid aweather in anticipation of the efforts on her exposed broadside of the wind and sea combined, and since already the forward yards had

been so braced that the first violent exertion of the squall should be spent upon the sail extended in that direction, as well as on the jib which stretched tightly out into the void, the piercing jibboom passing on and its point seeming to slant upwards into darkness, when the impetuous commotion of the elements, and the mounting sea assailed the side of the tumbling ship, she fell swiftly off, her sails fixedly distended and at first laying her nearly perpendicularly over. A minute or two afterwards, the reaction, and the counter rise of the swelling sea hove her up again, as out of a gulph, and the feeble light fell dimly and cheerlessly upon her. She yielded steadily and rapidly, and swinging round, bore away before the wind in full career over the rolling waves, which mounted and wheeled and tumbled, scattering a storm of spray behind her in vengeful and baffled pursuit.

As the ship bore well away before the

squall, rising over the waves with a kind of impatient contempt and defiance, and occasionally balancing on her centre as her yards dipped down from side to side nearly to a level with the speeding water, the mariners perceived with gladness that they were making immense advance. There was slight risk, except that from the fast following water, and the chance of a sea astern swelling up high enough to break over her, the vessel failing to maintain the same, or a higher velocity than the giddy rush of billows beneath her flying keel.

In a little while, however, the worst of the squall passed over the ship, and the whole bursting accumulation of angry combat and fierce elemental warfare, glided along the surface of the agitated sea towards the opposite quarter of the heavens. Obscuring and disturbing the liquid plain far to the right and left, it moved diagonally between the trader and her dim and distant companion.

Before the squall had time to pass over the sea and strike the strange sail, a glimpse of fairer weather began to heave up out of the breaking clouds on the edge of the sea, and the powerful illumination of the sun was seen to intermingle and brighten amongst them. A ragged patch or two of blue, seen deeply sunk in the tumbled mass of vapours which blotted the heavens in that quarter, and obscured with a multitude of misty wreaths turning to a blood colour, and the dim medium attendant on and following the course of the transient tempest, displayed a promise of a more favourable change.

So occupied were the mariners of the merchantman in the chances and the condition of their own vessel, that they had barely time to throw a hurried glance at the proceedings of their fellow voyager of the wide waste, and that was greatly mitigated, and much shorn of its fixed attention and excitement, in the more

pressing remembrances connected with their own vessel.

The schooner had during all this time retained her broad show of canvas, preserving it to the latest moment, in fact to a pitch of daring which could have sprung from nothing but a resolution to hold on to the very verge of possibility. It shewed a confident reliance on the qualities of the vessel, and on her activity and numbers enabling her to abandon her reckless perseverance when its further maintenance would have been mad, but only at that moment.

Just as the schooner was about to be overwhelmed with the driving squall, and on the point of being hidden in it, her light sails fell broken inwards as if by magic. All those means of adding to her speed and winning as much wind as practicable, but now become perilous encumbrances, disappeared as silently and swiftly, and seemingly as much without human interference, as if the vessel herself

were but a shadow. As if she were prepared to melt away and merge her extremities in the approaching cloud, dissolving herself into it as naturally and easily as if her substance were of kindred tenuity, a gliding mist over the surface of the deep, fashioned fancifully by some wandering wind into the outline and semblance of a ship, the work of the hand of man.

“Do you see him, Staunton?” cried Hudson. “The fellow feels its gripe at last, and has folded those outspread wings of his. He has in’d all studding sails, and run down royal, flying jib and gaff-topsail; as if he were cutting them away to drift down to leeward like so many white streamers, or like light feathers scattered from his wings at the first sweep over him of the fiercer wind.”

“Staunton’s glance was still fixed, with much mistrust and uneasiness, on the schooner, but he turned away from her to inspect the

proceedings of his own vessel, which under her reduced sail bounded over the waves with a lightness and a speed which under other circumstances, and with less wind and fairer weather, would have been inspiriting and delightful.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHASE.

THE wind now, since the change of weather, blew strongly from the north-east, puffing up at intervals into a violent exertion which damped the rising hope of its settling into more steady continuance, and rendered questionable, or more than doubtful, the expectation of soon being able to

spread more sail. As greatly with the desire of forcing the ship in the necessary direction, and increasing the distance between her and the mysterious sail hanging in her wake, the seamen longed for an opportunity of multiplying the means of working more forward.

Afternoon gave place to the first approaches of evening. The sky had cleared; at least so far that the character of the morning was restored, with the wind in a new quarter, and a display of grouped clouds disseminated in irregular heaviness, to cast down whole districts of shadow, as they might be called, over the troubled surface of the gleaming ocean.

The sun was dipping for the close of another day, in a sanguine blaze which lit up for trackless miles the ever-sleepless billows, majestically setting and rolling down to where the deep sea shadows and the watery green, gigantically undulating, shifted place and weltered inter-

changeably. Around the dark and bristling hull of the gracefully oscillating ship, they swept.

She was now seen under a crowd of sail; at least, as much as could be with any safety packed in so high a sea, and with so uncertain and treacherous a breeze. From heel to truck her tall spiring masts displayed her sets of extended canvas, and it would have been exceedingly difficult to have suggested one place, where the addition of an inch could have been with prudence, and consistently with her safety, hazarded. Indeed, as it was, a less bold mariner, and with less reason for his audacity, might have taken exception, since the topgallant masts were uneasily working in the caps, and the light sails bellying with such violence, while all the range was oppressively and fearfully distended, that they every moment threatened to blow away in fragments, or snap the masts which they were shaking and which were so severely taxed.

Distrustful attention began to be now generally fixed upon the movements of the suspicious vessel hanging in the western board. When their turn of relief below promised them a cessation of their fatigue, the watch exhibited but little of that promptitude to snatch their season of relaxation from the duties of the deck, usually evident when eight bells announces the watch out. The sad and sinking light, and the melancholy gleam which rested on the water, the uncertain signs of the weather, and the remarkable penetration and mysterious adroitness with which the stranger seemed watching, almost anticipating, the manœuvres of his trading fellow-voyager, each had their share in the anxiety and restlessness which were creeping over the ship's company of the Columbus. Dread even invaded the boundaries of the quarter-deck, protected as it might seem, by the superiority of station and character of its occupants, from

the superstitions and easily excited fears of the indifferently instructed and falsely reasoning body of individuals composing the crew.

“Don’t tell me,” said one of the seamen to a companion who, somewhat opinionated, was endeavouring to combat, with more resolution than dexterity, his shipmate’s conclusions that the sail astern by no means had all those marks of suspicion about him which he had been industriously enumerating, “don’t tell me, when you, as a seaman, must know sufficient to the contrary. You didn’t go to sea in a barrel, I suppose, and larn all your navigation out of the bunghole. D’ye suppose any honest trader would creep along in that cat-like, circumventing fashion, as yonder cruiser scrapes the wind, heading in to our wake at every move, and sliding along just so silent with no motion, and no more of a sign or symptom of life,

than if he were a dead ship, manned by poor condemned souls making their last unhappy voyage."

"Forecastle, there!" broke in, in Staunton's commanding tones, on the debate of the two differing mariners.

"Aye, aye, sir!"

"Call all hands, and get more sail on the ship—lively now, and let us take her in hand!"

"D'ye hear that, old Bobwig?" enquired the sailor. "They've got the alarm aft there, and take just the same view of it as I do. Depend upon it there's something they don't half like in the look of our flyer yonder, or Mr. Staunton wouldn't sharpen us up in those quick, short tones of his, which you know as well as I."

Meantime minds appeared to have been made up in the after divisions of the vessel, and decision and promptness were taking the place of cautiousness and examination.

“That’s all right, Staunton—pack sail on the Columbus,” said Captain Hudson, seeing his intimation to his second being in progress of execution. “I don’t like the look of that fellow. I’ve had my doubts from the first, and now set him down a rover. God grant I make a mistake ! but I fear not. What can we make of the wind ?”

“Fortunately the Columbus does her duty on a wind, sir ; and with your permission we’ll closehaul her, and get as much sail on her yards as the wind will grasp,” said Staunton. “I’m quite of your opinion. Now the stranger has drawn closer, there are those marks and tokens about her few would be tempted to try to explain away to themselves, or they would be fools if they did. She’s fetching up to windward of us, sir, with those treacherous kites of his, and she eats up into the wind at present that she may get herself elbow room for a handsome slant down. Notice, besides, that low, curled-

up shell of a black hull, which seems to dance on the water like a bucket, and touch it only on its shifting poise. See how cleverly she balances, with all the lightness and dexterity of a rope-dancer, upon the long-heaving sea. Those rakers, too, never sloped out of an honest harbour, nor were those snowy sails stretched for open and honourable traffic or a lawful cruise, or bent but to overhaul and hook up all that was weaker than himself. Her sticks are handsome enough, give the devil his due! if he's what I suspect, and she's a sweet boat. How now, fellow?—you've hove her up into the sea! Have you let a few spokes run through your fingers?—do you see how she lays over and you've got the wind roaring in the sails? Fall off—fall off a little and ease her!”

“Fell off—fell off, sir!” returned the seamen, “but she staggers as it is.” The sailor no longer with toilsome expenditure of force, and an anxious frown, as he exerted his

strength to the utmost to keep the ship's head up against the wind, contended with the heavy-beating side-sea, but eased his wheel, and permitted his firm gripe upon it, and his straining arms alightly to relax.

“Staunton, we shall have a severe night of it. We must drop her, boy, we must drop her! The Columbus will serve us a devil of a turn if she don't give us herself just now at this pinch. To be overhauled by a sneaking, blackguardly pirate, would be my death; and though we should fight, I'd much rather shake him off my tail than bring him down, if it's permitted me. We'll try the wind more aft. Send the men up, and rig out the studdingsail booms; out with them fore and aft on the larboard side, and try your hand at a maintopgallant and royal studdingsail astarboard. What was that?”

“A gun, by Jove! what does he mean?” returned Staunton. “Does he suppose he's

going to heave us to, and he shows no colours?"

While Staunton was speaking, a globe of white smoke was gliding sideways along the broadside of the schooner. Presently it slowly and gracefully expanded, opening out like a wheel of vapour, until it broadly ascended, and left a thin trail of smoke of serpentlike continuity to skim along the surface of the sea.

"That's handsome," said Hudson. "He wants us to wait for him. Does he think we have the heels of him? Look out, my boy, look out; what is he about?"

As well as the glass enabled him, Staunton complied with the desire of his commander, and narrowly inspected the cruiser. She was now about, and heading directly for the wake of the merchantman, the water surging and driving before her at the bows, and her whole delicate fabric symmetrically springing to the elegant curves of her extended sails and the showy, sloping slenderness of her crossing

yards, spreading her topsails in vertical and dashing diminution.

"She's really a lovely craft," ejaculated the two officers, simultaneously.

"Damme! 'tis a great pity a thief and a buccaneer should have the handling of her. But she'll be a wasp in our skirts, Mr. Staunton, unless we force the Columbus to make her two steps to his one."

Night had now come on, but unfortunately for the design of Captain Hudson, had he desired attempting to give the slip to the schooner by altering his course, it was fine and starlight, though in other respects sufficiently dark. He descended for a short time to the cabin, to calm the fears of Mrs. Hudson, who had heard the suspected character of the vessel in pursuit, and was, naturally enough, sufficiently alarmed. Taking all proper precautions for evading his enemy, Hudson ordered all lights to be extinguished on board, even to that in the binnacle, leaving the steers-

man to make out his course by the stars and the directions which from time to time were given him by the officer of the deck. A profound silence was enjoined all night, and the ship was kept away more before the wind, cracking on with all sail, and spreading as much as yards could carry or booms extend.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANOTHER MORNING, WITH THE DANGERS RE-
PEATED OF THE DAY BEFORE.

WHEN day at length dawned over the illimitable breadth of the restless sea, and flushed in the glowing east, the eyes of the anxious mariners were first directed to the quarter in which they expected to discover the vessel in chase, should her speed have proved equal to the task of keeping her place astern of the fast-sailing merchantman.

"There she is, by all that's holy ! not altered an inch. We can't throw her out after a hard night's sailing, the Columbus doing her best and with every rag. They have the devil's luck, that's certain," said Hudson.

There lay the creeping, stealthy, eternal schooner, displayed as on the preceding evening, under her cloud of sail in the morning light and lying over to the breeze, as it seemed to roll down the long waves to our perplexed and persecuted adventurers.

"She's after us as sure as fate, and has the heels of us, too," said Staunton, with grieved disappointment. "Not a rag of colour does she show, but that's not her cue. Did you see that?"

As Staunton spoke, a pencil of light darted out like a fiery arrow from the side of the cruiser. Presently the hollow roll and more distant faintly-rattling, echo worked down to the ears of the crew of the trader,

while the smoke rose in a pyramid, and sailing like a misty shroud before the tall spars and white sails of the rover, streamed and interweaved through her forward spars and past her jibs. It floated, when loosed from the vessel, as a snowy cloud over the tops of the gleaming green billows.

"Again a gun! What can he mean," said Hudson.

"An artifice. He'd decoy us, if he could, into the belief that he's only sheering down to speak us," observed Staunton. "Do you see, sir,? There is a dot which is tricing up to the extremity of his gaff. We'll see what coloured favour he'll sport."

The pursuing schooner, having enforced attention to his signals by firing a gun, now sent up to its allotted station a round little ball, which the officers of the merchantman had no difficulty in conjecturing his ensign, a supposition which was confirmed when

the wind took the fluttering roll, and in a short time blew fairly ont the folds of the blue ensign of a British man of war.

"A clever decoy, doubtless," said Staunton. "He forgets admonitions which greenhorns might remember, and slights the caution, that, 'old birds are not to be caught with chaff.' He must think us dull indeed to credit his *ruse*."

"He forereaches on us, Staunton," said Captain Hudson anxiously, and looking over the side as if he would willingly, if he knew how, increase the rate at which his own vessel was with graceful activity cleaving the tumbling waves, and gliding down them as they hissed and parted from beneath her, and swept away along her quarters and rolled into distance astern.

"As much as canvas and wood can do, our spars and sails are doing for us now," returned Staunton, looking up at the distended

sheets of white, which towered high up into the sky, and held the wind so silently that not a clue trembled, or a block shook, or a rope quivered. All was as still as if sails and ropes, and all her changeable but cumbrous furniture and shifting machinery, were the sculptures of a stupendous monument of art. All was so delicately chiselled, and so nicely modelled and accurately balanced, as to rival the pliant materials, and unstable make, and carefully fitted and pendant accessories of the most elaborate and fantastic, as well as one of the most gigantic works of construction, upon which man's art and human ingenuity were ever lavished.

"The old craft does her work, nor disgraces her high character, and justifies my dependance on her," said Hudson. "But this hornet is the very devil. He's light of hull as well as light of heel; and though now not altogether alarming, the advantage he has over us threatens to become something that

we shall in vain contend with. If he's a hand at a shot, too, which, rogue as he is, of course he cannot fail to be, a cast of a long gun might bring down some of our kites. I'd sooner have an arm shot away, than that we should miss a mast. Take the glass; your eye is steadier and clearer than mine. What does he show like now, Staunton, and what is he about?"

Staunton took the glass, and steadying it against the lee mizenrigging, bent himself to a long look.

"He's walking down like a racehorse, Captain Hudson," he replied, still gazing through the tube. "I see the water driving before him in a little storm of foam. He's covered up with his canvas, but I can see his decks crowded with men—a swarm of heads, and a gleam now and then amongst them as if of steel. I espy, too, the white line of the hammocks, and as smooth and clear a deck, and faultless a trim, as of any man of war in the English navy."

"What's his sail?" asked Hudson with a gasp. "I guess very well, but you can enumerate the sails. Those are boats, too, swinging at his davits, are they not?"

"Boats, sir, and his sails are of stout split cloth. He's a tartar, Captain Hudson, a regular sea-serpent, depend on't, with teeth, and tail, and sting, and the complete rig. If I might presume to advise, sir, I'd fall off a point or two, and bring the wind more on the quarter. The Columbus' point of sailing is handsome enough going large, and clippers, and especially a craft so sharp and of such a spoon-build as she, can't cut out so much way for herself with the wind abaft, and giving us all the advantage of our broad sail, with the multitude we boast of wings, and the room we have to spread them with broad yards and double tiers of studding sail booms.

"You're right," returned Hudson. "Let

go the wind, steersman ! Let her fall off—more, sir, more ! Mr. Staunton, square the yards, and stand steady on our present course. Keep this daring picaroon well over our taffrail. That will be it—Bravo ! capitally done, and the old ship feels it already. By Jove Staunton, we shall drop her ! I'll do it, if I drive the old boat smack out of the water !”

“ We'll fight him hard at his cloth at least, sir,” returned Staunton, “ and if he fetches up upon us, why then we must prepare to battle with him fist to fist.”

“ Bravo, boy ! you're Trojan, and we'll try if we can't train our guns upon him with as much smartness and hearty good will as a privateer. I say, you boys !” cried the captain, calling aloud to his sturdy and obedient crew, “ you see this chap astern who's got his gripes ready for your wrists, and mayhap a dinner for you of cold steel a-hissing on his grindstones. He

sadly wants to grapple the Columbus, and I suppose such sharp-sighted fellows as you have guessed already he's neither more nor less than a pirate. Can't you give him a rousing welcome if he attempts to throw his old iron aboard us? Damme! but he shall have it, if I shake the bones out of the Columbus's old carcass. What say you, boys? You can fight?"

"Aye! aye! let's have at 'em! Tumble down the bloody thieves!" shouted fifty voices with an inspiring cheer.

"That's right; do you hear them, Mr. Staunton?" cried the captain. "He shan't overhaul our ship's papers without a black eye and a cracked crown for his officiousness."

The deviation and difference in her course, as the Columbus fell off from the wind and ceased her contention with the hurrying waves, which came hastening on, impelled by a breeze still strong, and beat in baffled impetuosity

upon her dipping broadside and groaning hull, as the moving mass yielded reluctantly to the weight of waters, told greatly in a very perceptible increase of the extraordinary progress she had been previously making. She now swept over and overtook the rolling masses of brine, climbing with greater willingness and increased strength their tossing heights. Vaulting with less of painful exertion over their boiling crests, she slid down their general, and outwardly extending, and rapid declination, with a speed and a buoyant impetus unknown to her hitherto valiant though toilsome contest with the agitated element.

“Well done, the brave old ship!” said Hudson, whose spirits seemed to mount with the danger and the progress of the exciting chase. “I hardly thought, well as I know her, that there was such gallant spirit and fierceness in her. There she dips! ’S death! that sculking blackguard must keep on his

legs, or the dance we're leading him will tumble him off them. Well, Staunton, do we leave him?—is he as plain as ever?"

"He keeps foot by foot with us, sir, and wave by wave, though our rate is immense. Good God! Would that this unfortunate voyage were well over. I see we shall have to fight, sir, and if it comes to that, I'm sure we shall have better fortune than in thus straining and flying before him."

"Don't get distrustful, my dear boy, we'll have him yet—he must be the devil himself to press on with his little canvas against our heap," said Hudson. Hold her in hand, man," said he to the helmsman," and let her dart through the water like a shot!—by my buttons, but, talking of shot, if there isn't one, and an angry piece of iron, too, I swear by the sound!"

Breaking suddenly in upon Hudson's discourse, as he almost gleefully walked in rapid, re-

iteration up and down the limited space of the weather side of his quarter deck, rubbing his hands with excitement, seemingly pleased at the display of the qualities of his favourite vessel, and the proofs she was affording that there was no derogation to be dreaded from her former vaunted capabilities, came a gun from the deck of the vessel in chase.

Scarcely had the flash lightened on his eye, and his recognition of the hostile meaning of this irritated mode of opening communication with the West India ship passed into an involuntary exclamation, than out of the midst of the smoke the flying ball came skip — skipping from wave to wave, ploughing the sparkling water, and bounding by with a sharp, spiteful whiz, like the hiss of a startled snake. All on deck breathlessly watched the onward passage of the missile, as if uncertain whether all the mischief had yet passed. An anxious gaze was then cast inboard, to discover by inspection

whether all their complicated tackling had escaped the danger.

“ That’s polite,” said Hudson,—“ very well intended, but it has misseed, as many a better shot has done before it. But we shall have more of this pepper upon us, gentlemen. Order up the sail-trimmers and topmen, and let them stand by to spring into the rigging and replace damage, if any of these highflying hailstones should lead the dance through our sails or cut away anything. Let him go on, we won’t say anything yet, but clear away the guns, and let us shift ourselves into our battle dress. I won’t quit the deck even for a moment ; so if you, Staunton, will be kind enough to dive down and make Lucy as comfortable as you can about the result of this little piece of ugly business we’ve got upon our hands, why I shall be obliged to you. And say a kind word to the child, will you ? They don’t understand these cross humours between strange

ships, and the child is very likely alarmed at the guns. Go now, and be up again promptly, for I shall want you. If I guess aright, here's work cut out for us that you must have a stitch in with me."

The commander of the *Columbus*' anticipations of more fire upon his retreating vessel, were very soon verified. Two more guns, in quick succession, following on the heels of a double flash, borne sternly down on the wind, and a sheet of thick, rolling white smoke, proved that the rover was in earnest, endeavouring to shorten his chase, and arrogantly bring his prey more speedily within his reach. It would be needless to enlarge upon the state of mind, and the alarm prevailing on board. The *Columbus* was built for far more peaceful purposes than warlike ones, and ill adapted for contest with a professed cruiser, manned and armed for her lawless trade, and prepared for resistance and to overcome by

force, with all the appliances, accessories and resources necessary and indispensable to her occupations, and proscribed and outlawed character.

But with all the feebleness and incompetency inseparably incident to the peaceful vocation in which she was engaged, and to the class of noble though inoffensive and defectively defended vessels to which she belonged, with seamen unpractised in gunnery exercises and unaccustomed to warlike discipline, short of number, constructed for transport, and least of all for combat, she yet evinced all the readiness and resolution creditable in a ship's crew determined to resist to the last against the most formidable odds, above everything to persevere against a ruthless rover and the gang of ruffians which navigated her.

Staunton found Mrs. Hudson sufficiently alarmed at the prospect of the ships coming in contact. She was anxious for her child and dis-

turbed on her husband's account. With a pardonable evasion, he represented their means of defence of a much more consolatory character. He estimated the danger from their antagonist as of much more trivial consequence than he himself felt justified in assigning to his own mind. He suppressed, for the present, all mention of that painful and agitating necessity, should the ship and schooner arrive at close engagement, the duty of removing the defenceless occupants of the ship to the depths and securer places afforded by the hold of the Columbus.

“This is a chance that in a long voyage, madam, we adventurers of the sea are always obliged to dare,” said Staunton, almost gaily, and affecting a confidence he certainly did not feel. “You are sufficiently acquainted with the qualities of your husband's ship to know that we are not quite defenceless, and I trust that so far as resolution and nautical art

and seamanship are concerned, Captain Hudson can prove equal to this or any greater emergency, and that you believe him to be so, and able to count upon ready hands and devoted hearts."

"I know it all," said Mrs. Hudson, "and that in you, Staunton, he has one.—Oh! Staunton," she continued, interrupting herself, and giving way to no selfish tears or complimentary sorrow in what followed, "my mind reverts, though it should not do so at such a moment, to that dear cottage in Devonshire, and to your Felicia Wayland. What must have been her fears and doubts for you in your perilous voyage! What would she say now, if she knew of our present condition?"

A grief shot across Staunton's manly countenance at these words.

"Her name is constantly with me night and day," said he. "If I should die, I shall die

worthy of her. But we shall be victors. Do not talk of her, but if anything happens to me, let her know I fell loving her to the last—to the very last.”

“Pray watch over yourself for her sake, if not for friendship,” replied Mrs. Hudson tearfully, “and remember that your life is not your own, but that hers is bound up with it. God bless her ! may her dearest hopes be granted. May she see us embrace her in a reunion which would be all the sweeter for this temporary mischance, if all goes well, and let me pray it will. I feel assured heaven will extend us its protection and assist us against these lawless men. You will not keep me long in doubt I hope as to the progress and success of your resistance to these wretches.”

“The very instant we can leave the deck, shall we be with you. And now farewell for a time, and until this miscreant has

dropped, I hope, a mastless hulk far in our boiling wake !”

Staunton gave Mrs. Hudson's hand a friendly pressure, kissed the pale face of the trembling Caroline, and hastened on deck. Here, when he arrived, he perceived preparations already made for an engagement with their buccaneering antagonist. The guns were cleared of their lumber and cast loose at the sides, the men stationed at them, each under the command of a director of a gun. Rammers, and spongers, and other implements of gunnery were in hand ; buckets of water for quenching flames and for dashing into the holes made by the enemy's bullets. And boxes of shot, tubs for wadding, and arm-chests with their formidable contents displayed, were scattered about. Muskets, boarding-pikes, and the usual assortment of small arms exposed on a ship's deck when about to enter into action, with the cold shot deposited in squares in the

holes placed to receive them in the combings of the hatchways, were each and all present and systematically disposed, to attest that the preparations of the West Indiaman were completed with a cool readiness, and a disciplined dexterity, which would by no means have disgraced a ship of war. Finally the yards were slung, the hammocks of the crew were brought on deck and stowed so along the-bulwarks as to form an efficacious defence against musketry. Every precaution was taken to offer as firm a front to, and annoy as greatly as possible the vessel of the freebooters, to prolong resistance, and employ all possible securities which might tend to the preservation of the hull and masts of the ship, and defeat or disconcert her wily and warlike opponent.

Finding no notice taken of his previous insidious display of the British flag, and his signals to heave to, the privateer now dis-

charged a couple of guns, and simultaneously sent up two or three of those ensigns with which he evidently sought to delude his chase into the persuasion that he was a British man-of-war, following the trader to compel her to forego her obstinacy and shorten sail, whilst he should attain a closeness which might render his commencement of the battle fatal and decisive. No notice whatever was taken of these feints; the Columbus continued to hold on under all her cloud of sail.

By this time, however, the pirate had worked up, through his extreme lightness, and the extraordinarily dexterous manner in which he was held in hand, to an alarming nearness to the Columbus. The people of the trader had scarcely time to scan her magnifying proportions, under the now highly dangerous proximity to which she had reached, and notice her long deck, seen end on, and her snake-like bows, as her lithe and slender head, and tackled

crest with its piercing bowsprit, sloped upwards filled with men. The whole contour bore a near and frightful similitude to the reptile the shining black of whose armed and glossy skin she seemed imitative of. Hardly was there time for a look before her whole hull was concealed with a vivid flash, and a rolling cloud of smoke came tumbling, and tossing, and curling, and wreathing over the water. A storm of balls rushed like a whirlwind above the decks and through the rigging of the ship, and the report of the artillery rattled down to leeward, booming and dropping itself sullenly to sleep over the tops of the fast sweeping distant stretches of water. As momentary as light, and before the quickest eyed man aboard the West Indiaman had time to exclaim, "she's about," had the graceful schooner swung upon her heel and hove up into the wind, discharging her broadside, and pouring in the deadly contents of the whole tier of her

armament. Equally as soon as this evolution was lightly and cleverly executed, her head came round again, she filled her sails, she lay once more over, and was as before following relentlessly in the wake of her unfortunate and hard-pressed chase.

"That broadside's a devil for us, Staunton," said Hudson gloomily, "look at the slits, and by all that's unfortunate, he's tumbled down our maintopmast and all the sails! There goes the old spar splitting in its agony as sharply as if it felt the cut."

The ship's company cast their eyes up at the rigging with faces aghast. But, giving them no time to even satisfy their fears by looks, Staunton in a bold, cheering voice shouted out—

"Away, boys! never mind the stick, we'll have it out of him before long and with interest. Tumble from your guns, stand by and cut away the wreck, let's have a clear deck and

room for our hands, and we'll beat him yet ! Hatchets and knives ! cut away, cut and let the mast drag its trail and lumber over-board !"

"Right for the deck, my boy, but we'll turn to with him now," cried Captain Hudson. "We must run no longer ; another of those broadsides may lay us by the heels by tumbling down something else. He'll find it no easy task to cope with our weight. Helmsman, up with your helm, and send her bodily into the wind, but mind the luff ! take care and have her in hand. Gunners, to your pieces ; wait for the word, and, at the word, fire ! let him have it at once. Staunton, see all clear to let our kites come down by the run, and let us hold the ship fairly under command. Down with your studdingsails ; down with every rag of them fore and aft ! Stapleton, jump down and look to the guns. Now then's your time ! A gripe of the wheel, and heave

her up handsomely into the wind. That's it brace in your yards, round with them. There we come. Now we've got the dogs on our beam, scatter them, cut them up, my lads—knock their gunnels in—fire!”

At the word, the sturdy and resolute crew of the noble merchantman discharged at once her weather guns. So unexpected was this manœuvre, and so close and heavy her broadside, that the schooner was evidently staggered by her warm reception. The pirate seemed actually to drive on head foremost to meet and bury himself in the storm of fire, and smoke, and hissing shot, which spotted and ploughed the surface of the sea, and scattered the waves in sheets of horizontal spray. For some minutes all was invisible, but presently the black and angry form of the terrific schooner, fearful in its malific lightness and sharp and vengeful speed, with her beautiful outline, keen rake, and piercing lines of mast

and slenderly slanting spars, hove out like a phantom at once of fascination, loveliness, and awe, from the midst of the wide and mighty cloud, and appeared to be bearing straight down, faster with each advancing wave, upon the devoted but valiant trader.

The latter was now trying to wear back to her previous position, and to get before the wind. The clattering sails, which were one tempest of commotion, as, shivering in the wind, the yards swung them now this way, now that, until the sheets of heavy canvas, which were pierced with a multitude of shot holes, could be braced to receive the wind upon those particular surfaces necessary to perform the evolution, by no means an easy one under fire—the straining sails, we say, appeared to add with their perplexing and violent motion to the confusion and uproar of the scene of strife.

As the Columbus slowly yielded to the

influence of her helm, and abandoned the wind, the sailors at the battery left their posts to aid in reducing to order the temporary confusion and disarrangement among her sails and yards. Betaking themselves to the duties and occupations of the management and guidance of their vessel, they endeavoured to baffle their enemies and escape from their malignant and untiring pursuit.

The trader was now heavily heaving over again to the wind. Her yards were turned round, and the breeze fell freshly upon her wavering topsails and topgallants, while the clattering, and creaking, and shaking blocks, and innumerable loose ropes and flying cords, her spars and her horizontal tackling, came in from their disordered and intermingling disposition, and fell parallel into the proper trim and in their necessary places. Staunton's glance flew like lightning to the pirate, and he had the inexpressible pleasure of seeing

his tall mainmast tottering below the double. After a few giddy tosses, cracking and crashing down it came, tumbling in hideous ruin, smothered in folds of sail, and whipped and lashed with innumerable parted cords, striking in its fall upon the lee bulwark, and snapping its jagged teeth in two, like a splinter, over it. The mainchains were smashed with the fearful blow, and a good length of the bulwark destroyed, besides which mischief half of the schooner's guns were so lumbered up with the fragments of ruin as to be rendered useless.

Confused and dizzy as the elegant vessel seemed with the perilous blow she had received, she staggered on, driving the wreck of the mast before her, which hung a heap of tattered sails and broken spars over her lee side, trailing in the water and hurled about by the waves.

Drifting, as if with her unexpended impetus

alone, and with her full weight, bleeding figures of seamen wading and working themselves out of the litter and ruins of their noblest mast, her bows crowded with a congregation of the vilest-looking ruffians ever seen off a gallows, and glittering with thirsty steel and bristling with fifty levelled muskets, on she rolled nearer and nearer. There was a movement among her people forward, and a sudden and murderous discharge of fire-arms poured its hail of balls upon the decks of the merchantman. The two ships came together with an eager close and dreadful crash, which seemed to shake every timber in the trader and make all her spars totter to their centres.

“Boarders, away!” cried Hudson in a scream. “Abandon your guns, tumble up here on the quarter-deck, and have at the villains. Give it ’em bravely; drive the cut-throats back, give them steel for their fire!

Rally round me, men ; meet them, meet them !”

The bowsprit and bulwarks of the schooner were seen covered with murderous-looking miscreants. They were headed by Crowsfoot in a boarding helmet, sword in hand, and loaded with arms. He was a conspicuous object. But they were well met. Hudson, Staunton and Stapleton, with the whole of the crew, who fought with admirable resolution and desperate courage, encountered them at once as they were stepping on to the forecastle of the Columbus, and with hearty valour and inspiring cries laid on to them with boarding-pikes, bayonets and cutlasses. After ten minutes of close and terrific encounter, the intruders were hurled back upon their own decks. A bold and dashing fire of musketry was opened upon them as they lay confused, baffled and beaten on the forecastle. Before they had time to recover for a second attack, the idle fasts with which

the freebooters had endeavoured to lash the merchantman to their own vessel snapped with a noise like a pistol shot, and away broke the unhappy schooner, torn and ragged, with battered sides and bloody deck. She fell away to a considerable distance. The seamen of the Columbus jumped once more down, threw away their weapons, and commenced a well supported cannonade upon her, which she returned with indecision and feebleness.

The fight, gallant and vigorous as it was, did not continue much longer. A few stray guns, fired without much order or regularity, were all the enemy could oppose to the steady fire of their victorious chase, while his crew ran about the deck yelling with rage and disappointed vengeance, and even shaking their fists madly, and gibbering at their rescued prey over the bulwarks. The merchantman meantime stood away as swiftly as her crippled condition admitted.

The pirate vessel at this moment began to work uneasily and unsteadily in the water, as if she had received some blow or sprung a leak beneath her waterline. Great uproar was seen to follow aboard her, when the pitches and writhing of the late proud and matchless schooner became so irregular and eccentric as not to be mistaken.

She now lay an unmanageable mass, all her strength and beauty gone, upon the ocean, which tumbled her about with the helplessness of a wreck. Rolling almost gunnel in, farther and farther she drove, till all at once she hove her bruised and battered head suddenly up, with the long, slanting, splintered bowsprit and the dripping drapery of her tossing jib. Then with her sharp cutwater, as if in mingled shame, revenge and anguish, she clove the gleaming billows and disappeared, sliding down solidly, with all the unfortunate

wretches on board, till the washing water closed pitilessly over her, and came rolling down a desert and a silence to the now solitary ship.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE COTTAGE IN DEVONSHIRE, AND
FRESH INTRODUCTIONS.

THE progress of our tale renders it now incumbent upon us to introduce a new scene and new personages to the reader, and to transfer the conduct of our story to those happy shores, whither Staunton's ardent spirit and affectionate recollections had reached before the Columbus lifted anchor out of a Cuba harbour, and braved those risks,

and that chiefest danger, from which we have beheld her so fortunately and happily extricated.

It was in the month of May, that warm and cheerful season, in which the cautious advances of the glowing and genial spring have expanded into the first fervid breathings and luxuriant beauty of summer. The weather was fair and settled. A clear sky, deep in the sunny brightness of its translucent blue, was overhead. Broad white clouds were floating in the heavens, tinged and relieved with those rich shadows, which produce such a magnificent effect over the enlightened and smiling face of a lovely country.

Unlike the violent sun of the tropics, and particularly the fierce glories of the burning climate of an island situated as Cuba, the luminary here only poured down that moderate heat, and evolved that placid illumination, which warmed without scorching, and beamed

unattended with that painful strength which dazzled and oppressed the vision.

The country lay open for miles and miles. At some little distance below, stealthily winding in larger or smaller continuation, crept a thick girdle of beautiful trees, abounding in leaves of the purest and freshest tint of green, and slightly agitated by the occasional passage of the sweet and soothing breeze. This range of trees rose diagonally upward, shooting up its silvery stems, and tossing its elegant branches in a hundred graceful and picturesque forms, till the slope became so abrupt, and the grass so smooth, that the broken and flowery masses of turf failed them, and the twisted and entangled roots, amongst which the trees had risen and spread as in a soil congenial and favourable to their development.

At the lowest slope of the hill, where the lawns curved away and in places dipped to the margin, was a narrow

the water of which stream was clear as crystal, and ran meandering and murmuring, overtopping in its passage several long ledges of mingled stone and sand, wreathed about with water-lilies and their drifting tendrils, and numerous aquatic plants, and eddying and streaming around one or two large weeping willows, which hung their pensive tracery in wavering and unsteady freedom over the dimpling water. The scattered and encircling strips of wood met here and united, forming on the other side of the water an umbrageous hollow, deep and sylvan, where woodland shadows brooded, and the grass deepened its tints to shades of the darkest green. Beyond this again the country rose, and opposite, but still beneath the elevations in its neighbourhood, the prettiest of pretty villages was fairly disclosed in the centre of a real English landscape. This village was a picture, with its small venerable cottages with their high roofs and hanging

windows, and heaped thatch or glowing tiles, and many-coloured moss, placed, some sideways, and others in all sorts of picturesque positions; with its trellices glowing in the afternoon sun and set deep in creepers, its overhanging stories and antique woodwork, its tall trees scattered from the surrounding woods, and its gleaming foliage, but principally its modest church, ancient in its crumbling buttresses and ivied whitewash, its quaint porch, and piercing spire, pointing up out of the wood in which the structure looked half hidden. Over the village, an extensive and voluptuously pastoral tract of meadows, gay in their spring green, and patches of wood, and single trees, darkly dotting where the enclosures with their lighter colours ceased, and a solitary russet roof, perhaps, peeping out of the sunshiny woodlands, stole away into distance in the quiet and stillness, and melted away at last in the long blue hills and dim remoteness of the country at a vast way off.

Seated on the rise of this hill, and backed with a semicircle of large spreading trees, which appeared almost purposely placed there to complete the effect of the little rustic habitation as well as protect it from the kindling suns of summer, was a small cottage, low in height and seemingly of considerable age. The low door and its timber porch, which led up two steps paved with shining tiles, introduced to a narrow entry with a low carved ceiling, having on the one hand a sitting chamber of antique and dusky aspect, and on the other a second and more ordinary apartment, probably used as a kitchen.

Birdcages, with their feathered tenants fluttering and warbling, were hung on hooks just over the latticed casements of the jutting oriels. The front of the cottage had many breaks and shadowy angles, and was crossed and recrossed with slender beams of wood spotted with velvet moss. Springing up the corners, spreading around the windows in wild luxuriance,

and intertwining and intermingling amongst the old carpentry, and mounting the high twisted chimnies, were flowing creepers starred with white blossoms and pink pendants. A good sized garden was before the door, abounding in flowers, and everything about the little hermitage bespoke temperate and thankful enjoyment, and peace, and breathed of sylvan quiet and tasteful seclusion.

In the sitting-room of this little building, the furniture of which, though humble and unpretending, was comfortable, and arranged with the utmost attention to neatness, even with an approach to elegance, were three females. They were drawn around the window, from which the rich afternoon light tempered not only by its mullioned frames and sparsely of glazing, but also by some draperies of a dark blue colour, which depended in graceful folds and happy negligence on either side, slanted in into the interior, filling the room with soft and cheerful radiance. It poured into the

apartment that sort of temperate illumination which adds so mysterious a grace, and so greatly mellows, beaming on the countenances of the occupants of the chamber and revealing their forms. The most attractive figure in this domestic group was that of a young female, who sat slightly apart from the others and somewhat removed from the window.

Her face as it was raised in kindling attention and waking interest, displayed a serene and seductive cast of feminine beauty, so languishingly tender in its expression, and with so rich a glow mantling in her cheek, that a feeling of complacency and placid pleasure would insinuate over a beholder at merely contemplating her.

Her eyes were soft, full of expression, and of a swimming, lustrous black, shaded by eye-lashes of remarkable length, which quite hid them when lowered. Her features were small and exquisitely moulded. A short,

full, rosy lip and dimpling chin, a complexion pale almost to whiteness, except for the partial and delicate colour we have noticed as rising when she spoke, and a profusion of long, soft, silky hair, of the length and plentifulness of another Eve, falling around her head in rich abundance, completed a congregation of charms which might have puzzled one as found existing in a neighbourhood so lonely, and, to draw one's suppositions from appearances, blooming so banished from notice and destitute of admirers,

“ Recluse amidst the close emboring woods.”

The dress of Felicia Wayland—for it was she—was arranged with simplicity, but with much native taste. Her hair was quite unconfined. She wore a white plain dress, full in its skirt, with a set of dark blue ribbands ornamenting it, and a broad one encircling her taper waist. On her feet, which were small and delicate as those of Titania, she wore black

shoes, certainly of no rustic manufacture, or of any but faultless cut.

The elder of her two female companions was Felicia's mother. A respectable matron, who evinced in her countenance unmistakable traces of former beauty, though her face was pale, and its comeliness had been impaired and reduced by illness and its concomitant disadvantageous effects, and perhaps also with some suffering. She was attired in mourning; her hair was gathered neatly and becomingly into a plain cap of homely but happily chosen fashion. There was a sad and thoughtful expression in her mild and benevolent face, which greatly touched, and insensibly but powerfully attracted regard and excited respect. Her quiet, careful eye would rest with pride and light up with transient pleasure upon her daughter's lovely countenance. And then it would wander off, with some engrossing and it might be regretful reminiscence of bygone but not forgotten days.

But, on the whole, her manner was of a tranquil cheerfulness, and an air of content, mingled with some occasionally visible remains of a certain sober but highminded pride, which did not seem to sit ill upon her, prevailed in her conversation, as it certainly preponderated in her ordinary demeanour.

“ I have been telling Felicia,” said the third lady, a person of something of the same age as Mrs. Wayland, but with greater quickness and a more confirmed liking of the world, “ that she keeps herself much too lonely here ; and I do not altogether think that you quite do her justice to shut yourselves so up.”

“ Felicia and I,” returned Mrs. Wayland, “ are accustomed to seclusion. Retirement is no new thing to us ; so you forget, my dear Mrs. Lowestoffe, that we feel no deprivation in absence from gayer scenes, if anything like an approach to gaiety may be expected in these remote parts.”

“ That’s true enough,” said Mrs. Lowestoffe.

“ The dulness of our situation cannot be helped, as it certainly cannot be disputed. But we ought to endeavour to make up for it, or to mitigate it, by availing ourselves of what chance of change offers, as much as possible.”

“ You are not to suppose, you know, that because I like quiet, and perhaps that my dear Felicia, though sufficiently sober herself, likes quiet to please me, that she at least is not able to enjoy scenes where there is more of animation if not happiness. I do not wish her to bury herself, or take herself away from those relaxations and novelties, nor to indulge that innocent lightness and mixture in lively things proper to her age.

“ No, I assure you, Mrs. Lowestoffe,” said Felicia, “ my banishment is purely voluntary. I am a willing hermit, contented with my cell, nor desiring greater activity than that I see in the running brook before my door. Besides I have abundance of company, and

cheerful company, too :—what do you call my birds, my plants, and my innumerable family of flowers? I have trouble enough, believe me, in keeping all in order about me, and I should but neglect them, and show ingratitude for the gratification I derive from them, if I sought amusement for myself elsewhere. And I am not fitted for the giddy world, especially under present circumstances.”

“ Ah ! I understand you,” said Mrs. Lowestaffe, “ and I fear a certain young gentleman has something to answer for in this self-imposed but meritorious separation of yours from the delights of life.”

“ You may call them delights,” cried Felicia. “ I would much rather have such a lovely landscape as this before my eyes, and breathe this fresh air, and inhale the odour of these charming inhabitants of my silent though populous domain. I could not mix in places of public resort, and make one in the unwholesome and disappointing congregation of deter-

mined pleasure seekers, even supposing that such places were within my reach, which I am sure they are not, nor are they likely to be, nor do I wish that they should."

"Well, I shan't persuade you any more, nor would I have said as much, had I not really thought it was for your good," said Mrs. Lowestoffe. "You are a tiresome, wilful, unpliant girl, paying no attention to your best friends, and so obstinately bent on being a rustic, that I really think nature has bestowed some prettiness on you in vain, I have done with you. But to change the subject, which, for my present visit, I've exhausted, have either of you lately seen that amiable friend of yours, who wants, if he knew how, or could, to cultivate a much more closer intimacy than either you or I, in addition, for you, should be inclined to concede him.

"Whom do you mean?" asked Felicia.

"Why, I mean no less a person than that formidable Mr. Lockwood — Farmer Lock-

wood, with his acres, and his bags of gold, and all his other recommendations, all which you so fixedly, and with such high disdain, and such flattering constancy to a certain nameless absentee, reject."

A shade of trouble, it might have been said of fear, as it certainly was of repugnance, passed over the countenance of the fair Felicia at the mention of a name which she never heard spoken without aversion, and an emotion of no propitious order to the person.

Mr. Wayland looked in some uneasiness to her daughter, and said,

"He is an unpleasant subject to us, but I hope he begins to see the uselessness and mischief of his determined pursuit. He has given us much trouble, and caused Felicia a great deal of pain, indeed, alarm, with his harassing attentions; but I am in hopes that he is thinking better of it. I should much dislike making an absolute enemy of him, if I could help it, for you know he is our landlord. I

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have often wished that poor Staunton were here, to terminate with his presence the repetition of a subject the following up of which against hope, and notwithstanding our open discouragement, is as offensive and cruel as it is mistaken in him."

Mrs. Wayland's wish of the return of Staunton was echoed with fervency in the bosom of her daughter, who breathed a quiet sigh, while her eyes filled with tears.

"I wish with all my heart," said Mrs. Lowestoffe, "that Staunton were come back to extricate you from a situation so disagreeable. As to this man Lockwood—he is a monster. All the country speaks ill of him, though he preserves an outward show of respect from the people about him, for his station in his neighbourhood is maintained by his wealth and influence. But the presumption of the man to pretend to my darling Felicia! I hope she made him see she was her father's daughter, and repelled him with the indignation and aversion

he merits. Heaven's sake ! as I looked towards the garden, I actually imagined I caught a glimpse of him making his way to the cottage. Don't be frightened, Felicia. Here is your mother, 'and here am I to protect you ; and, as for me, I assure you I am not easily to be put down. We shall see what his bad conscience, and his impudence have prompted him to in this insulting visit."

CHAPTER XV.

AN UNWELCOME VISITOR AND AN UNPLEASANT CONVERSATION.

It was not unmixed with alarm, that Felicia heard this unwelcome announcement of Mrs. Lowestoffe's that Farmer Lockwood was at the door, probably bent on an offensive reiteration of his hopeless suit.

In a moment or two, a woman servant, the only domestic kept by the Waylands in their

small household, entered with a message from Mr. Lockwood to say that if the leisure of the ladies permitted, he would be happy of some few minutes' conversation with them.

"It is very unfortunate," said Mrs. Wayland. "I would much rather not see him. It is really very disagreeable, his obtruding himself on us, when he knows he is not welcome. What shall we do, Mrs. Lowestoffe?"

"I cannot understand the man," she returned, "nor his pertinacity, either. But if you dislike to talk with him or admit him to your presence, here am I, and I will listen, if you please, to what he has to say, and give him his answer. He has not come to you in his quality of landlord, has he?"

"I anticipate not—I think not," said Mrs. Wayland. "Though I would much rather that he should, inconvenient as his call upon me would be just now, for I owe him rent for this little place of ours, which the delay in the payment of my small income has hitherto

prevented my discharging, than that he should seek me on that hateful subject. I would prefer to hear him on any other, and run what risk I must with him, than that he should renew such proposals.

"Well, will you leave it in my hands?" said Mrs. Lowestoffe. "Shall I beard this giant of our little romance."

"I am much obliged to you," returned Mrs. Wayland, "and feel your kindness," continued she, pressing her hand in both her own, "but I must see him myself, nor do I know reasons why I should shrink from telling him a little of my impressions of his dishonourable conduct."

"Go, then, if you would rather have it so, and meanwhile," said Mrs. Lowestoffe, "I will take care of Felicia. You are compelled to see him here, for this is your only room. Felicia and I will remove ourselves, and you can come to us and glad our hearts with the intelligence that the house is free of this odious man."

Mrs. Lowestoffe and Felicia then disappeared through an inner door introducing to the staircase which led upstairs, Mrs. Wayland in much perplexity, discomposed and disconsolate, in a moment or two afterwards ordered the woman to desire Mr. Lockwood to walk in.

As Lockwood entered the room, which he did with a considerable degree of hardihood, mingled with some slight traces of embarrassment at the dishonourable part he was setting himself, Mrs. Wayland rose with calmness and dignity. Pointing to a chair, she coldly but politely requested to be acquainted with the cause which had procured her the honour of Mr. Lockwood's visit.

"I will not say a word to you, madam, on the subject," said Lockwood, "until I see by your reseating yourself, that you do not look upon me as quite such an intruder on your privacy as I fear myself,"

"Mr. Lockwood, I'm sure I do not wish

to be deficient in any form of respect," replied Mrs. Wayland. "I am sorry that you have yourself placed it out of my power to display the equal cordiality towards you, that I should wish to exhibit to all my neighbours."

"Ah! madam, it is that very restriction to equality of which I most desire to complain," said Lockwood, seating himself. "To a mind like mine, it is a most freezing and unkind repudiation of all the good feeling I entertain towards your family, and the good offices I would do you if I knew how, or you would permit me. I am not to let you know, now, the state of my impressions regarding you. I have endeavoured to testify an affection which I cannot conquer for one the nearest and dearest to you, by all the open, and straightforward, and candid means in my power. Your cold reception of my suit only prevented me extending and reaching to something more tangible and distinct still."

“ Mr. Lockwood,” replied. Mrs. Wayland, “ you are aware that this is a most painful subject to me, and that I could not, even had I the disposition to do so, which I confess I have not, urge my daughter in your behalf after such an unequivocal expression of her feelings towards you, and the evident pain your attentions give her. Nay more, I must say I do not think it quite delicate, or considerate to our lonely and unprotected position, to let your suit merge into a form a little too—too like persecution. Pardon me if I am open, but I would much rather be plain with you. Let me entreat that you will abandon this object, and display your wish for my happiness and my daughter’s happiness, by leaving us alone.”

“ You speak dispassionately, Mrs. Wayland. You cannot understand the difficulty of what you demand ;—you cannot enter into my feelings,” returned Lockwood. “ If we could reverse positions, you would see that much as you might task me, and I would cheerfully

undergo to serve you, and to minister to your comfort, and to exhibit my devotion, that this cruel desire is impracticable. Can you give me no hope?"

"None whatever," replied Mrs. Wayland." I would not deceive you if I could, and, alas, how can I! If your mind was dispossessed enough to reflect, you would perceive that it is impossible that it should be any other than it is. Felicia is young—very young."

"And you would say the difference in our ages makes a return of my love impossible—vainly to be looked for! 'Tis true I am not young. I cannot smooth the furrows that care, and not age—that disappointment, and anxious thought, and the world's rough and ungrateful usage, and not years, have traced in my countenance. But I have that which makes up for the marks of time, or the prints which suffering and misfortune set in that man's face whose life has been a conflict, with himself and his own ungovernable passions,

or with others, or to achieve prosperity, it matters not which. I have money. I am rich. I have houses and land, rents and goods. I have all that which could make Felicia happy, and she harshly, and ungenerously, and unreasonably, rejects the good things fortune has stored for her and now proffers with a lavish hand. And you, madam, countenance, and, perhaps I may add, second or encourage her in her blindness and girlish obstinacy to what she owes to herself, and to a love like mine."

"I am sorry you adopt this strain in speaking upon this subject, as it is mistaken," replied Mrs. Wayland. "I really must leave you, Mr. Lockwood, if your visit was only for the purpose of reiterating"—

"You mistake. I have forgotten myself in approaching or introducing the subject which fills my thoughts day by day, and therefore is not unlikely to break in upon what I utter. I desist. My visit here was for a far different purpose, though I own

I should not have been myself perhaps the one to have imparted intelligence which I know must be interesting, and I fear I must add painful to you—and, if I am right in my supposition, to your daughter. I have overstept the bounds I had set to myself already, and fear further to criminate myself in your eyes. I can depart, and leave to other lips a task which I would have much rather not imposed upon me.”

“Intelligence!—something painful for us,” cried Mrs. Wayland. “Oh! sir, we have suffered much, but if your regard for us be what you profess, and not entirely hollow, hasten to let us know the extent of what we have to dread. We are alone in an evil world, Mr. Lockwood; — alone, and without protection. We really deserve compassion, and stand in need of aid. What would you tell us?”

“Sit down, Mrs. Wayland, and be calm,” said Lockwood. “I am not ignorant that

a principal cause of my ill success with your daughter is that another holds deep footing in her favour. I have heard so—but I do not at this moment ask for a confirmation of it from your lips. I, of all people in the world, ought not to tell you what I am about to possess you with, though I am ignorant whether the pretensions of this unfortunate young person”—

“Unfortunate ! echoed Mrs. Wayland in anticipatory alarm. “Tell me, Mr. Lockwood ;—consider my impatience, knew you anything of Edward Staunton, or anything”— Mrs. Wayland could ask no more, but burst into tears and wrung her hands with deep distress.

“I see I pain you greatly with what I have already hinted. But you must prepare yourself, for my intelligence is worse than perhaps even your fears suggest. Do not suppose that I am not aware of the disadvantageous appearance, and the odium of my present office,

and the misrepresentation of which it is susceptible. In persevering in my foolish, hazardous, and besotted line of conduct, I pursue the worst possible policy. But the obloquy I must suffer. Some lips must have informed you of that which it seems fate has declared should be learned through mine. Have you heard that I have sure means of intelligence in the island of Cuba? Young Staunton was bound there when he entered upon his last unhappy voyage—doomed in truth to be his last.”

“His last—Edward Staunton’s last voyage!” exclaimed Mrs. Wayland.

“Accounts have reached England, that after she had put out from Cuba, in a severe gale the Columbus sustained such damage that her captain and crew were necessitated to abandon her. After beating about for three weeks, exposed to the complicated perils of the ocean, and reduced to the utmost extremity for want of provisions, one of the boats, containing the

only survivors of the dismal catastrophe, four common seamen, all the officers having sunk under their privations and the multitudinous sufferings to which in a very little while after their abandonment of the ship they were subjected, with very great difficulty contrived to reach Tobago. Such is the melancholy sum of my correspondent's advice. The letter, if you please, or if it be likely to be any satisfaction, you shall see. But there is yet a doubt as to the perfect correctness of this news."

Suspicion rose in Mrs. Wayland's mind, and lurked in her glances, as she surveyed the sinister lines and the perhaps too anxiously perfect dissimulation of Lockwood's repelling and unpleasant countenance. More than doubt mixed with her desire to disbelieve the unfortunate tidings he had brought. And the interest Lockwood had in the truth of his statements strongly lessened her credit in them.

"Forgive me, Mr. Lockwood," she at length said with a sigh, "but until I have certain assurances from this young gentleman's friends, amongst whom no one could number you, I am bound to disbelieve the fate you announce as having been his."

"You may disbelieve, Mrs. Wayland, but that this is the fate of Edward Staunton there is no reasonable doubt. I should be sorry to rejoice in the death of a rival, but love sweeps away commiseration for the mischances of the more favoured. I must ask you a question. My love is unconquerable, so do not argue with me respecting it. It is a fierce passion, which has beset me, and engrosses me entirely. It must be satisfied, or it will consume and destroy me. Supposing this intelligence prove true, and that Staunton is really dead, will you consent that your daughter shall be mine.—Will you accept for her the home, the wealth, the security, the love I offer her?"

"I will not suppose anything half so cruel, Mr. Lockwood. You do not treat me well to refer to such a possibility," replied Mrs. Wayland.

"Will you consent to lend me your influence with your daughter? Remember, Mrs. Wayland," said Lockwood, "I am your landlord. I could be a dangerous enemy, which however it will be your own fault if you make me."

"Under no circumstances, and overawed by no threats, will I consent once to move my daughter's decisions against her own pure spirit, sound sense, and right judgment. Should I be a mother if I did? You have had your answer, Mr. Lockwood; your further presence pains me. You will not menace me, and try to obtain by force what you fail to gain by fair speeches and professions of service."

"You do not know me—I will," returned Lockwood. "You will become more pliable

anon, and your daughter's high spirit will be broken when she sees discomfort, and misfortune, and ruin, possibly, Mrs. Wayland, close around the steps of her mother. I have it in my power to force you into a compliance with my wishes. I am stern and rugged as one of the rocks of this beautiful but treacherous coast. Remember my revenge is only to be appeased in one manner. But this is idle talk. I must task your endurance, and test your daughter's filial duty. If I know aught of her disposition, or calculate correctly on a young and ignorant girl's affections—her pity for the mother who gave her birth and to whom she owes so much, she will yield when she sees you surrounded with poverty and weighed down with trial, and when she knows one word of hers will rescue you. I shall await that word."

"Oh! to what a trial would you reduce my unhappy Felicia," cried Mrs. Wayland. "What has she done to you, that you should

so treat her? Can I not satisfy your relentlessness, and stand between your malignant, and mean, and cowardly vengeance, and that dear girl. Tremble, bad man! I shall grieve, not for my own misfortunes, but for the sins which you will heap on your own head, to cast you forth hereafter from the kingdom of heaven. God is my protection! Innocence will guard my daughter, nor shall you prevail against us. Go!—leave us; abandon this humble and inoffensive roof. I will dare your malice. Edward Staunton will one day thank you for your kindness and forbearance to an unhappy widow in the days of her affliction, and to her loved, her only daughter, who has been insulted even by your approach.”

“ ’Tis well!” replied Lockwood, coolly. “Staunton shall never return to woo and wed his bride; his fate is fixed. Your daughter, Mrs. Wayland, be assured shall

one day be my wife :—for the present, farewell !”

Saying these words, with a look of mingled disappointment, malice, and yet of expectant triumph, Lockwood seized his hat, and making a formal and supercilious bow to Mrs. Wayland, who had sunk in agitation on the nearest chair, left the house.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHEREIN LOCKWOOD RECEIVES AGREEABLE AND
VERY DISAGREEABLE INTELLIGENCE ALMOST
SIMULTANEOUSLY, AND HIS SUDDEN DEPARTURE
FROM HIS HOUSE.

Lockwood mounted his horse, and rode home in by no means a pleasant or placid state of mind. A variety of passions was agitating his bosom, and making a perfect centre of disorder and tempestuous conflict of his heart.

Revenge, pride, blasted love, and a persevering and rancorous determination to pursue his unfortunate victims to the very last, agitated him by turns. At first he traversed the road slowly, debating his schemes, and revolving his dark purposes in the gloomy depths of his bad and degenerate mind. As his distance seemed to increase from the lonely and lovely cottage against the peace of whose inoffensive inmates he was savagely plotting, he struck spurs into his horse, and galloped along with a fury which was only commensurate with the vehemence and impetuosity of his evil nature.

He arrived at home in safety, and, throwing himself from his horse, abandoned it to the care of an attendant.

Lockwood's house stood about six miles distant from Mrs. Wayland's cottage. It bore in its dim and gloomy aspect a striking and singular resemblance to the retired, unsocial and suspicious nature of its malevolent owner.

Its lonely situation, and depressing silence, seemed to be in harmony with, and to partake the solitary fortunes and abandoned position of the man who called himself master of it.

The house was old and rambling, built in the quaint taste of the days of James the First. Its corners and doublings were innumerable, and it abounded in narrow loophole-looking windows, recessed entrances, and high-peaked gables, half concealed in a damp accumulation of sad, and drooping, and clotted ivy. Crumbling walls of brick, profusely sheeted with pale and sickly mosses, heavy stone quoins, green or grey, with edges of stone to the windows and reiterated angles, chamferings and stretches of moulding rounded and honeycombed by time, smokeless chimneys and doorless out-buildings, all proclaimed a desolation and dispiriting abandonment and neglect. The latter was however contradicted by teeming barns and the rich produce of the

fields, which lay at a certain distance. For, somewhat oddly, the house reared itself surrounded by majestic trees of immense age and great beauty, though they but indifferently relieved the heaviness and cheerless solemnity of the ancient mansion.

The old place did not want for comfort in doors. The large apartments with their low roofs, and curious carvings and wide oriels, had something of feudal pretension, and a decaying species of reverend ostentation, affording glimpses of a distant time when the house was the abode of a well descended, possibly exalted family.

The country in its neighbourhood, though quite of woodland character, and therefore to some extent impressive of gloom and severity, was inexpressibly beautiful, abounding in shaggy slopes and greenwood hollows, of highly wild and picturesque distribution and effect.

In their sylvan glories and mellow light, their unbroken seclusion, and sweeping, cloudlike

canopies of verdure, and terraces of hoary trunks, they maintained a sublime and unbroken stillness, except for the voices of the stray crows, and the mysterious whisper of lonely woods, or the murmur or splash of running water, lavishing !on the smooth summer air—

“ That sound as of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
Which to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.”

Lockwood walked into the house with a gloomy air, and betook himself immediately to a small, snug room, in which he was accustomed, during his fits of misanthropy, to shut himself up. He threw himself into a large old fashioned chair with red cushions, and leant his forehead on his hand in a thoughtful posture.

The last fading light of evening stole into

the apartment, and fell sadly on his disturbed face and dusky figure.

Without, all was in unison with the gloom and despondence of his state of mind. The dark woods looked gloomier than ever, as they reared their sombre masses at a distance in the solitary twilight. The full moon was slowly and pensively ascending through some large and fancifully circling clouds. Everything bore an expression dim, doubtful and dispiriting.

Lockwood was followed into his room by Redmayne, an old adherent of his, and his principal domestic and the manager of his extensive farm.

"Well, Paul," said Lockwood, "what is it you want with me to night? I am in no humour for business."

"I don't wish to break in upon your privacy, Mr. Lockwood. I had several matters upon which I wanted to speak to you, but they are not of so immediate a consequence

that they do not admit of a delay until to-morrow, if such be your pleasure. But you have hitherto preferred that I should come to you in the evening after your return, and I have sought you according to my custom."

"I see you have," answered Lockwood. "But I've no head for your farming questions to-night. I have been sadly fatigued and disturbed to-day, and need rest, though it's little I can contrive to obtain. Don't the old place look more gloomy than usual to you, Redmayne? Or is it only an impression of mine?"

"On the contrary, sir, I have been remarking that everything seems to me to bear a more cheerful aspect than commonly," returned Redmayne.

"Ah! I am glad to hear it then," said Lockwood. "My fears are beginning to play me tricks. Is there anything new? Are there no letters—nothing for me?"

"Only this one has arrived," said Redmayne, producing a foreign-looking communication, which appeared as if it had only recently been extracted from shipboard.

Lockwood took the letter eagerly, and, after inspecting the hand-writing and seal, looked up for a moment with an abstracted frown, Then fixing his eyes unconsciously and vacantly on Redmayne, he broke the seal.

"Radmayne, you may go. I shall not want you to night. Send me lights here, and close up those windows and shut out that mournful daylight. How redly the sun has set! I could fancy those were streaks of blood which I see duskily trailed over the dim expanse of the cloudy west."

"Heaven save us, sir!" ejaculated Redmayne, lifting up his hands, "how could such a dreadful thought enter your head. But I will leave you, sir, and will bring you lights, myself."

Radmayne disappeared, and then his master, turning impatiently so that the little light which remained might be reflected on the letter in his hand, strove to decipher the awkward cramped hand of his distant correspondent.

"Curse the letter! I can't make it out," cried Lockwood, walking up and down his antique chamber with a disturbed step.

Redmayne very soon returned with two candles in ancient silver candlesticks of great height. Then retired, closing the thick door softly after him.

"Now, then, let me see what he says," muttered Lockwood. "His crooked characters are as mysteriously unintelligible as the cabalistic hieroglyphics of some dark Egyptian priest."

"DEAR FRIEND,

"Accompanying this, you will find, I hope, a satisfactory, as I assure you it is a

faithful account of ordinary transactions between us. But I guess your impatience as to another little affair which you entrusted to my management, and will inform you as to what I have done in a few words. Make your mind easy ; before you receive this, your wishes, and your commands to me, will have been executed. Under other circumstances, there might have been danger in removing the obstacle which thwarted your progress, but the mode of life, and especially presence here at a fortunate time for you, favoured us. Burn this letter as soon as you have read it. I have, backed by the promise you empowered me to make, and for the amount of which I have already drawn on you, secured the services of an ancient friend and trusty ally of mine, who undertook the job. He followed as quickly as prudence pointed out as advisable, by this time has overtaken his chase, and made you safe for life. Affect to know nothing of us, or of affairs here. Wishing you all success,

and good fortune in the quarter where you tell me you most desire it, and expressing my obligations to you, and repeating my readiness to assist you to the utmost of my ability, believe me your friend,

“ PEDRO VALDEGAS,

“ *Merchant of Cuba.*”

“Valdegras has been true to me,” said Lockwood, with a smile of pleasure. “I owe him much; but such obligations are dangerous ones. However, it is his policy to keep faith with me. The consciences of these Spaniards are much easier, as they hold life cheaper than we do, and are educated differently than we are here, with our rigid opinions and stringent interdictions.”

“I am now free. — I feel already unshackled; as if all those weights which bore me down, and the fetters which held me close—as if that nightmare with its horrible power, and its benumbing, paralyzing constancy, as if all—all were removed. I breathe easily.

With Staunton alive, I could have done nothing ; besides I hated him ;—hated him as alighted love incites—as a rejected rival only can hate. How totally am I possessed with this fatal, despairing passion ! Could it be believed, that love—that lightest and softest of passions, could so deepen, harden, and transform itself into such intensity, such insensibility, such fierceness, so fossilizing a solidity. As easily should it be credited that nature itself should change—that flowers in their delicate fragility and tender beauty should turn to stone ; or that the crystal fountain, sparkling in its clearness, and blushing in the light of morning, struck by the Gorgon blast should forego its terms of existence and drop, as showered metal, a Vulcan hail into its own profaned and desolated, scorched and branded receptacle. I have been hurried into crime.—Love has lured me on with his yellow torchlight and his rosy smile, farther and farther ; deeper—deeper ; until the darkening and descending clouds

have shadowed him as a fiend of the kingdom of the damned; changed has been the soft and graceful light which beamed from his glowing limbs, the roses of his sunny brow, and the spiritual radiance of his clear blue eyes, have melted into the ensnaring lights of triumphant hell, and a mist of blood has interposed before, and coloured afresh in its wizard and fatal bloom, and mystic horror, that fair and seductive form. I am sold—adandoned—a wreck—but one to bear upon my parting planks, in the joy of the vast illimitable solitude, and with the sensation that I have her all to myself, no matter whether to destruction, that lovely creature, bound, fastened, fixed to me while life lasts. There is delight in that—my name and her's shall be united, the dearest boon to my wild love. Is there no subtle force—no unearthly magic—is there no power in nature, no secret means—something beyond what we see, and feel, and understand, which might dissolve

that love of her's for another and attract it to me? There have been traditions of such things, but they are lies and illusions, though in our weak and longing minds, provoked at our incapacity, in extremities like this of mine we hungrily reach towards them, famished for aid beyond that we can give ourselves, prepared to conjure the spectres of our wishes into moving hopes and animate possibilities. But I am dreaming, and must to work. I must destroy this paper, and then the light of the senseless day only shines down on what we have done.'

Lockwood took his letter, and stooped to place it in the flame of one of the candles, when his eye lighted upon an open country newspaper, which Redmayne had brought in with him for his master's perusal but had lain down; and he had forgotten in quitting the room to call his master's attention to it. To set light to the letter, and throw it into the fireplace, where it slowly consumed, was

a task soon executed; and then Lockwood sat down, and, opening the journal, almost the first piece of intelligence he chanced upon, was the following amongst the ship news:—

“Arrived at Bristol, with loss of main-topmast and slightly damaged, the ship ‘*Columbus*,’ Hudson, master, with a valuable cargo, and a freight of specie, from Cuba. Captain Hudson reports that, about a week out, he was chased by a suspicious schooner, with which he exchanged shots, in latitude 11° , north, and longitude $49^{\circ} 25'$, west. After a smart action he repulsed her, and afterwards saw her founder with all hands and everything standing.”

“Death and the devil!” cried Lockwood, suddenly starting up, “’tis the very ship Edward Staunton was to embark in. Then that cursed Valdegas has over-reached me, or they have escaped. Villain! fool! idiot! what has he been about to take his measures so bunglingly! I am undone. Let me see—

Arrived at Bristol; --- then the first thing Staunton does, will be to leave his ship and travel across the country to the cottage. There he must never arrive---Felicia he must never see. My hat---I must remain here no longer. I shall start for Bristol to night, and ascertain, myself, the truth of this intelligence."

Lockwood forced himself to appear calm, and rang his bell with a hand which he steadied with the most determined resolution and the most powerful mastery over himself, though his face became nearly as white as death, and his lips worked convulsively. His summons was answered by one of his servants. Lockwood, in a word, ordered his horse to be immediately saddled and brought round to the front door.

In a few minutes, Lockwood, enveloped in his large riding coat, and lighted by a lantern which was held by his wondering attendant, who was strangely puzzled to conjecture the reason of his master's sally at

such an unseasonable hour, appeared from under his ancient lowering doorway, and mounted his strong and spirited horse. He struck his spurs into the flanks of the animal, and horse and rider were soon lost in the turnings of the dark road and the shadows of the lonely and silent woods.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SNAKE IN THE GRASS.

THE discovery of such an announcement as the return of the Cuba ship, and the glimpses he gained in the brief account of her encounter with the pirate, of the failure of the scheme by which Valdegas had planned to execute the criminal commission of his English correspondent, though Lockwood saw that its fulfilment had evidently been attempted, and

that Valdegas had kept his word, involving as it did the safety of Edward Staunton, and the total disarrangement of all his designs, and the impending demolition of his last hope, excited Lockwood to a pitch of desperation. His intentions were, in starting with such expedition for Bristol, to satisfy himself in the first instance whether the Columbus had in reality arrived, and had brought Edward Staunton aboard her, and next to acquaint himself with his movements, and devise a means of preventing a meeting between the lovers.

Lockwood knew well that all his machinations against Felicia must fail if Edward reached the cottage in safety. His first care would be, of course, as soon as he was informed of the conduct of Lockwood, of his persecution, and of his threats, to remove Mrs. Wayland and her daughter from their present residence, and to place them beyond all fear of

their landlord. He thoroughly knew, besides, that the Columbus brought over with her more, though not perhaps as equally devoted and as closely connected friends, of Felicia and her mother, and that in a day or two they must be shielded from any effort of his, and carried quite beyond his reach. This reflection was maddening.

On his arrival in Bristol, having performed his journey in as covert a manner as he could contrive, Lockwood found his worst suspicions confirmed by seeing the ship in dock, and finding that Edward Staunton, its first officer of her, was, safe and in health, in attendance on his vessel, and domesticated with his commander and his family. Words cannot express his rage and disappointment at seeing himself thus baffled, with all his fading hopes more quickly and quickly disappearing. He however set himself, with the most industrious assiduity, and the most untiring vigilance, pressing into his assistance all the powers of his powerful

and active, though evil and relentless mind, to acquire all possible information as to the movements of his intended victim, and especially the time when he proposed to quit Bristol, and to pass across the country to that part of Devonshire in which Felicia resided.

There were no great difficulties in his way, nor any formidable obstacles to be encountered in obtaining the intelligence which he sought to guide him. Warily and cautiously did he manage to make himself master of all he wished to know. After he had been in Bristol two days, he discovered that Staunton, relieved as quickly as possible by his kind and considerate commander from his necessary duties connected with the arrival of his ship in port, was to set out on the morrow to meet her to whom he had already dispatched two or three letters.

Having informed himself of the precise road

by which Staunton intended to arrive at the cottage, and also discovered that he was to travel on horseback, and alone, Lockwood returned in haste to his own house.

That evening he sought the dwelling of a suspicious and abandoned character, who had been his evil minister in many bad deeds, and who on account of certain transgressions against the law, of which he was guilty, was entirely in the hands of his patron and protector, nor was indisposed, with the temptation of reward, to undertake any desperate and lawless deed.

Until midnight was Lockwood and this man in close conversation, by the light of a lantern, in the hut of the latter, which stood on Lockwood's property in a very solitary situation, just on the borders of the wood. What passed in this meeting was confined to the knowledge of the two confederates; but, as the clock of the distant village church struck twelve, Lock-

wood, wrapped closely up in his cloak, was let out of the wretched habitation, and, making his way across the dark fields, let himself silently into his own house with a private key.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF EDWARD'S SETTING OUT FOR THE COTTAGE,
AND OF THE PERIL HE ENCOUNTERED AT
THE OLD BRIDGE.

THE next day, after an hour or two devoted to business, Staunton set out from Bristol on his journey into Devonshire. He calculated that, riding well, and as his horse was good, he should arrive at the cottage in the evening. He shook hands with Mr. Hudson, took a most friendly farewell of Mrs. Hudson, and kissed little Caroline, who was overjoyed at

seeing herself on shore, and at the pleasant prospect which was held out to her of soon going into Devonshire to see Felicia Wayland, with whom, as well as with Felicia's mother, she was a great favourite.

Mrs. Hudson engaged to follow Staunton to the cottage, and to greet her attached friends so soon as she had made a comfortable arrangement for her husband during her absence, and prepared herself for the journey.

Under these happy and cheerful auspices did Edward set out. The day was fine and sunny. Traversing the rich country of Somersetshire and Devonshire, and feasting his eyes with natural beauties, and beholding home scenes and rural prospects from which he had been so long separated, but for all of which he had always maintained a high predilection, he felt as if he could never be sufficiently thankful for the mercies of Providence in protecting him from such dangers as he and his wandering companions had so lately been

exposed to, and restoring him to the well remembered and dearly cherished scenes of his infancy, and objects of his regard and his hopes.

Edward travelled with all the impatience of a lover, and with the rapidity congenial to his quick and ardent disposition. He only paused on his way for the necessary refreshment for himself and horse, and by the evening had accomplished the greater part of his journey, and was nearly in sight of his destination, approaching the property of his deadly enemy, treading now unconsciously his most dangerous ground.

The evening, reversing the liveliness and splendour of the earlier hours of the long May day, had gathered in cloudy and dull. A sultry mist, with no wind to disperse it, or to stir the leaves, or to exert an influence over the dull silence which prevailed on every side, hung brooding over the distant woodlands and shadowy hills. The air was heavy and op-

pressive beyond all precedent at the time of year, and thick and threatening clouds obscured the west, and cut off and were gradually extinguishing the struggling and fiery beams of the descending sun.

Edward was now approaching a lonely part of the road, which, winding down a shaggy hill, serpentine between high banks, over the tops of which impending bushes stretched, and considerably reduced the light which found its way down into the hollow.

About half a mile forward, the road sloped down to a wooden bridge of no very strong and certain construction, and beneath roared a torrent swollen by spring rains, and speeding violently over jagged masses of rock and fragments of massy stone. It then rushed more silently and steadily, but with no diminution, or rather, on the contrary, with an increase of speed, under the overhanging buildings of a ruined watermill, whose idle wheel stood mouldering in the woodland solitude, falling from its

rusty ironwork, and with its gaunt skeleton arms, as if in mockery of its abandonment and desolation, wreathed about and fringed with trails and festoons of fresh and lively green.

As the nearing echoes of the traveller's horse disturbed the stillness which prevailed in this lonely and hazardous place, three men, attired in a rough costume, and with their faces concealed, crossed the bridge, cautiously keeping in the shadow as much as possible. At last they planted themselves closely together in a nook at the side of the road.

"That's he," said one of the figures, taller in height and of a different presence and a more superior air to the two other persons. "'Tis the horse; and this is the road and exactly his time. There could not have been chosen a more propitious spot than this for our purpose. Let it be done completely and suddenly, and remember your reward. Seize his horse as he comes by, and while you, Darnell,

lay hands on him and grasp him over to my side, Richard shall direct the light of the lantern upon his face, that I may make sure he is my man. That done, away with him ; drag him from his horse and throw him over the bridge. I want it to appear that he fell over in the dark and was strangled in the water, so horse and all must go, which we must manage together and with our united strength."

"To be done well, it must be done suddenly," returned the ruffian Darnell. "I shall be off directly the job's done, for I'd rather be out of England, and must make my share of the tin start me somehow in some foreign country. And you, Gipsev Dick, had better make yourself scarce, too."

"Don't fear me," said the other man. "Let us first catch our fish, and then wring the hook out of his gills and be off with our tackle. Hark ! he's coming down."

"Mind, men, no blundering," said Lock-

wood, for it was he who headed this dark ambush. You are armed, if he should compel us to set our mark upon him."

"I should prefer to heave him over handsomely with a whole body," said Gipsev Dick "if we can do the business and keep steel out of him, for lead's dangerous, and a report might be heard. But if I am obliged, why his blood be on his own head."

"Die he must, now," said Lockwood, his pale face as rigid as marble, "but do it by all means, if possible, in the manner I suggest. Richard, go over to the other side of the road, and when I whistle spring out and catch his horse's bridle. Hold the horse for life and death! and now look out."

Richard crept like a wandering shadow stealthily across the narrow road in the twilight, but the movement, well managed as it was, caught the eye of Edward, who was now in the midst of the descent. He suddenly shortened his reins in instant suspicion and

alarm. The slope was however considerable, and his horse, after making several vain attempts to stop himself, which were defeated by the slippery nature of the ground, became frightened and threw his head into the air, clattering over the smooth and treacherous gravel, and making several wild and perilous plunges.

Occupied with his horse, and now catching a glimpse of the additional dangers to which he was exposed from the rapid stream, deep as it was, of which he caught the momentary gleam, and the crazy bridge forming the only passage ; feeling certain that he was waylaid, and glancing at the perplexities from his restive horse, the place, and, above all, the obscurity, which must encumber his means of resistance, Edward, spite of his most desperate efforts, was borne irresistibly down to the fatal bridge. His horse started at the figures which simultaneously darted from the two sides of the way, and made a gallant

effort to clear them, but his bridle was caught in a moment, and he was nearly thrown back upon his haunches.

At the moment he saw himself thus arrested, and taking advantage of the fright of his horse, whose plunges and prancings greatly embarrassed the villain who held him, and who maintained his grasp on the reins with much difficulty, Edward raised his arm, and let fall such a heavy blow on his head with the butt end of a weighty whip, that he half stunned him. He now felt a gripe on his collar, and was almost dragged over his horse's neck, whose reins he still held fast with a clasp of iron, conjecturing even in that moment of horror justly that his only chance of escape rested with the possible extrication of the animal from the entanglement with which he was surrounded. How many were his assailants Edward could not see. The terrified horse forced his way onward, clanking with heavy hoof upon the shaking planks of

the old bridge and dragging Darnell forward, who was struggling with Edward, and whose fist was buried in his collar. Edward, fixing his feet firmly in his stirrups, held on manfully in his saddle, while with his disengaged hand he was feeling in his holsters for one of the pair of pistols with which he had fortunately provided himself. Having tried in vain to execute Lockwood's purpose in the manner he had enjoined, and finding himself baffled in his design of hurling Edward from the saddle, as the horse with all his force still strained on, Darnell resolved to terminate the attack by stabbing him with a large bladed knife which he wore in a belt round his waist. To this end, he let go the hold which he had taken with his right hand of Edward's coat, and from which Edward's most desperate efforts had failed to free him, owing to the great strength of his antagonist. The miscreant drew his knife, which gleamed with thirsty brightness in the faint light, but in a

second the horse reared and broke aside towards the wooden supports of the side of the bridge. Edward cast his eyes in despair towards the torrent, expecting to feel his steed launch himself over into its depth, roaring as it did below, and encountered Lockwood, who on this side threw himself in the way of the unfortunate young man. To seize the pistol intended for his other opponent, to cock it and present it was the work of a moment, and the horse, as if to second the determination of his rider, drove heavy upon Lockwood at the same moment that the pistol was fired. Lockwood fell over against the horse, and so close were all the combatants now to the edge of the bridge, that he staggered back the single step which remained to him, and feebly grasping at the wooden defence, reeled and fell over into the water, striking in his descent upon some of the large stones already described as covering the bed of the stream.

Rendered unmanageable by the report of

the pistol, the animal tore away from all obstruction, and in an instant had passed over the bridge, and was galloping with the speed of the wind into the darkness of the road forward of it.

Edward pale and giddy, and in a whirl of sensations at the sudden attack made upon him, and his as equally sudden deliverance, cast loose the reins, and away the horse pranced with a fleetness which soon promised to place him out of the reach of his enemies. As he made the turn which hid him from the view of those remaining on the bridge, a ball whistled past him and cut through the thick bushes on his right hand, luckily without injury to either man or horse. It was not long before Edward arrived in safety at the village, with as extraordinary a tale as had for a very long time agitated those parts.

The surprise, the joy, the affection with which Edward was received at the cottage, the things which were said, the things which

were done, the fervent thankfulness of Mrs. Wayland, the delight, the tears of her daughter, the questions which were asked and answered, and the excitement which prevailed, all may be easily imagined.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER, PROSPECTIVE AS WELL
AS TERMINATIONAL.

In a very little while calm happiness diffused itself over that household which had lately been agitated by so many threatening and formidable attempts against its peace.

When informed of the annoyances, and the danger, to which Felicia and her mother had

been exposed, Edward made use of the alarm they had undergone, and the unprotectedness of Felicia's position, to urge a speedy acceptance of him as a received lover, and sued that an early day might be appointed for their union. If any objection could have been found to so reasonable a request, Felicia, candid and warm as she was, would not have been the one to have brought it forward in opposition to the desire of her mother, who loved Edward as her own son, and the representations, and the advice of Mrs. Hudson, who was the attached friend of both parties principally concerned, and very anxious to secure their happiness. It was therefore settled that Felicia and Edward should be united before he commenced his next voyage, which was not appointed to take place for four months, the Columbus in her next trip being destined for Jamaica by directions from Mr. Rosebud.

The day after the attack on, and attempted

assassination of Edward Staunton, he sought a county magistrate, and gave a circumstantial detail of all the particulars connected with the violence offered him. The occurrence made an immediate stir in the neighbourhood, and a search was set on foot for traces of the men implicated.

After hearing all that Felicia had to tell him respecting the conduct of Lockwood, and dwelling especially on the threats and denunciations of his malignant rival, Edward had little difficulty in imputing the late bold attempt upon his life to his desperation and revenge, since there was much less likelihood, from appearances, of plunder alone having been the object of the ruffians. This conclusion was confirmed by the search which was directly made on the spot which had been the scene of so daring an outrage.

Lying in the water, with the back of his head resting on a large, rough stone, and with

his fingers fiercely clutched in a paroxysm of mingled vengeance and despair, the body of Lockwood was found cold and stiff. Whether the pistol ball had penetrated his breast and caused his death, or whether his destruction had been accelerated by his fall on the stones in the stream, and the blows he received on his skull in the descent, there was not sufficient evidence to decide. Nothing was heard of his two abandoned associates in the deed of guilt. Probably on discovering how matters stood, and the fall of their employer over the bridge, they had escaped without making any attempt to assist him, or to ascertain whether he was really dead.

When the due time arrived, Edward and Felicia were married. Her friends had, immediately after Edward's safe return, disposed of the cottage tenanted by Mrs. Wayland, and the whole party removed into Gloucestershire, where Mrs. Hudson was staying, and where

her relations resided. We need not add that Edward was at the height of happiness, nor that Felicia made him as equally an excellent, as she was acknowledged to be through the whole country a lovely wife.

We know not why we should linger to let the reader understand that his old friends, Mr. Rosebud and his faithful Sambo, remained together upon much about the same terms of occasional rebuke, and alternating and capricious favour on the one side, and periodical transgression, with now and then an instance of vinous forgetfulness similar to the one described in the early part of our book, until such time as the death of Mr. Rosebud dissociated them.

Sambo lived to become a free man, and to own property, and his wife ultimately achieved the wearing of what delighted the eyes and gratified the ambition of her sable partner--- a silk dress and a monstrous gold chain, with the links of about the size of the chain-cable of one of Mr. Rosebud's Indiamen.

Valdegas, about a year after the transactions in which he had borne so important but villanous a part, was suddenly arrested, by order of the Spanish authorities, for extensive frauds on the revenue. Evidence in this particular respect, and the disclosures concerning his evil doings generally, so thickened against him, that, after a lengthy trial, he was pronounced guilty, and was hanged in the place of public execution at the port of Havannah.

After some years' industry, Hudson retired from the sea service, and resigned to Staunton his duties as captain of the Columbus. Staunton soon commenced trading on his own account, and, backed by all Mr. Rosebud's weight, he was very successful. He lived, as he deserved to be, honoured and respected, an immense favourite with his ship's companies, and with one of the highest characters in the West India trade. So were dis-

sipated those threatening but fortunately transient clouds, which at first obscured the subsequently happy destiny of Felicia Wayland.

END OF VOL. I.

MY

MARINE MEMORANDUM

B O O K.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY HARGRAVE JENNINGS.

“ Wherein I speak of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field.”

SHAKSPEARE.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

T. C. NEWBY, 72, MORTIMER ST., CAVENDISH SQ.

1845.

MY

MARINE MEMORANDUM

B O O K.

CHAPTER I.

THE GHOST AND THE GALLON O'CORDIAL.

Paying out. A civil hint. Little and big.
A getting up in the world. Emulation. The beauty
A jewel of a craft. Wires and a spider's web
for masts and cordage. Front rank and rear rank
both even. Long as broad. A grasper. Definition
of a ghost. Catheads and cat's eyes. Diana nodding.
Waking up sometimes and holding up the candle.
Clear night. All still. The wanderer. An illus-
trious stranger. Puzzled a little. Snugly ensconced.
A signal from the citadel. Scarcely acknowledged.
An enemy in sight. A throwing in of supplies.
An object of interest. Will Watch. A fastidious
ghost. Bearing down like a mountain. A *bawl*.

VOL. II

B

A cowardly visiter. Running away after one has knocked at a door. A general dealer. A list of notions. A politician. Absence of mind. Looking one way and rowing another. A broad hint. Over carefulness. Solicitude. An arrow in your heel while you're in the clouds, *volant, a la Mercury* No way out. Letting in fresh air. A roof over one's head and a temporary floor. A present. Bottled up. The quarantine. A letter of introduction. Half of the despatch with bearer, while the other half comes to hand. An expounder of things hidden. The epistle. A great deal in few words. Perspicuity. Strong advice. Castles in the air. Intrigue. Thrusting your spoon into another man's dish. Absence dangerous. Temptation too strong. Can't understand it. Being cheated out of the good things of this world. Suspicious circumstances. Confidential discourse. A difference of opinion. A grand mistake. Cordial and physic. Approbation. An inquisition. Deep consideration. A promise. The best way to be secure. Locking the door of your house and throwing the key into the river. Winning the game by a card too much. Kept to be looked at. Taken out and brought back. The result of an unaccountable oversight.

"Who's for a story?" shouted a seaman of the thirty-two gun frigate, Blazer. "All

you fellers what want to listen, come a'ter me and you shall hear something. Bob, it's your tarn to-morrer, and mind you takes one or two hints from me as to 'livery. A story's nothing unless you gets your fingers greased and lets it slip comfortably through 'em. I'm your man, boys—I'm your man, depend upon it. I'll get along as glib as a parson, and as eloquent as the chap what tags his discourse with Amen. See what respect the chief feller pays to the little un! He never goes on, you know, 'till the other has sinnified his appropriation by singing out the last word. Depend upon it, a mighty clever fellow is he what squats under the captain. While the preacher jaws on, you know, t'other feller al'ays jams his eye upon the book afore him to see that the man atop don't make no mistakes. When he's done he just raises his eyes and says a word what we may say means all right, you know. Then the parson quite joyful and 'lated that he's pleased the t'other,

and got on so well so far, and not made never a mistake, and got the clever feller's appropriation, begins again in a voice what shows he's quite contented with himself, and goes on and on, better and better, till he runs through the log, and is driv'd up by the man with the long stick into the preaching box."

This was said as the party of seamen, all eager for a story, were bending their steps towards the galley. Once there, seated around the promised story teller, all prepared to do the communication proper honour.

"Well, boys," began Tom Bracelock, "you've hard often of and I dare say a good many on ye have seen the crack frigate, Bluetoe. If any of you haven't hard on her or seen her you may safely set it down that you've lost summut. It was only those what has seen her, tacking and dead full what could give ye an idea on her. By George, a'ter seeing her tricky way o'doing both, one must be full on it indeed.

Sure she was one o' the finest crafts whatever I cast my eyes upon. There wasn't nothing wallish about her broadside, but it sloped so illegant away to'ards bulwarks and counter that it would ha' done your heart good to see it. Then as to her bows and quarter, gad they was as clean cut as if chipped out in ivory. Her starn, too, had a gallows handsome slope, and her figur' head and cutwater was so cleverly sliced out that you'd ha swear'd the man what dubbed his tools upon 'em was prince in his trade. And then her masts, why they was as round as a finger ring, and as neatly hooped as a piece o' jew'll's work, and as nicely fitted as the second luff's jacket. Topgallant poles and royal sticks all shot so finely up into the sky, that they looked at a distance more like willer wands than things to carry sail upon. Then her crossing yards and rigging, standing and running---why it all looked as if it was a show boat or a nobleman's yacht, top and tail, head and starn, rig and

hull, than an old dog of a barkie what was as surly as the devil and had got plenty o' pepper and mustard in her."

"Now, Will Spanker, the chap what I'm going to tell ye about, was one o' the Bluetoes, and a famous bold feller he was. Will didn't hold the slack among the Bluetoes, you know, and so he was as well 'spected as any on his shipmates. Fine crew altogether as ever you'd wish to see. Ay, and the officers warn't behindhand with the men. The skipper was a little squab feller about as broad in the shoulders as the main yard and as tough as the stock o' the best bower. He'd got a couple o' fins as dab as a turtle's, and yet when he closed 'em as tight as a wice. Sure he was a 'straordinary man. His eyes was like fishes's, and they glared and stared at ye like a ghost's. Not that I've ever 'seen a ghost and knows from what they calls oc'lar 'monstration, 'but they looked at you as we may suppose a ghost

would look if it *could* look. Have any o' you fellers ever seen one?"

"What, a ghost?" asked one, taken a little aback by the singularity of the question.

"Yes, a ghost—a sperrit," returned Tom Braceblock, "a thing what glides about as sulky as the devil, and what feels like a wet towel when you attempts to catch hold on him."

"I'll tell ye what," said one of the group, after a pause of some little time, "I think I *did* once see a ghost."

The speaker gave this terrifying intimation with suitable importance. All the party pricked up their ears, as the saying is, and bent their heads eagerly forward to listen.

"How it was, was this," said the ghost seer in a low and cautious voice, "I was sarving at the time in the Mynervehere, and was a cruising fifteen leagues to the west'ard o' the

Eyesores, a looking out for a home'ard bound convoy. I had the watch on deck, and it was almost a dead calm and about two o'clock in the morning. I'll tell ye where I was : I had the starboard cathead at the time, and was a keeping up a pretty sharp look-out all about, for it was a fine clear night and you could see all round. Well, all was quiet 'fore and aft, and the moon up atop, when a cloud or two comed over it, seemed a winking its eyes and devilish inclined to finish the watch. Sometimes it was light and then the moon shined on all the ship, but by and bye in went the 'glim and you had to look about by the lightness o' the sky. There warn't no mist or haze, you know, and so when even there warn't no moon you could see tolerable well.

“ Well, boys, I got a thinking, you know, how werry still and quiet it all was, and how it seemed as if I was in the ship by myself.

Presently, howsomdever, I hard a strange kind o' noise some distance ahind me, and I looked round but couldn't see nothing. Well, I didn't think much o' this, but clapped a squint again upon the sea, when I hard the same sort o' noise and a patter, as it seemed, o' bare feet, and I tarned slap round. I looked and looked for some time but couldn't see nothing, you know, and was a thinking that my fancy had did it all, when I seed summut or t'other come trotting up the fo'castle ladder, and *whirring* about here and there, and coming to'ards me. Well, I didn't like to sing out, you know, but I felt summut jump up to my throat and begin'd to trimble a little bit. By and bye, you know, I seed tne thing come toddling up to'ards me, and thinks I to myself, I'm blow'd if this is much fun, and so I dives behind the foremast and squats in a corner with a coil o' cable round me. I left a little hole, you know, 'cause I wanted, for once and

away, just to see what a ghost looked like, and to be on my guard, if the confounded critter meant any mischief. Well, the thing went brushing about till I think'd that matters begin'd to look rayther serious, and that it warn't no game for a ghost to be taking the fo'castle of his Majesty's frigate all to himself. So in a minute or two I ups out o' my hole and calls softly, just above my breath, to Jack Pipkin who'd got the larboard bow, you know. 'Jack,' says I, 'Jack.' 'Who's that?' says Jack. 'Me,' says I. 'Well, who's me?' says Jack, for you must know, my boys, that my woice coming out o' my stowing hole sounded uncommon sing'lar. 'Why,' says I, 'can't you know my voice? I'm Joey Dickins.' 'Well, what's the matter with you?' says Jack, 'and what makes you so deuced hoarse?' 'Hush!' says I, 'hush! or we'll be pulled to pieces. Didn't you hear nor see nothing?' says I. 'Hear nor see?'

says he, 'what should I see? What do you mean?' 'D—n your impudence!' says I, getting a little hot, 'all I've got to tell ye, is, that there's a ghost at your elbow, and if you tarn round you'll see him grinning in yer face.' Jack seemed strik'd by a flash o' lightning. He bobbed his head as if he was afraid the ghost would twist it round and *make* him look at him, and then he comed squeezing up to my fortification. 'Jack,' says I, 'you needn't be such a fool. Let's see what this ghost is made on. If we finds that he's a real un why we'll alarm the ship and have all hands on deck. Hark, Jack, there—he's coming!' Jack didn't look up, but squeezed himself up, and shivered and shaked from top to toe.

"Well, my lads, I plucked up heart, though I must say I felt rather rum, and got my head just beyond the foremast. The ghost was skulking about a-ferretting into every-

thing and a-poking his nose everywhere. I keeps quite still, and whispers to Jack to do the same and let me have have opportunity for westrigation.

“ Well, boys, when the ghost had sarched about and had found nothing to his mind, he comed steering down to’ards me, and now, thinks I, we shall see the upshot. The moon just at this moment had a confounded cloud come blackening her face, so I was prewented from making close squints upon the figgur. Up it comed nearer and nearer, and two or three times I had a good mind to bob, but d—n it, says I—I won’t be afraid of a lubberly ghost, neither, come what will. I knows it arn’t no true blue un, or he’d a had the ciwility to ha’ given us a hail afore he comed driving upon our bows. He’s some tarnation swab what has mistaken his place and belongs to the land instead o’ the water.

“ Well, boys, presently the ghost comed

quite near, and I'll tell ye as well as I can remember what it looked like. It had monstrous great eyes what glared at ye like coals o' fire. Then it had a face very big and all hair, and a monstrous great main all standing on end like a lion's. I didn't see that it had any white sheet on, but sheet or no sheet you may think that it looked terrible enogh. When it comed quite close it poked its phiz into mine and begin'd brushing me with the hair on its coat. I warn't able to stand this no longer, so I cried out, and Jack cried out too, and the ghost got frightened, and bolted away all down the forecastle and tumbling down the ladder. I didn't see no more on it that night, but when I and Jack was talking about it next morn, the boatswain begin'd to laugh and swear'd it was only a big devil of a Newfoundland dog, what belonged to one of the leeftenants and had got loose in the night. Depend upon it this warn't nothing a bit but o' gammon to

keep the fellers from being frightened, for as sure as you're there there was summut werry odd in the thing, and summut what neither Jack, nor I, nor you, could understand. This was all the ghosts I've seen, and by George I don't want to see never another. Well, Tom, I've held this tack a devilish long while, and kept you out o' your story, so now let's have it and hear what you've got to tell us about that Will Spanker you was talking about afore I begin'd."

"Well this Will Spanker what I was telling you about," said Tom Braceblock, "had a uncle—a uncle what lived in the hubbubs o' Gosport. My father know'd a man who had a lodger what had once lived with the wife's sister of this uncle, and so you see I know'd a good deal about him. He kept a little shop in one o' the streets, and sold a wariety o' things—pepper, mustard, cheese, bread, butter, eggs, anuff, paper, pens and ink, garden seeds, tripe and packthread, soap, dips, pots, pans

and tinder boxes, matches, birchbrooms, mouse-traps and crockery, small beer—and 'baccar. I used to lay out a good deal with him for 'baccar while I was knocking about in Portsmouth and the places round about, and so I used to have a jaw with him now and then and a argufication about the state o' the nation. He would have it that we was all going to rack and ruin 'cause the duty warn't taken off starch, and I would have it that if people wanted starch they would buy it whether there was a duty on it or no. I remember one day he'd got his old green spectacles pulled up over his forehead, and was jawing with me about some stupid thing or 'nother what the parliament people was about. I was smoking and setting on his counter, and was kicking my heels against the bulwark. In the middle o' the talk, when old Bluebag was in the midst o' one of his speeches, in comes a woman for half a pint o' treacle, a loaf, a skein o' thread, and a couple o' darning-

needles. Bluebag keeps on talking to me instead o' looking at and hearing what the customer had got to say, and so without knowing what he was doing he went poking about the shop and keeping up his argufication. Well, a'ter a long time he gets the things together, and what d'ye think they was when he laid 'em on the counter and held out his hand for the money?—half a pint o' turpentine, a bag o' split peas, and a couple o' iron skewers.

“ Well, my lads, concentric as old Bluebag might be, it was buzzed about that he'd a good deal o' money, and having never a chick nor a child everybody expected it would go to Will Spanker. Will think'd so himself, and so when his uncle once axed him to lend him a book, if he'd got one, he gived him a book upon wills. Bluebag was werry fond o' Spanker, and so he had been of old Spanker, but old Spanker was dead, and as old Spanker was dead young Spanker comed in for all the thick on it. Old Bluebag's wife too was

werry partial to Bill, and mended his stockings and things for him, and sent him many little presents 'board of his ship. I 'member once she was in such a hurry over his worsted stockings that she left the needle in, and that Will never found it out till he'd had 'em on half an hour. Will was letting out the fore-sail at the time, and devilish auk'ard it must ha' been. She was old, you know, and couldn't see at all without barnacles, and only half and half with them, and once I 'members she sewed up the neck o' one o' Will's shirts, thinking that it was some tear or another. Bill got in, but I'm d—d if he could find his way out again. She was so werry careful on him, too, that she knocked out the crown of his straw hat to ventilate it as she called it, and gived him a receipt to make ~~gruel~~ when he'd got a cold, besides giving him a pair o' pattens to walk the deck when it was wet a'ter a shower o' rain, and a large cotton umbrella to go up aloft with when he got

out upon the yard and was handing, reefing or furling. But Will in course tossed the pattens and the umbrella overboard directly he clapped his foot on deck.

“ Well, boys, before the Bluetoe sailed from Spithead old Bluebag think’d that he’d send his nevee summut good afore he set out for his cruise. So one day a boat brings out a gallon bottle o’ some good stuff and a letter tied to the stopper. The letter was fastened in such a d---d queer fashion round the neck of the bottle, that Bill pulled away half and left the other half behind.

“ The men declared when it comed aboard that the bottle must do quarantine, and be thoroughly tasted and examined for fourteen days at least afore it was given up to the owner. But Bill wouldn’t consent to this, and so the leeftenant laughed and made the men give up his bottle.

“ Bill couldn’t read, that is, he could read, but couldn’t read werry well, and so he handed

over the letter to me and told me to read it to him. So I got sight o' the letter, and I readed it so 'tentively that I remembers great part on it now. It said this, " My dear Bill, how are you ? I'm werry well, and so is Mrs. Bluebag. We sends you herewith a gallon bottle o' cordial, what you must mind and take constantly, for its werry good for you. It's all of Mrs. Bluebag's own confounding, for she understands these things, and has got summut in her noddle though she don't look like it. Mind you takes it. You'll find yourself as stout and strong as Sampson a'ter taking it, and escape all yellow fevers, ailments and sea sicknesses, whatsomdever. Keep it cool, and don't let nobody poke their nose into it besides yourself. This is all from me and Mrs. Bluebag—Samuel Bluebag.—Take care of yourself, my boy, and mind you uses the pattens and umbrella in werry bad weather.'

" Well, my lada, the ship sailed, and Bill begin'd to think o' opening his bottle. But what d'ye think he did to keep it cool, for he

was told to take care and keep it cool, you know, in old Bluebag's letter. Why he hang'd it out on the top o' the topgallant mast, and there it swing'd till he was afeard it 'ud break by banging up against the mast and he was ordered to take it down by the leeftenant.

“ Well now I must tell ye of a werry wicked trick what the messmates o' Bill Spanker played the poor feller. You must know that they was werry curious about the bottle o' stuff ever since it com'd on board and, was detarmined by hook or by crook to see what sort o' stuff it was, in spite o' Bill. So one night while Bill was away and warn't likely to come and catch 'em, they opened the bottle, and finding what was inside tarnation sweet-tasted and pleasant, taked a good spell at it and half emptied the thing that held it. They fills the bottle up with water, and then walks off as if nothing had happened. They takes care, d'ye see, to seal up the bung again and not let matters look noways auspicious. Next day Bill opens the bottle himself, and

without saying nothing about it takes a good drink o' what was inside. That night and the night a'ter, while Bill was away, his rascally 'panions fairly emptied the bottle, water and all, for what still remained wasn't bad. When they had finished it they begin'd to look at one another and ax what they should do to prevent Bill finding out what they'd been at. They couldn't find out nothing better than to fill up the bottle this time with some vinegar and treacle and a good deal o' water. It was the colour exactly of the stuff they had drink'd, and looked altogether werry like it. Bill, you see, had only tasted the stuff when it was half deluded, and so couldn't know what nice liquor he'd been robbed on.

“ Some days a'ter, Bill applied again to his bottle, and a'ter drinking some o' the new stuff shook his head and looked a long time as if he was thinking about it. He had a fancy that summut was wrong, you see, but he soon set it down that the stuff had been working and had lost a little perhaps of its

quality. He said a word or two about it to one of his messmates, and they soon persuaded him that the stuff was werry good, for he gave 'em a little to taste, you know, and that it had only lost a little of its quality by being kept in too hot a place.

“ All the cruise Bill now and then, for the good of his health, applied to his bottle, but he couldn't help thinking that it was almost as bad as taking physic, and so shirked off the day as long as he could. But he know'd that Mrs. Bluebag understood well what was good for him, and so kept on and on, by little and little, till he finished his bottle.

“ When the cruise was ended and the Bluetoe was again in port, Bill had only his empty bottle, having 'ligiously done what he was directed and kept to that which his wicked companions had also kept to and fulfilled besides.

“ Two or three days a'ter the Bluetoe was anchored, old Bluebag comes aboard

and inquires for his nevee. They soon got together and was having a long and confidential discourse.

“ ‘ Well, Bill,’ says Bluebag, wiping his barnacles and ’specting a werry grateful answer, ‘ how did you like your cordial ?’

“ Bill looked over into the water and went on talking.

“ A’ter they’d said a little more, his uncle again enquires---

“ ‘ But, Bill, you haven’t told me how you liked the cordial Mrs. Bluebag sent you.’

“ ‘ What the stuff in the bottle ?’ says Bill.

“ ‘ Yes,’ says his uncle, ‘ and mighty good stuff it is too, I tell you.

“ ‘ Do *you* think so ?’ says Bill.

“ ‘ Don’t *you* think so ?’ says Bluebag.

“ ‘ Yes, for my part,’ says Bill, ‘ I thinks its werry good stuff indeed, but will you ax Mrs. Bluebag, if it’s all the same to her, to be so kind as not to make the cordial next time

quite so sour? By George,' says Bill, 'I thinks it's werry nice physic indeed, considering that it *is* physic.'

" 'Physic,' says his uncle. 'It's wind—its cordial, werry nice to the taste and werry good to the constitution.'

" 'As to its being werry good for the constitution, I dare say it is,' says Bill, 'but as to its being werry nice to the taste why if it is I'm'——

" 'Well, Bill,' says Bluebag, 'you must have a werry 'straordinary taste. If I and Mrs. Bluebag says it's good, why can't you say its werry good too? But *I* sees, *I* sees; you must ha' done summut wrong with it. What did ye do with it, Bill, now come tell me?'

" 'Do with it?' says Bill, 'why nothing but drink it. That warn't wrong, was it? I drink'd it all by little and little, 'kase I had confidence in Mrs. Bluebag and know'd she'd send nothing but what was good. I don't

know whether I've d'rived any benefit from it 'kase I haven't considered, but I dare say I have without knowing.'

" ' Well, Bill,' says Bluebag, ' you're a werry good lad to ha' drink'd it up so confidentially, and you has my appropriation for it. But I sees I must sift a little into this bottle business. Did you mind and keep it cool, Bill, 'cause I told ye, you know, that that was 'portant.'

" ' Cool, ay, I believes ye,' says Bill: ' it swing'd a long time at the top o' the topg'ant mast. Cool, you axes: ay, ay, cool as a cow-cumber."

" ' And you never let nobody touch it? says Bluebag."

" ' Why, yes, I touched it myself,' says Bill, ' over and over again, or how should I ha' dranked it up?'

" ' Ay, ay,' says Bluebag, ' but I means you never let nobody else touch it.'

“ ‘Touch it! to be sure not,’ says Bill. What, would you have had the whole ship’s company take physic ’kase I did?”

“ ‘Well, then I can’t understand it at all,’ says Bluebag. ‘Have you got any o’ the stuff remaining, Bill?’

“ ‘I don’t know,’ says Bill, ‘there may be a spoonful or two, and if there is I’m sure you’re werry welcome to it.’

“ ‘Go and fetch it then, Bill, my boy,’ says Bluebag.

“ ‘With all my heart,’ says Bill, and away he goes, and by and bye comes back with the bottle. Old Bluebag werry ’liberately taked out the bung and looked into the bottle. A’ter he’d done this, he puts the bung in again, and looks up at the sky and considers a long time without speaking a word.

“ ‘Werry sing’lar indeed,’ says old Bluebag at last, opening the bottle, and shaking his head, and heaving a long scythe. I’ll taste a little

and see what it's like. Here's your health, Bill.'

" 'Thankee,' says Bill, 'same to you and many on 'em.'

" 'You're right, Bill,' says, Bluebag when he'd done drinking. 'There's summut 'straordinary odd about the taste—a sort o' sweet—soury—watery—can't—tell—whatish kind o' flavour. The stuff's work'd, I suppose, and work'd all its goodness away. I see Mrs. Bluebag can't warrant it to keep in every climate, as they says in the advertisements. There's summut about the ship what has had a strange influence upon the quality on it. But don't be chop—fallen about it, Bill; don't fret, 'cause it arn't no use. Mrs. Bluebag shall send ye another gallon on board, and this time we'll take care that it *shall* be all right, for I'll have a padlock put upon it, and we'll lock it up afore we sends it ye, and Mrs. Bluebag shall keep the key on it in her own pocket and not let nobody see it at all.'

“ Well, my lads, Bluebag went ashore, and the day that the Blueto sailed he was as good as his word, for he sent aboard another gallon, so padlocked up that Bill himself couldn’t get at the stuff what was inside. Mrs. Bluebag, detarmined to be secure, you know, had kept the key in her own pocket, and as it was too late to go ashore and get it, Bill carried the bottle out, and carried the bottle back again, without tasting, a drop and never looking upon nothing but the outside o’ the thing from the day that he received it.

DICK, BILL AND THE 'BACCR CASK.

Prisoners abroad and at home. Sage reflections. The comforts of philosophy. The best reasons for a love of life. Foolishness of crime. Pen and ink sketches of a castle, a town, and a prison, with its guards. Daily exercise. Hercules in strength of mind. "A dog's obeyed in office." The advantages of being able to talk in one's sleep. All the talk to oneself. Escape. Scaling walls. "We fly by night." A house after the taste of Diogenes.

Working to windward. Travelling in a one-wheel carriage. Gazers a nuisance. Cannot control fate. Great curiosity as to one's movements. Prating of one's whereabouts. An inclination to examine the subject. Barred by scarcely necessary difficulties. The wrong box. Willing to accept the reasons of others in preference to your own. Indignation. Excuse. Crestfallen. A making one-self scarce.

“ Good thing, in one sense, that there arn't no war now with France,” said Bob Wilkins, one of a group of seamen, belonging to his Majesty's ship *Isis*, that was gathered around their mess table 'tween decks. “ Those poor devils what was taken pris'ners suffered a great deal. To be sure we had more o' the French caged up at home ; but it arn't no sat'sfaction that your enemy's suffering in one country, while your enemy's countrymen a got their claws on you and making you count two stripes for his one. Thinking o' foreign pris'ners in your own country is like talking of a halter in

the house of a man what's been hang'd. It's al'ays best to pity other folks' misfortun's when you arn't got none o' your own. When they comes upon you, yourself, you don't wonder no longer why people can't stand up under 'em. But to be sure there's one thing: you thinks that other folks troubles *can't* a been as bad as yours, and so you finds excuse and justification fer crying out. As for myself, I pities all prisoners though I haven't never been a prisoner.

"Though our chaps, some of 'em, *was* taken pris'ner," said another the party, "their wits and their 'dustry didn't fail 'em. They tried devilish hard, a great many on 'em, to escape. Some of 'em was cunning enough to deceive the Mounseers; but a few was lagged at the last moment. Precious tiresome that! Nothing is so provoking as to tumble when you've got to the last round o' the ladder and one foot on certainty. To fall the first half dozen steps can be bear'd, because you may

expect it; but when you've got nine points o' the game, and have bothered and worried yourself to death with hope, and fear, and 'spectation, and anxiety, then to lose all at once, when you'd clapped a half gripe on your object, must be tiresome out of all fancy and idee.

Misery all your life is the best thing in the world to make you contented: make a miserable man comfortable for a few days, and then shove him back, and you doubles the misery he had before. 'Fliction's like a petrifying pond; pop your wictim in and by and by he'll come so hard that he can't tell the difference between what he's got and what he might have. A man what's going to be scragged, let him alone and he'll wait for the axacushioner; but tell him that he's got a reprieve and he'll die of himself. For my part, I'd say I wouldn't be told I'd got a reprieve unless I'd done summat willanous enough to deserve it; — one death's bad enough without having two, and to kill with kindness

is the worst becase it's the most stupid way o' killing. I thinks if *I* was going to be hanged, or going to die, I should be more *wered* than anything. I should say to myself, bless my soul how *tiresome* ! Here's the sun a going to rise every day, and the moon a going to shine, and the spring, and the summer, and the autumn, and the winter to come on a'ter one another ; and then every body will walk about, and eat good dinners, and drink good drinks, and make merry, and take pleasure, and employ themselves--and yet I can't see none of it all. I can't see how the world goes on, and that's some comfort. I can't see the sky no more, and that's some pleasure if I arn't got no more to make me comfortable ; and I'm going to be sent out o' the world, and a going goodness knows where ! How uncomfortable it is, I should say, that the world will go on to-morrow just the same as it's done to-day, and yet that to-morrow I shan't be able to see it. If one warn't werry good, why

one would wish that the world should be all knocked on the head and that you should go and be finished together. Depend on it that a man what commits crimes what'll hang him, is as *foolish* as he is *wicked*.

“ You said just now,” rejoined Bob Wilkins, taking the pipe from his mouth which he'd been most industriously puffing, “ that it took a good deal o' cunning for our English chaps, when they was pris'ners, to overreach the French. It did indeed, and I'll tell you a story, if you likes, what is as they calls it a case in pint. There was a man named Dick Randall, what was one of the pris'ners taken in the *Leander*, 50, Captain Thompson, when she was captured by the French 74, you know, in the *Medit'ranean*—*Lee Jennyrue* I thinks she was called. Well, Dick Randall and some more was landed and marched into the 'terior of the country as they calls it, and clapped up in the castle o' some town there, but I'm blowed if I don't forget the name. Well, we musn't mind the name, for all castles

is alike, and all towns is alike, and I suppose this castle and town was like all the rest o' the castles and towns. Fancy stone walls, pigeon holes, rows o' iron teeth, brick boxes with iron rods at the corners, grass mounds, ditches, ins and outs, ups and downs, soldier's feathers, long nails at the tops of their guns, smooth grass plots, flag staffs and bunting, and you've got a castle or a fort. And fancy lots o' houses, chimbley tops, street doors, staring faces, a church spire, an inn sign overhead, blacksmith's hammers clinking on a horse-shoe, the roar o' the fire, lots o' sparks, pots o' beer, carts and waggons rumbling, plenty o' jaw, old women emptying 'tatoe water in the gutters, dirty children, men hanging about at the street corners, cocks crowing, dogs barking, cats crossing the way, and you've got a town. Well, Dick Randall and the rest of the Leanders was shut up in this fort what belonged to this town, for the town was ortified, and devilish easier it was I tell you

to get in than get out. First there was cannons to prevent you, and then there was walls ten feet thick, and then there was gates ten feet high, and then there was ditches, and worse than the ditches plenty o' sogers; and worse than the sogers, guns; and worse than the guns, bagnets; and worse than the bagnets, the ball cartridges what was in the guns. You *might* be able to escape from the prick o' the bagnets, but then there was the balls to fetch you up and make all strait with you. Altogether the place was a werry devil of a place, and one that I'd much rather fancy than see."

"Well, a'ter Dick had been here five months he began to think that he couldn't bear it no longer, and that the treatment was getting a little too bad; and so he walked up to one of his messmates what he could depend upon, while they was a taking their daily exercise in the great prison yard; and says he to his messmate, 'say he ' Bill,' says he 'howd'ye feel

now ? and how d'ye like the board and lodging that they gives us.'

" 'Board and lodging', says Bill, 'yes, there's the board, but I'm d——ed if I've seen anything upon it, and as to the lodging, why they lodges us like house dogs—with a rug to sleep upon, and the street door al'ays standing open.'

" 'Street door!' says Dick, 'you makes a mistake;—dogs never have no street doors to their houses: but come, hang dogs! and let's talk about our private affairs. I'll tell you what, Bill.—If you likes this place I'm blowed if I do, and so I'm detarmined to cut my stick as soon as I can.'

" 'I likes this place!' says Bill. I only wish I'd the 'tunity to get out on it, and then you should see whether I liked it or no.'

" 'I'm glad to hear you say so,' says Dick, 'for I half thought I should be obligated to make the wenture by myself. But we can't

talk no more about it just now, bekase you see that cursed Frenchman with the baggernet has come out of his corner, and is beginning to drive the poor devils into the pen like so many sheep !'

" ' I wish I'd a pen,' says Bill, ' for I'd write an account of our sittivation to the Lords of the Admiralty. Mum's the word just now though, and so let's obey the Mounseers and get in with the others.'

" ' Well, I'm coming,' says Bill to the Frenchman, for the Frenchman, you know, was motioning them to get in faster than they was walking. ' You needn't be so 'thorative, Mounseer, nor screw down your black eye-brows in such a singular fashion. You've got the pin just now in your hand, and so you can prick us on if we don't run just as fast as you please; but the wind chops and changes, my boy, and we may have the needle in our hand before long.'

“‘I say, Dick,’ says Bill in a whisper as they was going through the long dark stone passage that led to their ‘partment, ‘we’ll talk more o’what you said to night, and it shall be when the ship’s quiet and all the hands is snoozing. I was thinking, to protect us against accidents and guard against the sentry overhearing us, if we couldn’t talk in our sleep as they says people does.’

“‘Ah! that wouldn’t do,’ says Dick, ‘for if you can talk in your sleep, I can’t, and so you’d jaw while all the time I shouldn’t be able to answer you. No, no, we’ll sit up and take our time about talking, and not begin ‘till there’s never a soul able to hear us. Trust me, Bill, I’ll manage, and so quiet ‘till then—quiet as a mouse.’

“Well, boys, Bill and Dick laid their plans that night, and they agreed that they’d try the next night if it was one that was likely to do for them. So about two o’clock in the morning, when all the place was as silent as a

church, they got up and dressed themselves—the dressing didn't take much time, for they principally used their clothes for their bed furniture'—well, they dressed themselves, and got up to a winder by the help of two blankets what they cut in strips, and with a little wrenching, what they was obliged to be werry quiet about, pulled out some o' the rusty bars and got upon a ledge what run under the winder. They got up to the winder inside by an old table what sarved the pris'ners for eating on ; but they couldn't have no table now, and so they didn't know what to do to get down. The winder looked upon a broadish river what runned half round the town, and if they could get upon the grass slope below, they think'd, as it was a werry dark night, that they could swim across the river without being seen, and get away into the woods. Well, what they did was to fasten the strip o' blanket to one of the bars, and so to let themselves down as far as they could, and to drop the rest.

They listened when they touched ground to

hear if any body was stirring, or if their getting down had been overheard. But all was quiet, or at all events they couldn't hear nothing, for the wind was blowing werry hard, in strong, thundering gusts, you know, and the night was quite as dark as they could ha' wished it to be. Well, Dick and Bill crept down the slope, and dropped into the river, and beganned to swim across it. When they got to the t'other side, and to do this it took 'em some time, they turned round to see if they could perceive any sign that the fort was alarmed and that they was missed. But howsoever all looked just as usual, and they beganned to think that they should at all events have the heels o' the Mounseer sogers. This comforted 'em, mightily, you know, and away they went, running along with famous spirit, and no small 'spectation that they should scrape clear altogether. All night they runned and walked as hard as they could, and in the morning they beganned to think that they

had got far enough from the prison to be out of 'mediate danger.

"I wish I'd got time to tell you what they did, and all the trials and troubles that they went through. But it 'ud take me from now till to-morrow morning, and even then ten to one if I could tell you all. They was in the country two whole months before they could contrive to fetch up the coast, and in that time, as you may suppose, my boys, they was a hundred times near being discovered. They had no end of adventures, and in time to come, by little and little, perhaps I shall be able to tell ye great part on 'em, if not all. But there's one that was so odd, that I can't help telling it you now."

"Plenty o' time," said Bob Braceblock, one of the circle.

"Crack on, Bob!" said another, "and I'll stuff in another plug to my pipe."

"Give it us all," said a third, "and don't be skinflintish."

"Well, pass us the grog," returned Bob Wilkins, "and I'll 'dulse you, as they calls it. Not over stiff, is it masters? So here goes in a little more o' my 'lowance! So—that's all right." As he spoke, Bob raised the mixture to his lips, and primed himself for his story with a hearty draught.

"Well, now I'll begin," he resumed, heaving a sigh and striking the flaggon on the mess-board. "You must know that among the many disguises Bill and Dick was forced to assume, Dick made himself on one 'casion a travelling merchant, and 'sisted that Bill should be stowed away in an old 'baccor cask what they contrived to get hold on somehow or other. They thought it better, to evade suspicion, to march boldly through the towns in some sort o' character rather than sculk about hedges, ditches, and woods, never getting nothing to eat, and running all the more risk from their 'spicious movements when they did poke their noses out of their holes. So, ac-

according to this, Dick dressed himself up with a cap on his head and an old leather ap'on afore him, and made Bill get in the 'baccer cask, leaving him holes to breathe, and a bit o' provision perhaps ; for at one place that they was they contrived to walk off with an old wheelbarrer, and on this wheelbarrer Dick put the 'baccer cask, and when they was going along the roads Bill didn't keep in the cask, but taked a spell at wheeling now and then, you know, and when they got near a town or village, both pulled up, and either Bill or Dick crept into the cask while the other prepared to act his part as a poor ragamuffin what was 'pointed to convey the cask from the seller in one place to the buyer somewheres else.

“ Well, boys, one day when it was getting rather late in the a'ternoon, Dick and Bill 'proached a town, and seeing nobody in sight, Bill got as usual into the cask and hid himself, while Dick prepared to wheel him through the

town:—stopping perhaps a bit at the alehouse to supply himself with provisions. I ought to tell ye, perhaps, that when Dick and Bill left the prison they had some money about 'em what they had contrived to conceal in the lining of their waistcoats — they warn't searched when they was shut up and so the money missed the Mounseers. Well, being werry ec'comical, you know, they had contrived to eke out the blunt, and they'd enough now, as they reckoned, to carry 'em to the coast, letting alone what they might pick up by singing and begging, or doing any little matters that might be offered 'em. Dick had picked up a little French, and so what with the little they know'd of French, and making signs, they contrived werry well to pass themselves off as poor 'Mericans in distress, what had been shipwrecked, and was doing any little things they could to arn a present subsistence.

“ Well, boys, I left Dick and Bill going into the village, Bill in the barrel, and Dick wheeling. Dick put on a werry serious, business-like face, and when he got into the village, wheeled away most 'dustrously. Bill liked the barrel werry well, for there was a great hole in the top of it, and that stopped only with a bit o' coarse canvas. Through the canvas he could see when he liked, and he'd got some bread and cheese, and a herring or two, and a quart o' beer. So Bill was in the barrel, and the barrel was on the wheelbarrer, and Dick was a wheeling Bill and the barrel and the wheelbarrer. By and by he comes to the village, and Dick begins to wheel through it, while all the people was a-looking as if they wanted to know what the wheelbarrer was wheeling for, and why the cask was upon it. People is al'ays curious, and 'specially in places where they arn't got much to do. So by the time that Dick had got up to the ale-

house he'd got about a dozen folks behind him, all wanting to know all about his business. Well, Dick stops at the public-house door, and claps down the barter as if he warn't afraid o' the people looking at him. There was two or three folks standing afore the door, and so Dick makes up to one what he takes for the landlord and axes him civilly in his French if he could give him summut to eat. The Mounseer stared and was a long time before he could make out what t'other meant, for I dare say Dick's French was a sort o' French that he'd got all to himself. Well, you know, a'ter some time, and making Dick repeat his words, and laying 'em a little together, the Mounseer understood that Dick said he was a 'Merican, and so without answering him, but only making him a bow, he turned round and called inside the house, and presently out comed another Mounseer. This Mounseer asked the first Mounseer what he

wanted. So the first Mounseer speak'd, and pointed to Dick, and the second axed Dick, in a sort o' English, what he was.

“ ‘ What am I ? ’ says Dick, ‘ why I’m a ‘Merican, and I’m travelling through the country as you see.’

“ ‘ De ‘Merican gentlemans says he’s travelling tro de countrie,’ says the new Mounseer to the t’other. When he’d said this, the two began to jabber away, and when they’d done, the one what talked English turned round again to Dick.

“ ‘ And vare did de ‘Merican gentlemans come from ? ’ says he in just that sort of lingo.

“ ‘ Where did I come from ? ’ says Dick, ‘ why from the last place ; where would you have me come from, Mounseer ? ’

“ ‘ Dat’s veery true,’ says the Frenchman, ‘ but Mounseer don’t travel very lightly, for he carries his carriage vid him.’

“ ‘To be sure,’ says Dick, ‘you can see I’m a gentleman for I travels with my carriage, and I carries my carriage instead o’ my carriage carrying me. I’m concentric, perhaps, and that’s no great harm, is it?’

“ ‘The gentlemans says he’s concentreek, says the Mounseer to the t’other, ‘and dat is de reason vy he answers me in vat—a de Eenglish calls de roundabout vay.’

“ ‘Round about de vay, vat dat is?’ says the other!’ you ax him vy he carry de a—a—vat you call?—veelbarrow. Ay—ay, de veelbarrows. ‘And, Monsieur, do you ax him vat is dat big veery grand tobb on de topp o’ de barrowveel.’

“ ‘Ah, ah—exceeding good—*tres bon*,’ says the t’other, ‘you talka de Eenglish, Monsieur almost as vell as I myself. Exceeding wonder dat de ‘Mericans should de Eenglish talk. I say, Monsieur de ‘Mericans, you most a—a—vat you call?—you most explane vare—a you

going vid de barrowveel, and vat all about is. Ve most know, for it look singulaire and mysterieuse :——vary much vat you calls de suspicieux. Do *vous* intend ?

“ ‘ Intend ! ’ says Dick, ‘ what do you want to know what I intend for ? ’

“ ‘ De gentlemen is in de *vapeur*—vat you call de cloud, ou de *smaak*, ’ says the Frenchman. Then he said a word or two to the others and all begin’d to gather about Dick. Well, Dick didn’t lose his presence o’ mind, but prepared to answer any question, for he seed that was what they was up to. So presently Mounseer, you know, begin’d again.

“ ‘ Dere is von explanation leetle vat I must make of you, ’ says he. ‘ I dessay ’tis all-a-de right ; but steal——

“ ‘ What about stealing ? ’ says Dick, ‘ I didn’t steal the cask. Don’t be afraid, Mounseer. Ax on and I’ll answer you.

“ ‘ Dese goot people are de vitness, ’ says

the Frenchman, ‘ and me axes you vat for this barrowveel be going, and vy de von tobb—I tells you, ‘Merican gentlemen, dat me to you introduce as a—a von grand vat you calls de *douanier*. I is dat ting, and so—a—a—*entendez vous* ?’

“ ‘ I don’t understand you, Mounseer,’ says Dick. ‘ I’m a going with this cask to the person what buyed it, and the man what solded it is your own countryman ; he’s a Mounseer too, d—n you, and he employed me to carry the cask and ‘liver it at some place or t’other, but I’ve lost the direction and so don’t know.’

“ ‘ Ah dat is good :—vary vat you call de *honeste*,’ says the Frenchman. ‘ I am satisfy so mosh ; but vat is in de tobb ?—dat you tell a-me and I be complete satisfaction.’

“ ‘ What’s in the cask ?’ says Dick, ‘ ‘baccer—baccer, Mounseer : you knows what ‘baccer is, I suppose ?’

“ ‘ Baccàar ?’ says the Frenchman, ‘ ‘bac-

càar ? vhat dat is ? You let me look in de tobb, and den I see.'

" ' Ah that's werry good, but tarn't quite conwenient just now,' says Dick. ' You can't look in the cask, Mounseer, for what you call the air will spoil the stuff inside. I'll tell you what it's got inside and that's all the same. It's 'baccer ;—Lord don't you know ?—what you puffs in pipes and puts in your mouth sometimes. Look you here, Mounseer.' Dick pretended to put a pipe in his mouth and smoke.

" ' Ah, ah ! very good—very good. It is what de English and the 'mericans call de tòbac :—I be quite satisfy. Ha, ha, so it ees de tòbac !' The Frenchman while he said this, you know, boys, thumped his hand on the 'baccer cask. Werry unfort'nate, at that 'ticular moment a sneeze comed from the inside o' the cask. Bill had got a bit of a cold in the head, and though betried hard he couldn't help sneezing. The Mounseers all started back quite

frightened, and Dick in course was taken slap aback.

“ ‘ Ah !—ah ! ’tis a lie ! it no tōbac ; it something else. Villany !—ey, ey ! you be von big liar of a ’Merican gentlemen,’ says the Frenchman, and all the rest begannd to cry out in their lingo like so many devils.

“ Dick didn’t know what to do for a moment, but when all the Mounseers got about him, chattering and grimmacing, and some on ’em laid hold o’ the cask, he plucked up his courage, laid hold on the cask, and with a wave round of his arm drived back the crowd. Then he made up a werry serious face, and says he to the Frenchman who spoke first, says he—

“ I tell you what, Mounseer—look you here ;—if this cask arn’t a cask o’ baccar, why I never wheeled a cask o’ baccar in my life. I ’knowledges there warn’t summut unlike a sneeze comed from the inside, but what o’ that ?

I can 'count for it. You see, Mounseer, and all you good people, that this cask o' 'baccer laid a d—nation long time in a werry damp cellar, and so you see that's how I 'counts for the sneeze, for the 'baccer must have got damp, and perhaps now by sneezing the damp's a working off. You needn't be surprised, for I've knowed more wonderful things in my time ; but if you can account for the sneeze in any better way, why, d—n you, do it, and I'll be werry much obliged to you.

“ ‘ Well, boys, there was a werry great to-do. The Frenchmen laid hands on Dick and the cask, but a'ter a great deal o' bawling Dick managed to get a hearing. He telled 'em that he had only said the cask was a 'baccer cask bekase he'd got a poor sick mess-mate who was travelling in that fashion that he mightn't be bothered. Dick swear'd that he was so bad that if the air was let in upon him the consequences might be fatal, as they calls it, and the goodnatured Mounseers was

quite satisfied, and fell back from the cask, and got Dick all he wanted in the way o' provision. They wanted to get a doctor, but Dick said he couldn't wait for one, and so, getting all he axed for, he went off as fast as he could, blessing his stars that he'd come off so easily from such a dangerous predicament. When they'd got some distance, Dick let out Bill, and Dick rested him in the cask while Bill wheeled him, and they had a hearty laugh at the 'wenture and the fortunate way they had got out o' the scrape.

“ ‘ Some little time a ter, they had another werry singular 'wenture : and if you likes I'll tell you that the werry next time we gets together.’

THE UNITED STATES SCHOONER,
WILDFIRE.

It was evening of the 12th of August, 1812. We were on the broad bosom of the Atlantic, and our slim schooner was cutting gallantly through the water under all sail.

The blue waves now rolling widely and majestically, though not high. The sky was clear, with some large purple and amber clouds,

and the sun was shining in the blue, penetrating and filling the air, and glistening on the surface of the water. The distance, with its long strips of soft shadow and light, was particularly distinct. As we swept on, our cutwater seemed to *slice*, if I may call it so, through the waves, causing the water to hiss and roar under our bows like a boiling kettle.

Our sails were all full, and gleamed white in the sunshine ; our decks reflected the light, and our cordage seemed so tight as to be elastic. At the peak floated the silver stars and pink stripes of our noble union.

The watch on deck consisted of five men and an officer. They were quiet, and gazing at the beauty of the evening. I was reclining on a gun-carriage and looking over our weather quarter. The wind was E. S. E. We had enough, but not too much of it.

Reclining on the deck near me, was my

friend, Lieutenant S——, of the United States Navy.

“Not much to complain of in our run across, is there?” said I to S——. We have had as good a start as any one could have hoped for, had their wishes been more sanguine than we can say ours have been. In my opinion it is always best to keep on the safe side, and not expect too much.”

“Right,” answered S——; “in so doing we stand all the less chance of being disappointed in our expectations, should fortune take it into her head to be offended at our presumption in counting too precipitately upon her goodness, and prove sulky. But good weather and a good wind have not been our only advantages. We have scraped clear of English cruisers, and their legs are sometimes of the longest, as well as their eyes of the sharpest.”

“Yes,” returned I; “they require not the

sound of trumpet for them to march after you. They want not spectacles to discover you, and they stretch out their long arms to fish you up like a muscle from the bottom of a salt-water pond. Unless you can shoot out like a comet from under their grasp, or waddle backwards like a crab into a hole, you may expect to feel their teeth in your flesh. They are ogres in their appetite, and, like them, they make their principal prey upon small craft—upon the little bantlings of the ocean, rocked on the bosom of their great mother. Well grown people and bulkier barkies sometimes stick in their throat.”

“ And little ones can make a bolt of it, if they are supple and lithe,” said the lieutenant. They can dodge the club if they are nimble, and make an offing before the enemy had well got full. The giant must waddle from his weight, like the lubberly beast that he is, and little Jack can skip, hop, and race from his want of it. Do not be afraid. I

never trusted the Wildfire in vain. She is as stout as wood and iron can make her, and the jade has a pair of legs of her own that can distance any grim rascal who has bad intentions."

"Good news," cried I, "since I am to trust to her protection. English as I am, I want to see America, and I hope she will exert her goodness so far as to carry me on her back if she should be under the necessity of making a bolt of it."

"She will not grumble at the weight, if we manage her properly," said S——, "a great deal lies in that. If she is so good as to make the attempt of carrying us so nimbly out of danger, the least we could do, I should think, when we find ourselves comfortably established on her back, is to send a few pellets from our popguns at the lubberly rascal who rolls and pitches in his pursuing of us."

"I'll answer for my share of that, as far as

promise goes," said I. "My aim, if I fire at all, which I may do for the sake of some Irishman's fun, shall be at one of his bow-chasers, or, in other words, at his starboard peeper, which I shall stop up, and make him see with his left when we have turned the corner. Truly this weather maketh one lazy. Here I lie, reclining like a lord, with a somewhat harder cushion; and there are you, endeavouring as much as in you lay, to follow my example."

"To be sure," said S——; "good example is never lost upon me. How's her head, Thompson?"

"Right enough, sir," returned the quarter master. "If this wind hold, we shall in fair time see Boston."

"Sail, ho!" cried one of the look-outs.

"Aha!" ejaculated S——, starting up.

"Who have we now? A sail is it, Robinson, eh? where is she?"

"There, sir," said Robinson, pointing, "she's

nearly to windward, and on our larboard quarter."

"I see her," cried S——, "here H——, come here and make use of your eyes. Bring us a glass."

"Aye, aye, sir."

At S——'s call I rose and walked aft to him. He was eyeing the strange sail carefully, and I, the moment I caught its position, was doing the same.

In a moment or two the glass was brought and in the hand of S——, who looked intently at the sail, and remained a long time without altering a muscle of his countenance or changing his position.

At last he turned his head to me, still holding up the glass with both hands.

"I calculate that that fellow is likely to turn out something ugly. She looks devilish large, and is standing straight in our direction. Do you look and tell me what you think of him."

I took the glass without speaking and directed it towards the stranger.

She was a large ship nearly head on, with a breadth of square sail which seemed to promise a heavy hull when she should have lifted sufficiently to disclose it. Her head sails seemed closely packed, and she appeared coming up at a good round rate. Her outline was grey, but distinctly marked upon the lightness of the distant sky.

"From the cut of her sails and her general appearance, as yet," said I, "I judge her a vessel of war, and whether she is likely to turn out English or not, you are best able to judge."

"Tis not at all improbable, or rather it is highly probable," answered S——, "We must pack on till I know what she is, and then it will be time to think of putting myself before the wind or holding the same course we maintain at present. But if we must run from her, my opinion is that our best chance

is on a wind. I know the qualities of the Wildfire, and am pretty well persuaded it will take a good deal to beat her on one."

"Sail, ho!" cried another voice just at this moment.

"Hillo," cried S——, "Are they coming upon us as thick as hailstones? Have you reported the ship a second time to make sure."

"No, sir, not quite that," returned the seaman with a smile, "there's another devil there, sir, just lifting."

"So—so, and to windward too—directly to windward: that there's devilish awkward, as the blind man said when the dog that was leading him fell over into a pit. Let's look at him, however."

S——again took the glass, but was not so long in his examination of the new one as in the case of the other ship. "Another rascal," cried he, "just the very counterpart of the fellow who who is coming to speak with us."

I soon found that his announcement was correct.

"The appearance of this other ship," said S——, "somewhat shakes me in my opinion that the first was a vessel of war. They may be both West Indiamen, and I do not think it would be a bad plan to lay to till we see a little more of them—canvas is often deceitful."

"All well and good," said I, "if you fancy your Wildfire will be able to make long legs of it when she's come to her determination, and found she mustn't wait for a conversation with the two gentlemen who are coming so kindly to volunteer it."

"I'll try her at all events," returned S——; "if it should be so, there will be the greater merit in the race. I'll wait for the hulls any how."

The crew came tumbling up, and the schooner was soon stripped. Her head sails came flapping down, the squaresails descended the wand-like topmasts, and the gaff topsail having

been taken in, the gaff was merely lowered, and rolled the mainsail round in wind-swollen folds.

Thus we lay for some time, lightly poised like a bird on the long clear waves, rolling gracefully, and alternately washing our glossy sides in the sunshiny water.

All eyes were of course directed to the strangers. We had to wait patiently while they slowly lifted. The ship first seen was rising fast, her gray pyramid was becoming larger and more distinct, and as the base of it was heaving up we looked out anxiously for a peep at her hull. The other stranger, being with the wind, was shooting up as rapidly as her companion, and under about as much sail. We did not as yet know that we were seen, as no change had taken place in their appearances.

First the hull of the first ship began to rise out of the dim grey strip of distant water, and shortly after that of the other. They both

loomed dark and large. Through glasses we could see a small white band in each, dotted with ports and soft in their distance. At this moment some dots, which we knew to be signals, ran up to the maintopgallantmast head of the ship first seen, and her head fell slightly off from the wind. This movement was sufficient to let us know that we were seen, and we waited impatiently to see if more sail would be added to the pile each ship displayed. By and bye out ran the slender booms, and the studding sails began to widen the outline of the mass of sails. After two or three slight turns to starboard and port, the head of the first ship settled directly for us; and on looking at the other vessel, we found that she was already square on the horizon with her studding sails, and laid up directly for us also. Both vessels were dark and small in the south-east, and they were as yet too far for us to see the sun shining on them, though he poured his light on the bright sea between us,

and must have made out our spars distinctly enough on the horizon.

"No traders, sure enough," said S——. Their laying themselves so deliberately up for us prove it mightily. What say you, H——? there is a chance of their being French, or some of our own cruisers, though I confess the cut of their sails and their general appearance seem to contradict me. What say you? is it prudent to lay by a little longer, or shall we spread out our wings and fly?"

"I think if you delay much longer, they will send a shot through some of our feathers, and oblige us to drop to the ground, or rather water."

"Very well then, we'll make a run of it. All hands---make sail!"

In obedience to this command the crew, who were all on deck, immediately dispersed. The head sails rose flapping to their places, the gaff was hoisted, the mainsail consequently tightening, the gaff topsail was set, and the

square sails were let out and sheeted home. As the head of the Wildfire fell off before the wind all the sails filled strongly, and we soon found ourselves cutting the water in most satisfactory style."

"Down with the colours," said S——, let them not see who we are. If there's need we'll take care and show 'em at the proper time."

The colours were soon drawn in and rolled up.

Twilight was now gradually coming on. The sun was nearly down, changing his glories to crimson, and flashing strongly on the waves below him. The east was already deep blue, and the two ships with their broad sails spread were somewhat hazy.

The Wildfire continued to make the best of way. Her cutwater roared over the billows in a cloud of surge, and her tense sails were filled evenly and tightly. The bubbles which raced by us and tumbled and tossed on the

sea in our wake denoted how fast we were going.

“By and by the sun sank redly down surrounded with purple and crimson clouds, the light of the sky dulled down, and the distant sea began to grow gloomy. Shadows were stealing over the broad sea space and widening, while a few stars were glittering in the dark sky, and every moment becoming more bright. Our pursuers seemed still to appear of the same size as when we first made sail.

“When it had been dark some time Lieutenant S—— and I went below, the Lieutenant giving particular instructions that if anything should occur he should instantly be called on deck. We sat ourselves down in the cabin and ordered the steward to send us some coffee.

“After we had sat about a couple of hours, S——’s anxiety again led him on deck, and I shortly followed. We were just in the same position with regard to our pursuers,—

we could see or hear no more of them than when night closed in.

We remained above some time, and then S—— left the deck, committing the charge of the vessel to the officer of the watch, giving orders to keep the ship in precisely the same state as she was at present, and reiterating his directions to be called at the instant if any change of weather, or any perceptible movement on the part of our antagonists, took place.

Accordingly we went below, and I turned in, leaving the lieutenant over a glass of grog.

I was not disturbed all night, and at about six o'clock next morning turned out. After I had dressed I went into the cabin, where I found S——, who informed me he had slept but an hour or two. He had, however, been on deck, and found that our relative positions were somewhat altered, the ship last seen had gained upon us, though not to any alarming extent.

I was soon on deck and looking out for myself. The morning was beautiful, the sun was strong, and shining over the whole sea. The nearest ship was under a cloud of canvas, and moving steadily on. The sunshine fell upon a spot in her side, and I could see her white belt glistening softly with its black dots. Through the glass she seemed to ride grandly over the waves, and I could see the snow-white surge, like a white point, boiling up under her bows, telling somewhat fearfully of the rate at which she was advancing. The other ship was considerably to leeward of her consort, and seemed higher out of the water and heavier, her booms spread broadly out, covering a formidable space, and extending the dim pile of studding sails.

"The little they have gained on us," said I to S——, who had come up, "tells something against us. She'll contrive to make it more before noon, and if we keep but the same pace

we must lose the race. I suppose you don't think the Wildfire is able to fight her?"

"Not quite that, my dear sir," returned S——, "that fellow's metal would blow her out of the water—blow her up like peels of onions. No, I've nothing to trust to but her legs, and if they fail why we may bid good bye to Boston for a time. I make out this first ship, now I have a little better sight of her, an English frigate to the backbone, and the devil won't let us alone, depend upon it, till he has run us down. See how he keeps up after us, all through the dark too, as if he had the eyes of a cat. But I'll try and baffle him yet. Up with the helm and let her fall off, ease away the boom sheet, in with your weather braces, and prepare and rig out the stunsails."

The ship's head fell off from the wind, and the yards were squared, while the men were sent aloft and busied themselves in clearing out the booms and spreading our snowy studding sails.

We now raced with the waves, leaping over them almost before they had time to surge. Our graceful schooner stooped elegantly over the seas, and skimmed down them so buoyantly, that she almost seemed to touch the water only in a point.

"That will do I think for a time," said S——, "now we'll go below, and see if by noon this first fellow will have diminished his distance. If he does, 'twill be time for me to throw my guns overboard."

"Why you would not pull out your teeth yourself, would you?" said I.

"What's the use of them," said he, "if I've nothing to eat. You wouldn't have me venture upon that big fellow, would you? If I don't draw them myself, I know very well they'll be knocked down my throat for me."

Time passed on, hour after hour slipped by, we still stood swiftly forward. About eight o'clock, S—— finished a long look at the first

frigate, during which he had not said a word, with,

“Come, H——, come and let us have something to eat.”

I thought it was of no use to stay on deck watching when there was nothing new to see, and so I descended and joined him at what he made his dinner. We made ourselves as comfortable as we could under the circumstances, but I had my doubts of the Wildfire's being able to escape after all, if it should be true, as we all expected, that our pursuers were English frigates.

I had just “laid my knife a board,” as the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* says, the breast of a fine fowl, when a man came below to tell his commander that the first ship had contrived to get—something nearer. S—— started up and ran on deck, in spite of my earnest remonstrance that the fowl would hurt by keeping and the ship would not. I had to sit down *solus* and employ myself upon the fowl, which

now however I had all to myself, with liberty, had I been so greedy, to have eaten all. After I had made a tolerable dinner, at precisely two o'clock in the afternoon, I walked up the companion and found myself on deck.

The sun was shining brilliantly, filling the sky with glory and flashing on the water. Piles of fleecy clouds were floating in the bright clear blue which were literally suffused with light. The sun cast long strips of soft, picture-like shadow over the breadth of distant sea, and shone on our white sails, clear decks, and black, glossy sides.

The ship which was first in pursuit was now considerably nearer—she was no longer dark and indistinct, but large and bright. She was nearly head on, her bowsprit surmounted with the pile of sails and her yards and booms spreading canvas up to the royals. The sun was shining on her side and partly illuminating the cloud of sails. Her black

hull was almost midway threaded with a snowy band, bristling with guns and gleaming in the sunshine. All this was distinguishably through the glass, together with the specks of boats hanging at her quarters, and glimpses of threadlike spars and tracery. It was evident that in a short time, if she continued to hold on at her present rate, she must get within gunshot. Her consort was at some distance, but she had also lifted, and now the pyramid which she presented was based with the dim hull.

“Near enough, is she not?” said S—— when I had concluded my examination and had laid down the glass. “Two hours hence she will be telling her shot among our sails—poor rags!” continued he, looking up at them, “I should be sorry to see them slit.”

“It looks uncomfortable, I must acknowledge,” said I, wincing; “fighting is out of the question.”

"You never said a truer thing," returned S——, "one broadside would do our business. Well, I've tried my best, and if I am overtaken, why, I can't help it. One thing I'm clear of, and that is she must be a devil of a sailer to overhaul the Wildfire."

"Our Wildfire has fizzed her last, I'm thinking," said I; "see—she comes down like a racehorse."

"On a wind, or before the wind," said S——, "it seems all the same. If anything were wanting to convince me our pursuer's a frigate, her being able to keep up with us would have been sufficient. All's spread that we can crowd in, is it, Robinson?"

"Aye, sir, every inch."

"And everything draws?"

"Tight as a bladder full of wind."

"We're doing everything we can, then. If I thought it would be of any use, I'd throw over some of my guns. It may do some good,

and they're no more use to me than so many pieces of wood. Here, stand by, some of you, with your handspikes, and heave over half of them !"

In obedience to his orders, the crew seized their handspikes and detached the guns from their carriages. Two of those on the star-board side were ordered to be first sent over. Watching the roll, at the order to heave, the men lent their efforts, and down plunged the guns, striking the water with a tremendous splash, and causing it to start up around them in strong, flashing jets. Eased of the weight, that side of the vessel seemed to rise up like a spring, but the instant after its starting up the other two guns on the other side were tumbled into the waves, and sank like tons of lead.

Time passed on, we continued flying over the waves with everything set which we could crowd, but with the unenviable certainty that

our pursuers were every minute gaining on us. We were grouped astern, anxiously watching the frigates. Very little was said, and if our eyes did move they only wandered from our pursuers to our sails and back again to our pursuers.

While we were in this situation, S——'s eye at the glass and the rest of us either conversing with anxiety or gazing intently at our enemies, a pencil of light flashed from the bow of the nearest ship, instantly followed by a jet of white smoke, which shot out into a globe and then began softly to expand. We waited in silence but could see nothing of the shot, till one of the men shouted—"There—there it is," and pointed it out cutting the tops of the waves and shaving them up into showers of spray. Presently the hollow report rolled down to us, and the ship's head was obscured in the cloud of smoke.

"That's the 'stop a bit and let me speak

with you," said S——, "we shall by and bye have the 'how do you do.' Never was there such an unpolite jade as the Wildfire, she won't stay for them, civil as they are in asking her to do it."

"Because the lady's afraid of them, and very properly, too," said I. "Besides two at once are enough to put anybody out of countenance. The poor little thing is timid, and don't like such rough invitations. They'll walk up to her though before night."

"I'll try if I can't throw a stone in their eye, however," said S——. "As this fellow's been so kind as to open the conversation, I don't see why we shouldn't return an answer. A lucky shot might bring down some of those highflying kites. Load our stern chaser, and I'll try my hand at playing marbles. Clear the way now, and come H—— and see my success."

Our stern gun was loaded, and S——

carefully pointed, adjusting the piece with great coolness and deliberation. When he had fixed it to his mind, he took the portfire from one of the seamen, raised it and fired. The rush of flame and report was almost instantaneous. A cloud of smoke rolled upon us, making us turn our heads and hiding everything for a time. It rushed down the deck, and when we looked again we had the comfort of seeing not a bit of alteration in our pursuer---there she was, as large, as near, and as complete as ever.

“A shot thrown away,” cried S——.
“We’ll keep away however as long as we can. The wind seems freshening.”

It was as he said, for the wind blew now much more strongly than it had done. The waves were longer and, rolled out more majestically, lifting us higher up, and tumbling about us.

The ships still stood perseveringly after us with all their broad sails. They were like

giants walking over the waves after us, compared to which our poor schooner was little more than a bubble. I could see the black bends line on line, and the white band bristling with guns, shadowed by raised ports, the dark bulwarks with their chains and shrouds, the quarter boats swinging at the davits, the long bowsprit pointing over the waves and covered with triangular sails, the yards and booms extending sail on sail till they seemed to rise to the clouds, and terminated in the slender spars which shot aloft. While I was looking, another flash shot from the nearest frigate, another puff of white smoke followed, and the shot dashed by, scoring the water and flying ahead, leaving a long white line of spray to track its way. The waves were rolling large and bluely, and sweeping us on like a cork.

“Set the colours,” cried S——, “we may as well let them know who we are, and who

has led them such a pretty dance, before we give in."

In a minute the colours ran up to the gaff end, and blew straight out, revealing our gay red stripes and constellation of bright stars in its field of blue.

The display of our flag seemed to occasion a sensation, for two guns one on the heels of the other flashed out of the frigate's bows. One shot went ahead, but the other flew so near us as to send a dash of spray right over the deck, wetting it like rain.

The frigate had so gained on us, as to be now within half gunshot. Still S—— persevered in keeping the schooner before the wind. But something soon altered his determination. We saw the frigate's cutwater incline to the starboard, and her bow and side begin to open. S—— as quick as lightning saw what was coming, and called out for the colours to be brought down. Down the fluttering stripes

were drawn, and our naked gaff was pointing alone above.

The schooner's head immediately ran into the wind. We were stripping. There we lay, tumbling on the long seas, all our white sails falling loose and fluttering. I cast an eye at our antagonist. The frigate had seen what we were about, and some of her white studding sails were descending. One by one they came down, filling loosely and waving fiercely as they were taken in. The other frigate was also reducing her breadth, and yards of her horizontal canvas were going in, like an immense bird floating on the surface of the water and folding its wings. Her vast pyramid was tumbling to pieces, and running to her sky masthead were several signals, flying out in the wind and seemingly floating in vacancy. The hulls of these two ships looked formidable enough, they were large, dark and heavy.

Our crew were all busy in furling sails ; we now of course had no way, and lay there rolling in the hollow of the sea. The giants who had pursued us were sweeping up, and we every minute expected to be boarded.

“ It’s all over, H———,” said S———, “ The stripes are down, and the Wildfire is the property of his Britannic Majesty. We shall see England and not Boston, and go back the way we have come. It’s one comfort these two devils are so large. It takes all blame from my shoulders, and gives me a sort of merit in my twenty-four hours’ run. See ; here they come,” he continued, pointing to the first frigate, from which a boat was just shoving off.

We watched them till they came alongside. There was a midshipman and a strong party of seamen in the boat.

“ This schooner has struck ?” the officer queried, standing up in the stern sheets.

"Certainly," replied S——. "I need not invite you to mount."

The midshipman and his men came on deck.

"I cannot say that you are welcome, gentlemen," said S——, "but still I am as happy to see you as I can be under the circumstances. 'Tis the fortune of war. I tried hard to run for it, but it wouldn't do—you've longer legs than the Wildfire."

"Is that the name of your vessel?" enquired the midshipman."

"It is," returned S——. "The Wildfire, late the property of the United States, now a prize to his Majesty, the King of England."

The officer was civil, and took the command of the schooner with anything but a disagreeable display of his mastership. We found our first pursuer was the Jupiter, a frigate of thirty-six guns, and her consort, the Thames, of forty-four.

We were that evening removed on board the latter ship, and after a somewhat lengthened cruise, no opportunity occurring of sending us to England, were landed at Portsmouth. After our arrival at the last place, however, we were soon exchanged, and on our return to America, S—— had little cause to regret the loss of his schooner, in being appointed to a magnificent brig, in which, fortunately, he had more success than in his prior command.

JACK, IN A CHURCH.

A YARN.

A willing auditory. Lesson to story-tellers. Some of the right sort. True blue. Presumption. Battle. A friend in need. Victory. Good fellowship. A pattern for wives. Truth. Somewhat religious. Necessary instructions. See and be seen. The disagreeable surprise. Just indignation. A setter to rights. Exordium and address. Much confusion. *Coup de théâtre.* Lesson to public functionaries. *A noli prosequi.* *Finale.*

"Some o' you fellers are looking snoozy," said a wide awake member, addressing the watch one night. "What say ye to a yarn?"

"That's right, Bob," cried two or three" starting up. "Let's have it."

"It shan't be a doleful one, because we've run'd out our grog, and watery stories d'ye see, require a dash of the spirit.—Ha, ha, that's good, arn't it?"

"Humph:---tol'able."

"And it shan't be false, 'cause then, you see again, you can't place no dependance on it. I likes a story that when you're telling it again you can say, 'I'm hanged if it tarn't as true as the Bible. Then people can't shake no heads at ye, or if they do you may blow 'em up for it with a good conscience. But this, boys, is as true as you re all sitting there, so when you're paying it out again you may all say that you've seen it yourselves, and I'll be bail for your debility."

"Well, you've heered what things the Killease,* forty, did in the West Ingy seas,

* Achilles.

and what a set o' stiff fellers she had aboard her. I know'd a few on 'em in diff'rent places, and was once half inclined to sarve aboard her myself, only at the time I wanted I was sarving in the Andrew Mackie,† one of the crack thirty-sixes, and had a skipper what I didn't want to part company with. 'Tall events, as I said afore, I know'd a few on her men—and jolly fellers they was too, capital hands at the grog, and as glib at a yarn, long or short, taught or bightish, sad or merry, true or 'pocryphal, as ever you'd wish to see I'll tell you how I got 'quainted with Joe Fisher who was one o' the best among 'em. It was at Falmouth, and I was in a public house with a pipe in my bow-port and a pot o' beer afore me, sittivated in one o' the inshore reaches. There was a good many coasting crafts and unregular navigators brought to an anchor about, and amongst 'em was Joe:—

† Andromache.

he and I, you must know, was the only thoroughbreds in the place. Well, I didn't know nothing o' Joe then, in course, and though I could see he was a true un, and he must ha' made me out to be the same, we hadn't as yet hailed each other. Well, I and some o' the long shore coveys got into conversation, and, starting some perfeessional subjects, at last into summut like a little kind of a breeze. The fellers hadn't no right to dispute the 'pinion certainly of a man o' war's man, but howsomedever they *did*, and afore I know'd where I was or into what latitude I'd got, I found myself carrying on like the devil in a stiffish running fight, with a couple o' blazers ahead and some smaller craft on each bow. *They* jawed, and *I* jawed, till their noise nearly runned me down, for four at one, you know, wasn't fair play, and I was just thinking o' hauling off out o' the smoke, when up shot Joe Fisher on my starboard quarter, and begannd thundering away on my side.

I directly gathered fresh heart, and re-manning my guns, peppered away on two o' the coveys on my starboard beam, while Joe, already loaded and primed, sent a whole broadside slap aboard the others. Even now there was four to two, but lord ! Joe's metal was fifty times as heavy as his 'tagonists, and his guns was so well sarved that their fire gradually fell off to nothing."

" By and by they all begin'd to sheer off, wonderfully disabled in their upper rigging, and when the smoke had a little cleared away, I hailed Joe, and Joe hailed me, and we begin'd to grow wonderful thick. He sing'd out for biscuit and cheese, and I for porter, and we soon got as comfortable as a couple o' kings, and know'd each other's history from the time we shoved off our keels into the ocean o' sarvice to the moment he steered down to my assistance.

" A generous feller was Joe, indeed ! for when to pay was the word and the landlord

shoved in his warrant, while I was rummaging for small shot he tossed a handful o' coppers into his starboard bin and told him to bear off and say nothing to nobody. But howsomever I was even with master Joe another time ; but never mind about that !

“ Well, you must know, my lads, that Joe wasn't going to stay at Falmouth only a very little time, for his skipper had only put in there for a day or two and was bound for Portsmouth Harbour. The day a'ter this, Joe and I shaked hands and steered diff'rent courses ; he went aboard his craft, and I cut off for Sheerness, and I didn't hear on him till some time arter. But blow *me* if I *haven't* forgotten to tell ye that he had been married for a couple o' year ; and his partner---a well rigged young 'oman so he said, fond o new cloths in her mainsail, and of mighty genteel behaviour---he had her from a 'spectable stock, for her father kept a wholesale crockery shop, and her mother had been cookmaid to an

admiral's lady--none o' yer flaunting, flyaway, bunting-decked, gingerbread, tittering young lasses, but an orderly, taught-sailing craft, what never run'd with loose rigging but had al'ays her spars scrup'lously squared and her cordage neatly standing, al'ays answering her helm, and tarning lightly to wind'ard, and never missing stays. She lived in Portsmouth, and in course Joe was in a main hurry to join company whilst he stayed in port.

" Well, what's to come I had from a very 'edible witness, and when I sawed Joe a'terwards and axed him about it, he fully bored out the other's testymoney and conferred that no long bow had been drawn in the bus'ness.

" The next day a'ter Joe got ashore happened to be Sunday, and, as his consart was very 'ligious, nothing would do but he and she should go to church. Joe hadn't been to no church for a number o' year, and strived hard to be excused the sarvice. But this only made

the young 'oman ten time more dissolute, and at last Joe was reasoned down into the voyage and made to ship his holiday toggery. Afore they got aboard the praying place, his missus think'd fit to give him a little destruction in the way he should behave himself in it, and amongst the rest, says she to him, says she---

“ ‘ Joe,’ says she, ‘ mind you mustn’t say nothing to nobody till the bus’ness is all over, and then only in a whisper.’ ”

“ ‘ Very well,’ says Joe, ‘ I won’t.’ ”

“ ‘ You mustn’t,’ says she, ‘ keep rolling your eyes about the deck, and when the people gets up and sits down, mind you gets up and sits down, too.’ ”

“ ‘ Aye, aye,’ says Joe, ‘ I won’t sit down at all, and then I can’t fail o’ being right.’ ”

“ ‘ Well,’ says she, ‘ that’ll be better than keeping your seat all the time,’ says she, ‘ and with a little regglation from me you’ll do in that respect tol’rable well. Now the next

thing,' says she, ' what I'd have you mind of all things is that you must remember no one upon no account whatsomedever must say nothing except the parson.'

" ' Aye, aye,' says Joe, ' I'll be blow'd if I don't mind *that*, 'specially as I knows that nobody has no right to give no orders except the captain. Well, that's all, I 'spose,' says he.

" ' Yes,' says she, ' that's all, only be sure to remember that nobody's to speak never a word except the parson,' and with that they cried hands to the lee braces and stood in.

" Well, 'my lads, having slackened sail they bring'd their helm to the larboard, and espying a snug anchorage with only a single craft moored in it, stood across to'ards its nearest end. Then they clued up their courses, and backing their maintopsail got starn way and let fall their kedges. But they'd got so far

abaft that they could see little or nothing of what was a going on, and as Joe kept every now and then poking up his starboard eye over the hammock rail, and seemed mighty restless his missus, think'd they might get a better berth. So she got under weigh, and with her consart in her wake doubled a cape and stood on under an easy sail through the whole fleet, till at last she bring'd to under the bows of the Admiral's ship, and throw d out a signal for Joe to do the like. This was a much better sittivation, for they could hear beautiful and faced the whole congregation. All went on very well for some time, the parson was getting through his log like an East Ingyman in a staggerer, and Joe seemed very 'tentive.

“ Well, my hearties, as bad luck would have it, just as the old gentleman who was a-reading had cut through a tar-nation long thingumbob, a strange voice just above Joe's head sing'd out, drawing it out as long as the main top

bowline, 'A——men!' My eyes, you should ha' seen Joe. He pricked up his ears directly, and, as he didn't know well what to make on it, at first he said nothing to nobody, but looked very queer and begin'd to grumble to himself. His missus, who had all along been very fearful of his behaviour, heered him sayin' summut just above his breath, and,

" 'What's the matter, Joe?' says she.

" 'Matter,' says he, 'blow me nothing's the matter, only this ere feller in the foretop has been a-saying what he shouldn't ha' said.'

" Well, the people about begin'd to look rather funny, and Joe's partner told him to let down his bowport and not say no more. The parson, you know, had it all to himself now for some time, and Joe know'd all that was right enough, and so kept wonderful quiet.

" But by and bye, you know, the foretop feller striked up again, and begin'd to sing out

summut considerable longer than the first. Joe bobbed up his truck again and looked rather flustered.

“ ‘ Poll,’ says he, ‘ didn’t you tell me afore we comed in that nobody was to say nothing except the parson.’

“ ‘ Hush ! for goodness sake be quiet, Joe,’ says she.

“ ‘ Quiet,’ says he, ‘ when I sees no discipline aboard the Admiral’s ship, d—d if I will.’

“ Joe started up, threw down his log-book, and primed for action.

“ ‘ I say you mister,’ he sings out, ‘ you mister in the foretop ahoy——a ! What ’thority have you to cry out when the captain’s a-speaking and you’ve orders to run in your piece and lash down the port ? Pretty regg’lation aboard here, indeed ! Don’t you see his honour looks quite dumbfounded with your impudence ? What bus’ness have you to keep

there mocking the skipper in this insinivating way, eh, you 'long-shore toddler? I wish I'd got you aboard the Kill case, that's all. I'd see if you'd play such pranks again. Blow me if you shouldn't have a lash from every man in the fleet. I heerd you the time afore, you lubber, I did, only I think'd I'd give you an offing for consideration, and fancied what you sing'd out slipped from you convoluntary. Shiver my timbers here's a pretty go! mutiny, by Jingo!--a d--d, sculking mutiny. And you too, old gentleman, why don't you unship your barnacles and sing out for the master at arms. If you won't make your men pay you proper respect why that's *your* fault, that's all. Blow me if he won't get under hatches in a minute. Hail for a guard and clap him in the bilboes. Here's jolly revolution! men tarned skippers--warrant coveys flag officers. Blow me if you arn't all a disgrace to his Majesty's sarvice, one and all--one and all, from skipper to landsman.'

By Jove but you should ha' seen the church! all in as much confusion as the cockpit arter a thundering action. The lighter craft scream'd and begin'd to scud from their moorings. The men o' war bear'd up and wanted to see what was the matter. The parson dipped down the hatchway, and swing'd down to the lower deck along the bannister rail, while the charity boys, and the chap what keeps order, comed running through the reaches to get hold o' Joe. Joe got on the seat, and was singing out like a thirty-two pounder.—

“ ‘I say, you sir,’ says he, ‘you chap with the cocked hat, threepenny cane, and laced toggery, capital order you keeps ’tween decks, when the captain can’t say his say without being put out every minute. I’ll warrant you was ogling the young women alongside instead of attending to your duty. Clap on more sail, old bottle-nose, and bowl down as

you ought to do. Clear away your grappling i'ons and run aboard your chase or the clipper'll slip through your fingers. I've a good mind, only it 'ud be interfering with regglations, to bring you down myself, you fish-eyed, basin-headed, limber-finned, bell-pulling, spade-driving, psalm-singing son of a poor-box. You'll soon heave to in limbo, that's one comfort, so come down and victual for the cruise, and be d——d to you.'

"Howsomedever Joe was stopped short in his 'dress to the ship's company, and hauled out by a half dozen o' the hands into the stern galleries. A few o' those on board, 'specially the parson and his first and second mate, wanted to march him off under guard for a court martial, under the charge as they said of disturbing the congregation at their 'votions, but one or two o' the most 'spectable passengers offered to become bail for his 'pearance, and so they taked off his lumbago and let him warp away. The damage arter all wasn't o' no great im-

portance, but often as he's been since in Portsmouth, blow *me* if you could ever get Joe into any thing what mounted a steeple or had a warrant officer forreds with a cocked hat, cane, and laced jacket.

TOM SPICKMAN AND STEPHEN
SPLICER.

PART FIRST.

Friendly enquiries. Don't know who. Stop a bit. Calling to mind. Dull as ditch water. Field sports attractive. The sailor turned sportsman. An expedition into the interior. Arms and ammunition. A correction in grammar. Somewhat impatient. Bothered in an explanation. *Ex fumo dare lucem*. The want of a guide. One pressed into the service. Proper distinctions. Signalising. A taste in colours. A purchase. Preserved ginger. Reconnoitring. A peep at prey. A strange sail. Making oneself believe what one wishes true. In soundings. Comparing notes. A mistake somewhere. Ill used on earth safety sought in heaven. A general chase. Disturbed by a voice. The pursuit of a shadow given up. A turning of the reins.

“Do any of you fellers know anything of a

Tom Spickman," asked a seaman of his companions, who were seated in a little circle on the forecastle of the fine new frigate, Retaliator. The evening was a fine one in June, and the little party formed the watch on deck.

"Tom Spickman," repeated two or three, "no, I never heer'd the name."

"Tom Spickman," cried a third party, "Tom Spickman; I ought to remember the name. Stop a bit—wasn't he a fo'castle man aboard the Hermes."

"Yes he was," said the first speaker. Fo'castle man aboard her for several years. An odd chap he was, too, a little soft in the upper works—Ha, ha! Did you know much on him, Joe?"

"No, not much," returned Joe; "I heer'd on him though several times, and I sailed once with him two or three weeks when he in the Hermes and I in the Peak* was crossing

* Pique.

the 'Lantic for a cruise against the privateers. But he was the biggest fool I ever sailed with. What made you think on him, Bob?"

"I don't know," said Bob, "he comed across my mind. Did ye ever hear how when he was lying in Portsmouth Harbour he got leave o' absence for three days and started off on a sporting expedition?"

"What," cried Joe, "*did* Tom ever go a sporting! Well, come, that's an odd idea at all events."

"Let's hear, let's hear," cried a majority of the circle. "What about this Tom Spickman? You seem to know most on him, Bob; tell us."

"So I will, boys," cried Bob, starting up. "It's a d——d queer story, and well worth the listening to. This Tom Spickman, as Joe has told you, was a fo'castle man aboard the the Hermes, and at the time o' my story the Hermes was lying snug enough in Portsmouth

Harbour just arrived from the Jamaica station, and all the hands in course looking out for a bit o' 'laxation. Well, Tom had lain here for a week, devilish dull for want o' summut to do, for it was all flat calm with the men, you know, and a'ter being in activity so long they nat'rally felt it. Tom, as I say, had lain here for a week obliged to put up with his lot, but directly the week was over, 'Blow'd if I'm going to stand this any long,' says Tom, and so off he goes to the luff—the skipper and first luff, besides a round dozen more o' the officers, was ashore, you know—aye, not only ashore but miles off.

“ Well, my boys, he axes the luff for leave o' absence, and the luff thinking it all fair that as he had as yet had no pleasure he should have some now, gives him permission to leave the ship for three days and to do what he liked with himself. Tom only axed, you must know, for three days, and so all was right.

“ Well, Tom casts about in his mind how best to spend his three days, and not having a sweetheart, at least ne’er a one in Portsmouth or Gosport, he makes up his mind, and the first thing he does is to march up to an old crony of his, named Stephen Splicer, who knowed just about as much of the land as a hedgehog does of the water, or a post-captain does of the coal-hole.

“ ‘ Well, Spli,’ says he, ‘ how are *you* getting on ?’

“ ‘ Oh, hang it, I don’t know,’ says Splicer, ‘ deucedly hard up for something to amuse me.’

“ ‘ Just the very thing,’ cries Tom. ‘ I’ll tell you what, Spli,’ says he, ‘ I’ve got liberty for three days and I’ve got something in my truck.’

“ ‘ Have ye ?’ says Spli, ‘ well out with it.’

“ ‘ Why, it’s this,’ says Tom. ‘ You know we’re as dull here as ditchwater, and I wants

you and I—you must get leave as well as me, you know—I wants you and I to go a sporting.’

“ ‘ A sporting !’ cries Spli, holding up his fins. ‘ What, are you going to stand out to sea and shoot porpoises, or pass over to the French coast and pick off the fishermen ?’

“ ‘ Neither one nor t’other,’ says Tom. ‘ I’ve often heer’d that sporting’s rare fun, and so I don’t see why I shouldn’t sport as well as another. I shall carry a musket and ship some powder and shot, you know and go sporting on a manor.’

“ ‘ Go sporting in a manner, you mean, Tom,’ says Splicer. ‘ If you want to shoot, why don’t you go to the island and shoot some birds among the cliffs.’

“ ‘ ‘Cause if I *do* sport,’ says Tom, ‘ I’ll sport in a proper fashion. Don’t say no more about it, Spli. I’m going, and,—ye, will you go ?’

“ Well, not to keep too long upon this tack,

my lads, the short and the long of it was that Tom and Splicer set off together, for Spli soon got liberty, and they got ashore at the Hard.

“ Well, these two fellers was rigged out in regg’lar sporting fashion, you must know, muskets in hand, powder and ball at their back, with duck and blue jackets on, and straw tiles upon their noddles. As they was going down the ship’s side the officer of the deck axed what they was going to do with their guns, and so they up’d and told him all about their sporting contentions.”

“ Don’t say *contentions*, Bob,” said one of the seamen, “ it’s *intentions*---When you intend to do a thing, you know, it’s an *intention*.”

“ Oh, hang your intentions !” cried Bob ! “ What did ye put me out for ? What does it matter so long as you understand what a feller means ? A_ precious nice diffusion

you've throw'd my story into with your intentions."

"There again, Bob," cried his corrector. What *are* ye arter? It's *confusion* that you mean and not *diffusion*. To make a confusion it to make a higgledy-piggledy of a thing, like a ship's sails fluttering afore she stretches out upon the fresh tack, you know. But a diffusion is—to make—a sort of—diffusion, you know. Come crack on, crack on."

And the elucidator, a little bothered with his own illustration, resumed his pipe all in a hurry as if to conceal his unlucky interruption, and to set the others off again in their listening to the story. Bob was not ill-natured and so let the fault-finding pass.

"Well, my lads, I told ye that the officer of the deck axed Tom and Splicer what they was a going to do and that they told him they was going to sport. The officer didn't take no notice, only laughed and told 'em to get down. So off they set and got snugly ashore. Both

chaps now were cracking on up the streets and lanes to get into the country, for both knew that there wasn't no things to shoot to be found among the houses.

"Well, on they went. The day was very sunny and fine, and so they got precious hot, but they didn't mind that as they was going to have a day's pleasure in a new fashion. By and bye, Splicer, who was ahead, slackened sail, hove to, and hailed his 'panion as his 'panion stood up.

" 'Tom,' says he.

" 'Well,' says Tom.

" 'What d'ye think?' says Spli.

" 'D——d if I know,' says Tom.

" 'Wouldn't it be a Jolly good thing if we was to buy some book?' says Spli.

" 'Book,' says Tom, book, what should we buy a book for?"

" 'Bekase for this reason, Tom,' says his companion, 'a book will tell us all what we ought to do to circumvent our game and where the

best sporting's to be found. 'Sides there's another thing that's very 'portant.'

" 'What's that? says Tom, as his companion held his breath for a moment.'

" 'Why, it's this,' says Spli, 'do you know birds?'

" 'Birds, blow'd if I don't,' cries Tom, 'there's noddies, boobies, gulls, cormorants, (on the coasts,) puffins and flying fish.'

" 'Aye, aye, I know'd all that,' says Spli, 'but bless your soul these arn't the critters what we're going to look for—these arn't game.'

" 'What's the odds,' says Tom, 'can't we shoot 'em and so *make* game on 'em?'

" 'That may 'be,' says t'other, 'but the game I mean is the regg'lar game that the land lubbers what goes a sporting shoots at. We shant't meet any noddies, boobies, gulls, cormorants, and flying fish out this way.'

" 'Blow'd if I think we mayn't,' says Tom, 'some of each specie what waddles on two

legs and never leaves the ground. twig, Spli, eh ?”

“ ‘ Yes, yes, I sees,’ says Spli, ‘ a nod’s as good as a wink to a blind horse. But such critters arn’t shootable, ’cause the law won’t let us shoot at ’em. Now look ye here, Tom,’ says he. ‘ We know that game’s to be shot, and that if we go a sporting we ought to shoot game and not shoot nothing else. Now if we know birds, but don’t know game birds, that is, the proper birds that we ought to shoot at, how shall we know one bird from t’other, or know what we ought to crowd sail a’ter and what stand past. Birds don’t carry no colours, you know, or a spy upon the bunting would settle the business.’

“ ‘ That’s true, says Tom, ‘ but what should we buy a book for if it’s not to tell us the colours the birds carry. All what there is to do is, as I takes it, when we see a craft heave in sight to pull out our signal book and look for the colours. If we makes the bunting the

craft shows tally with the bunting in the book, we shall know that all's right, and so clap on all sail, prime, charge and point, and make a'ter her. But if, you know, the stranger stretches off with a unknown ensign at her gaff end, all what we have to do is to toss the log again into the locker, shake our trucks, haul our wind, and stand off in another correction. We can't be wrong, you know, if we keeps a stiff eye upon the bunting. Trust me, Spli, trust me. I knows all the colours of the world from the old union down to the King o' the Cannibal Islands! No coming over me with a false Jack. I'll riddle their old hulks for 'em if they don't set me their proper rags. There's no circumwenting an old sea dog like me, and that they shall find if they don't stand upon their p's and q's.

"Well, boys, I'm standing across with a deuced long leg* this time, ain't I?—but never

* Technically, 'tack.'

mind, we shall have the breeze in our starn afore long.

“Tom and Splicer had no more words about the book, and so when they rounded to into a narrow strait and seed a pictur’ and book shop, they put the helm down and hove round into it. There was an old cove at the bulwark, and so when they comed in they axed him for a book.”

“‘What book?’ says he.

“‘Sporting book,’ says Tom, and let’s have a good un, will ye, old gentlemen, for we’ll pay ye good money for it.’

“‘Do you want any particular sporting book?’ says he.

“Tom looked at his ’panion. ‘Do we want any ’ticular sporting book, Spli?’ says he.

“Spli took off his tile and begin’d to scratch his noddle.”

“‘I don’t know that we wants any particular sporting book,’ says Spli, ‘but we wants it ’ticularly good.’

“‘Well,’ says the old gentleman, ‘I dare

say you do want it 'ticularly good, but do you want any sporting book with a 'ticular name?

“ Spli begin'd to gather up the slack now, and so he said---

“ ‘ No, we're not 'ticular in the name, but you must give us one with colours in it, and one where the birds is taken off.’

“ ‘ Oh! I sees,’ says the man in the store, ‘ you wants a sporting book with plates and preferences. Here's one what'll suit ye to a hair. Price only five shillings;—the plates alone is worth double the money. Ample erections --- full destructions --- plates --- preferences --- and no mistake.’

“ ‘ Stop a bit, master,’ says Tom, ‘ look you here: we don't want no plates, we wants only the destructions, preferences, and picturs. We want's when we sees a bird to know the name on it, and whether it's fit for us and whether we're fit for it. Give us such a book and we'll pay out the rhino. Come, don't let

us make such a fuss about it! or we shall stand jawing here all day, and lose our voyage for shipping the cargo.'

"Take his book, Spli, will ye? and fork him over the blunt. If your locker's empty I'll rummage mine, and try if I can't chase a tinkler or two into a corner.'

"There's the shiners, master,' says Tom; 'so now all hands to make, heave in the anchor, and stand off into the offing.'

"Well, boys, the short and long of it is that the book was bought, and that Tom and Splicer stood out o' the harbour. A land breeze fort'nately spring'd up, and away they went under a press o' canvas. It warn't long afore they got clear o' the town, and when once free o' pediments, they bear'd off for the blue water with a spanking speed. A'ter having run for about half a glass, they begin'd to take in their flying kites and prepare for action.'

"Tom and his 'panion now bear'd up, and

stood off upon the larboard tack across the fields. They loaded their pieces and looked 'cutely about 'em for summut to get a shot at. Nothing heaved in sight for a considerable time, howsomever.

" ' I say, Spli,' says Tom, ' this won't do, we must have a shot at summut if we even make game o' one another.'

" ' Belay, belay,' says Spli, ' keep a stiff hand upon your tongue, for I'm blow'd if I don't think we're coming upon a preserve.'

" ' By George I thinks you're right,' says Tom. ' Why *here's* a lot o' fine uns !'

" ' Tention, steddy,' says Spli. ' Shorten sail Tom, and clap your helm to starboard.'

" As they was a saying this, you know, they comed up to a stile and begin'd to mount the rattlins. Splicer was right you must know, my boys, it was a tarnation fine preserve. There was some sheer hulks moored about — something in the sheer like the floating batteries what was burned at Gibraltar. There were gangways and hatches in plenty, and a

great fleet o' small craft was rummaging about the soundings and grubbing their noses in the straw and litter."

" ' D——n my *eye* !' says Tom, ' but here's plenty o' game or it *is* odd. Look at that big crittter with the fleet o' little uns at her heels. Wouldn't it be worth while to get a shot at her ?'

" ' Sit down on the rails, Tom,' says Splicer, ' and I'll clap a squint upon the book.'

" So said, so done, Tom and his 'panion dropped anchor and sat down upon the stile.

" ' I say, Spli,' says Tom, all at once.

" ' Spy a strange sail ?' asked Spli.

" ' Aye, aye,' says Tom, ' look there. Do you see that fine feller ?—a regg'lar ship o' the line, with half a dozen frigates on his quarter and wake. Blow'd if he arn't a clipper. How taunt and trig he is, ain't he ? See how nobly he tarns to the wind and swings

round his yards :—fine crew aboard there, eh ? and a grand chap of a captain. Look how his bunting opens in the wind. Open your book, Spli, and see if you can't make out what countryman he is. Blow'd if I ain't eager to hit him—gallant 'pearance he'd make in our bag wouldn't he ?

“ ‘ You mean that thing there, don't you,’ says Spli, ‘ with thin lower stanchions and a h—ll of a spanker boom to each ? Yes he carries his canvas well enough. Let's see. I've had him pointed out to me afore. I've not been much all my life upon terror firmer, but I think I know what it is. I think it is a cock.

“ ‘ A cock,’ says Tom. ‘ Is he game ?’

“ ‘ I don't know,’ says Splicer. ‘ I don't think he is, but I'll look in the book.’

“ ‘ Do, Spli,’ says Tom, ‘ and I'll look to my gun. Take care you tell me he's game, for I think I shall let fly afore you've done reading.’

“ ‘ Here it is, I think,’ says Spli. ‘ Let us see :—here’s ‘ Game’ at the top o’ the paper, and in course all under must be for us to shoot at. What’s this ?—woodcock. D—d if we ain’t right a’ter all all ! Bravo !—hurrah ! now we’ll look at the colours and conscription. I say, Tom, you look at the flags he shows and tell me whether I’m in soundings.’

“ ‘ Woodcock :—the plumage of this bird is very fine.’

“ ‘ Right—right, by Jove !’ shouted Tom, who was in tip-top, sky-high glory.

“ ‘ At a distance it makes a beautiful appearance.’

“ ‘ Right again ! Right again ! beautiful ’pearance—my eyes does it not ?’

“ Splicer kept on reading.

“ ‘ This bird is much esteemed among sportsmen.’

“ ‘ To be sure he is,’ cried Tom. ‘ I esteem it.’

“ ‘ Then there’s a lot more o’ the conscription.’

“ ‘ You needn’t hold the tack any longer, Spli,’ says Tom. ‘ Don’t the ‘ game’ at top, and the ‘ cock’ to the woodcock settle the matter? *You* say it’s a cock, and the *book* says it’s a woodcock, and game into the bargain. Haven’t we come out to shoot game, and isn’t it there. So here’s all hands clear away for action. In with the canvas—a stiff hand on the helm—drums to quarters. We’ll soon make Mounseer down with his tricolour. You needn’t fire, Spli. I’ll send a shot through his hull afore you can say Jack Robinson.’

“ Saying this, my hearties, Tom stood boldly on, guns loaded, primed, and pointed, and signals flying to his truck to direct his consart. Tom was commodore, you know. He made a sheer to port to get the weather gage and bear down upon the enemy. Splioer

kept astern till Tom got within half gunshot o' the 'tagonist, to secure the prize when she should be throw'd upon her beam ends.

" All being ready, Tom gived the word fire, and bang ! went the gun, making a d—l of a noise and scaring every craft in the harbour out of its wits.

" Tom and Splicer run'd up to board the prize, but I'm blow'd if Tom hadn't missed, for directly Tom and his 'panion 'tempted to lay hand on her, the critter begin'd to ' cluck !' and flutter, till at last it got aloft somehow, and scudded off into the sky with all the frigates and winged things, one and all, little and big, flying off like fun a'ter it with every stitch o' canvas crowded. Tom directly throw'd out the signal to chase to leeward, and away he and Splicer went, getting over the ground in tarnation fine style, and grabbing at every confounded critter what they could get nigh.

But the woodcock was indeed a clipper, for

he was hull down afore you could say, helm astarboard.

“Just in the middle o’ the chase, howsomever, a loud voice comed out o’ one o’ the hulks, and Tom and Splicer, thinking that it warn’t no use to hold on any longer, bear’d up, gave over the chase, and stood off to the east’ard as hard as they could.”

TOM SPICKMAN AND STEPHEN
SPLICER.

PART SECOND.

High time for sport. A sail in sight. Search for game. A man of mettle. A nose flattened. Looking on all sides and not seeing anything. The imprudence of being too hasty in conclusions. A discovery. A bird with golden plumage. Speculation as to the value of the "treasure that he bears about him." Laying plans. A persuader. Pride must have a fall. Astonishment. A flattened pigeon. A strange mistake. *Lucus a non lucendo*. Considerable conversation. Talking and drinking. The crow of a woodcock. Making game. An elevation and estimate. Confident. No great naturalist. Argument. Knock down reasons. *Verbatim et literatim*. Good advice. *Carpe diem*. Great grief. Lamentation, objurgation, and execration. An arrow flight. A liberal offer. A noble resolution. Ru-

mination. Cautiousness. A confidential communication. Tamed already. An *avant courier* with four legs. Parallel between a zebra and a unicorn. Might is right. Protest. Defiance. The modern Don Quixote and Sancho. Offer of a payment in current coin. A determination not to be done. An assertion of property. Pulling two ways at once. Macbeth and his "rebellious head." Pulling together. Battle. Flying kites. A scud. A pursuit. Catch the hindmost." Getting under cover.

"WELL, boys," continued Bob, "Tom Spickman and Stephen Splicer, thinking that, as they had not yet had no sport, that it was high time they should if they intended to have any, kept up the spanking pace what they had set out with from the place where they had shot at the woodcock, and in a little time they was a full half mile to leeward.

They didn't know well what to make o' the voice what had called out to 'em so gruffly, but think'd that it was some lookout aboard one o' the hulks, what was 'pointed to keep a

stiff eye over his convoy, and keep off stragglers, robbers, and all suspicious sails.

“By and bye, you know, Tom and his ’panion, standing still across the fields, made out a sail in the E.N.E., shining in the sun, and showing like a craft o’ size. They looked at it a considerable time, but finding that it didn’t make no way, they detarmined to haul their wind and steer down towards it. It was open enough all round ’em, but just where they descried this thing there was a quantity o’ trees and the upper works of a good many ships, with the smoke rising from their galley chimnies and the sun coming down all as bright as possible upon ’em and round about ’em.

“Tom and Stephen had to cross a good many fields afore they neared the craft what had caught their eye at first, but at last they got to the nearest stile to the place, and, clambering over the cross pieces, they found themselves in a great square piece o’ ground, where

the anchorage seemed devilish rough and there was a great many upright stones with no end o' reading and worses upon 'em. Tom and Splicer taked the path and begin'd to cast an eye about to see if they couldn't find some game, or summut to get a crack at.

“ They looked at the broadside, bows, and quarter o' the craft, and then at the bulwarks and upper deck, but they couldn't see nothing what they could aim at, except a rum sort of a face what was a grinning at 'em on a water spout. They think'd once o' flattening his nose for him, but gived over the idea and let him grin on. Tom howsomever was so nettled with him for laughing so much, that he taked up a stone and fling'd it at the critter's mouth.

“ A'ter they'd both looked about and about for a long time, with their hands shading their eyes from the sun, now up at the sky, and now down on the ground, now to starboard, and now to port, they was beginning to think that

there warn't nothing to be found in this place, and so prepared to loosen the foretops'l and clap hand to capstan bar. But just as they was shaking their heads at looking for something and finding nothing, Tom happened to spy summut atop o' the craft, and called out to his 'panion—

“ ‘ I say, Spli,’ says he, ‘ we should al’ays take time to consider afore we give over anything. Look up there, old boy, and tell us what you seea.’

“ ‘ Where ?’ says Spli.

“ ‘ Up there,’ says Tom, ‘ can’t you see nothing on the truck o’ the main to’ga’nt-mast ?’

“ ‘ Aye, aye, let’s see,’ says Spli ; ‘ why, yes, d—n my eye ! arn’t it a bird ?’

“ ‘ A bird,’ says Tom, ‘ aye to be sure it is, and a gallows fine un into the bargain. I wonder what specie he’s of, but we won’t waste time by looking into the book. Don’t you see how he tarns and twitters about, and

what tarnation fine feathers he must have too. See how they glitters when the critter tarns round into the sun. Why he looks all over gold, and as fine as the Prince o' Abyssinia. Depend upon it, Spli, he's summut extraord'nary, valuable. If we misses this time we desarnes to be laughed out of his Majesty's navy. I say, he's!got devilish high—harn't he?—he must be a wonderful bird, and must have a 'stonishing history if we know'd it. Summut considerably out o' the common run. If we catches him, I'll have him stuffed and send him as a present to Poll Teakettle at Sheerness. She shall stick him in the parlour and put a glass case over him. Come, Spli, now lets get a hit at him. I'll tell ye what we'll do. I'll fire first, and directly I fires you fire, so that if I fires wrong you fires right, and if I misses you don't miss. Aye, aye, master, you may twiddle and tarn fast enough just now, only stop till we've bring'd our pieces to bear upon ye.

We'll alter your tune or we don't know what we're about, that's all. Now then, Spli, I'm ready. Strange too, that he should fly so high, isn't it ?

“ ‘ I wonder what's his name,’ says Spli.

“ ‘ Oh, we'll tell when we've got him down. Blow'd if I don't think I warn't born to be a sportsman. I feels quite joyful and 'lated, you know, when I sees my game and am pretty sure of a hit. Now then all's quiet ; there's nobody but dead folks in the burying-ground, and they won't disturb us for taking our sport. Here I goes. Directly I fires, you know, you fires.’

“ ‘ Aye, aye,’ says Spli, ‘ directly you goes, I goes.’

“ Well, boys, Tom fired his piece, and directly Tom fired, Splicer fired. In a minute they cast stiff eyes on the topmast, and had the inexpress'ble sat'sfaction to see the game come tumbling down, whirr—whirr, round and round—into the burying-ground. Seeing that

the enemy had striked his colours so 'straordinary soon, they stood down towards him, and made tarnation haste to get aboard and secure him.

“ ‘ Why, Spli,’ says Tom, ‘ look you here.’ ”

“ ‘ Well,’ says Spli, ‘ what’s there to look at ?’ ”

“ ‘ Well, says Tom, ‘ if this arn’t odd, I’m a Dutchman. What did we shoot at, Spli ?’ ”

“ ‘ Shoot at ?’ says Spli, ‘ why some bird or t’other what was as fine as a bit o’ gilt gingerbread at a fair with the red ribbon round its neck—a kingfisher, bird o’ paradise, or golden eagle, for what I knows.’ ”

“ ‘ It was a christianlike bird at all events,’ says Tom.

“ ‘ Well, and what a’ you got there ?’ asks Spli.

“ ‘ A brass bird, by all that’s astonishing !’ says Tom.

“ ‘ A brass bird !—dash my buttons !’ cries Spli, holding up his fins.

“ ‘ Yes,’ says Tom, taking up the thing

what he'd shot, ' a bird o' brass with a round hole for a eye and a whirligig under its feet to tarn round upon.'

" Tom speak'd the truth, my hearties, for the long and the short of it was this : Tom and Splicer had got into a churchyard, and had taken the weathercock atop o' the steeple for a live bird tarning round and round, and all ready cut and dry for a shot.

" Well, boys, Tom and Splicer thinking that they'd had a good taste o' sport for one day, put up at a little public house what they found a mile or two off on the road side, and there stayed the rest o' the a'ternoon and all the night. The landlord was a jolly feller, and so they all got jawing ; and Tom talk'd and drink'd, and Splicer talk'd and drink'd, and the landlord talk'd and drink'd, and they all talk'd, and got drunk till it got eleven o'clock at night, and a woodcock what the landlord kept in his back-yard begin'd to crow, and to tell 'em it was time for 'em to tarn into their hammocks.

“ Tom didn’t get much sleep that night, for a Tom-cat had taken up his quarters in the state room afore him, and he got up in the night, and stalked about like a ghost, and got into the landlady’s chany cupboard, and molrowed like the devil, and rattled the chany, and made a h--ll of a fuss. The room was as dark as the deuce, and so *our* Tom wasn’t able to tarn out the other Tom till it was broad daylight and more nor six o’clock in the morning.

“ Well, my lads, Tom and Splicer soon got up, and had their breakfast, and paid their reckoning, or the landlord’s reckoning, for they hadn’t no time to reckon it themselves, and got out into the road. They went along for some time, and then comed up to one or two houses, and as they think’d that they might find some game about the houses, they slackened mail and kept a good look out all round.

“ Just as they comed abreast o’ the last craft, they seed a strange hanimal come stealing

out of a hatchway what was stick'd in a long bulwark what shut in a fine garden, with all the flowers growing and the bushes and trees fluttering and whispering in the wind. This hanimal looked a odd one, though it had four legs and two eyes in its head and was regular in other respects. Its colour was whitey-brown, it had long whiskers, and hawse-holes of a gooseberry green. Directly Tom seed it he draw'd himself up, put his finger to the side of his nose, and surveyed it werry 'tentively.

"I say, Spli,' says he, what do you say to that creature?"

" ' Say ?' says Splicer, ' why that he's got four legs, two to his bows and two to his quarter, two round ports one on each side of his cutwater, and a whitey-brown beam. He looms largish, doesn't he ? and sheers like a clipper.'

" ' Yes, he's fine of his kind,' says Tom--- as fine a hare as ever I saw in my life.'

"A hare !' says Splicer, 'do you call that a hare ? I say it's a squirrel.'

" ' Don't be a fool, Spli,' says Tom. ' I knew it was a hare directly I clapp'd eyes on it.'

" ' *You're* the fool, Tom,' says Spli. ' I call it a squirrel, and I'll stand to it afore all the bigwigs in England.'

" ' Now *don't*, Spli,' says Tom deprecatingly, ' don't be so ignorant. What's a hare, and what's a squirrel ? What's a squirrel, and what's a hare ? That's the proper way of stating it, now, like the rule of three. Come now let's argufy it out. A hare's wild, and isn't that thing wild ? for doesn't he look at us as if he wasn't acquainted with men, and isn't that being wild ? Now, a squirrel's tame, and doesn't every thing that's tame show no signs of fear at people ? 'Sides what sort o' thing's a hare ? A hare has four legs ; that thing has four legs. A hare has two eyes and a mouth and a couple of ears ; that thing has the same :

A hare's brown in summer, and white in winter ; that thing to be sure is neither brown nor white, but whitey-brown ; but he's just upon the tarn and at present's neither one thing nor 'tother.'

“ ‘Aye, aye, all this is werry fine,’ says Spli, shaking his truck and giving a wink with his starboard peeper, ‘and werry phlogistical I dare say, but with all its phlogisticalness it arn’t convincing. Now lookee, Tom. What’s a squirrel? There’s the long and the short on it, the straight forward question. Now a squirrel’s a thing with a fine brown colour and a bushy tail turned up to its ears. Now isn’t that critter of a brown colour, and though its tail doesn’t just now turn up, hasn’t it got a tail? ‘Sides this there’s another circumstance what decides the case. Squirrels is ‘stonishingly fond o’ hazel nuts.—You know what a hazel nut is I s’pose?’

“ ‘Come don’t take no liberties with your elders and your betters,’ says Tom.

“ ‘Well, squirrels is ’stonishing fond of hazel nuts, and if you’ve got a hazel nut about you, only throw it to the animal that you call a hare, and you’ll just see how greedily he’ll swing his yards in, round to, and sweep down upon it. ‘Sides squirrels is as harmless and tame as a anchor stock. Arn’t he tame enough, or would he stand there so long looking in our phizamahoganies and seeking a better acquaintance with us? Take him while he offers himself, Tom. Strike while the iron’s hot, make hay while the sun shines, take Time by the firelock, prime, load, and point, and come up behind him, and just aim at him.’

“ ‘I’ll take your advice,’ says Tom, and he primes and loads his piece. ‘Here goes for master hare.’——

“ ‘Suqirrel you mean,’ says Spli.

“ ‘Why d’ye put me out now, Spli,’ says Tom, lowering his gun a’ter he’d presented, and tarning round to Splicer and looking him in the face. ‘Why the d——I can’t you let it be a hare?’

“ ‘And why the h——I can’t you let it be a squirrel?’ says Splicer.

“ ‘Hang ye,’ says Tom, ‘only let him be a hare ’till I’ve shot him, and then he may be squirrel as much as you please a’terwards. Hold your jaw now, Spli, there’s a good feller, he’s moving. Now then for a shot smack through his bow.’

“ Tom, my boys, raised his piece and fired. He shot the critter dead on the spot, for it tumbled down directly. Tom and Spli was running up to get hold o’ their prize, when an old ’oman comed waddling out o’ the house, and set up such a scream when she saw that the animal was dead, that it was enough to astonish one. ’

“ Tom and Spli stood gaping and staring at her without saying a word, for they was so 'stonished and flabbergasted at her grief and lamentation that they couldn't get a word out.

“ At last Tom recovered and shook himself, and tarned and speak'd to the old woman.”

“ ‘ What's the matter with you, missus?’ says he.

“ ‘ Matter!’ says she, ‘ only look there and sees what *is* the matter. Oh you couple of villains! to shoot a harmless cat and then look one in the face and ask what's the matter. But the gallows 'ull have ye at last, that it will, and then the murder that you've done to day'll stick in your conscience and let ye have no rest 'till the hangman tarns ye off, and you can't remember it no longer because you can't remember it. The ghost o' the innocent 'ull pursue ye, and stand beside ye, and face ye every where, till

ye stabs yourselves and cusses the day that ye raised your arms to slay a harmless and unoffending animal. Go your ways, you couple of miserable sinners, and never hold up your heads again as long as you live. Begone, and mend your lives if mending your lives is possible, and tarn Christians, and throw away your impl'ments o' construction, and never again lie in wait in the high-ways to kill those who is not meddling with you.'

“‘Well, missus,’ says Tom, ‘all I got to say, is, that I’m main sorry I killed the hare since you appear to place so much value upon it, but I couldn’t know the creature was yours, and so I couldn’t help it. You may have the dead body, old lady, mayn’t she, Spli, with all my heart and Spli’s too. By George I’m, myself, tarnation sorry that the animal’s dead, but it was game, and so I couldn’t help shooting it,

and 'sides you should ha' tied a label round its neck to say that the hare warn't to be shot, and that it was priwileged property. 'There's the corpse, missus, I and Spli washes our hands on it. Come, Splicer, my boy, let's leave the infecting spectacle and sarch somewhere else for sport. As the hare's turned out such a bad business we'll next shoot at a tiger if we can find one.'

"Well, my lads, Tom and Splicer left the old 'oman, and the corpse o' the hare or squirrel, and all the houses, and steered off to a considerable distance. At last they comed to a common, and seed no end o' clothes' props, and a wariety o' running rigging, and a staggering quantity o' light duck royals, sky-sails, stunsails and spritsails, jibs, and flying jibs, and flyingjibs' jibs, all a fluttering, and waving, and streaming, and drying in the wind. Going along the road, there was a werry strange large-looking banimal standing stock

still on the grass, and looking stupidly at Tom and Spli as if he was a statty.

“ ‘What’s he?’ says Tom to Spli in a whisper, so that the animal shouldn’t hear that they talked about him.

“ ‘Blow’d if I know,’ says Spli to Tom.

“ ‘He looks queer, doesn’t he?’ says Tom to Splicer.

“ ‘Werry queer indeed’ says Splicer to Tom.

“ ‘I say, says Tom, ‘his size is werry diff’rent to the hare’s, arn’t it? Summut like a feller indeed, this is. Why, what sort o’ game bag must it be to put such a critter in?—a dozen sacks all sewed into one wouldn’t make a sack big enough for him. But how odd it is that he stands there so quiet, and looks at us so ’tentive, and doesn’t do nothing but shake his long ears now and then. He must be one o’ the things what they call ruminating animals I s’pose. Quite a curiosity, by George! ‘I say, Spli, a thought strikes me. Let’s

catch this creature alive, and as he's some wild beast or t'other what's got a name what we don't know, mayhap we may sell him for a stagg'ring sum to some old feller or t'other what collects cur'osities and is fond o' wild birds and beastesses. Oh how I wish we'd got such a net now as they catches lions in, in foreign parts. But never mind, Spli, we'll manage him without. Why he's as quiet and as tame as possible, says Tom, going up to him. Ten to one if we couldn't drive him afore us. Blow'd if I won't try, at all events.'

“Well, boys, Tom and Splicer walked up to the beast, and sure enough the strange creature begin'd to go trotting afore'em. Tom said it was a zebra, and Spicer would have it that it was a unicorn, but they agreed to argufy the question when they'd got a better opportunity for doing it.

“Well, what d'ye think? Some o' the people what was at the t'other end of the common comed up when they seed Tom and

Splicer driving off the critter, and axed them what they was about, and what they was a going to do with the animal."

" 'What are we going to do with the animal?' says Tom. "Why as we've catch'd this wild beast so nicely, we're going to take him to Portsmouth and try to sell him.'

" 'Sell him,' says one or two o' the folks, 'what d'ye mean, master? This thing's a donkey, and it belongs to all us. There's the cart what we fixes him to, and there's our lines, and our props, and the duck a drying and we gets our living by washing and mangling.'

" 'I don't care twopence for ye,' says Tom. 'You're an ass, master, to call this creature a donkey. You've been making a mistake all your life, and you don't know the value o' the animal what youv'e got. He's a zebra, and a thing straord'nary valuable.'

" 'Tom here thinks it's a zebra,' says Spli,

quietly, and taking off his tile and blowing his nose, 'but *I* think it's a unicorn.'

" 'Zebra and unicorn!' cries the man what speaked. 'Why bless my soul this is summut odd with a wengeance! Arn't ye dropped down from the moon, masters, and don't ye take us for hannibals and savages? Are ye mad? Joe, here's two men broke out o' Bedlam.'

" 'Take ye for hannibals and savages! I take ye for a fool,' says Tom, 'and I'll drop foul o' your quarter soon, depend on it. Come we don't mind being honest and upright, you know. What d'ye ax for the animal and we'll buy him of ye?'

" 'What do we ax for him?' says the man, who saw it would be best to call the thing a zebra and to sell him, 'why ten guineas, 'bating not a farden. And let me tell you the zebra's devilish cheap at the money.'

" 'Oh, ho,' says Tom, 'so you knows it's a zebra, do you? But the price is an un-

conscionable price, and we won't be cheated and over-reached whether we're buying wild animals or tame uns. I'll tell ye what, master, and all you good people; we'll give ye all ten silver shillings for him, and not a stiver more, and if ye arn't contented with that, why Spli and I 'ull take hold on his ears, and you may take hold on his tail, and we'll soon see which can pull best at him.'

Well, boys, the people got riotous and in a passion, and swear'd that they'd give Tom and Spli a good drubbing for their impudence and wiolence. So Tom taked hold o' the donkey, and Splicer taked hold of Tom, and Tom pulled, and Splicer pulled, and the people pulled, and they all pulled, till the donkey you may believe it didn't get the best on it by no manner o' means. At last they all got fighting one with another, and Tom and his 'panion was so hard pressed with numbers, that they had a hard

job to get out o' the battle and get clear o' the enemy's ships. All the people beared down to renew the action, and so 'Tom and Spli getting out all the wings what remained, tattered and torn as they was, stood off to the south'ard as hard as they could cut along. The enemy's admiral throw'd out the signal for a general chase, and away they all went, firing all the time at the English what fled because of the overpowering numbers upon 'em, and crowding every stitch o' canvas what their yards could carry or their booms spread.

"A fine sight it must ha been indeed; the two English frigates flying with the whole combined fleet in their wakes. But the English was clippers, and they soon got out o' gun shot and hull down."

"To end my story, my boys, I've only got to say that their last liberty day Tom and Spli spent in a public house in one o' the Portsmouth soundings, and that the next

morning they got aboard their own craft, well pleased with their two days' sport, and with everything except the zebra and the washer people."

BOARDING THE FRENCH MAN OF WAR.

“As I descended to the gangway, I heard our commander’s voice behind me.”

“Mr. Warp !”

“Sir !”

“You’ve noticed the brig yonder on our weather bow. Don’t you think a sortie, as the soldiers say, is practicable on her? She seems a tight vessel, and one that I should well like to make myself master of.”

"There lay a brig, and a large schooner, quietly at anchor in the roads. Both evidently French."

"Yes, I do, sir," said I, "she lies in an available position for an attack, and, with the night to conceal, and the tide to favour our movements, I will almost venture to insure her capture. She appears to be stoutly manned, and as a proof of the sort of resistance she intends to offer us, I have perceived, through the glass, that they have triced the boarding nettings to the lower yards. You would wish the outer one to be carried first, sir?"

"I spoke but of the brig," said our captain. "You seem confident enough, Mr. Warp. One will satisfy me. We have calculated on a long and obstinate resistance."

"The resistance, I dare say, will be made as obstinate as possible," returned I. "They will, of course, not suffer themselves to be mastered without a blow on two. But we are Englishmen, sir, and not likely to be daunted

by the mere putting on of a bold aspect ; unfelt, but ‘donned of necessity.’ A valiant push may drive them from their decks, and if we should approach unperceived, we shall have them at advantage.”

“Of course they have a good look out.”

“With so suspicious a craft in their neighbourhood, they must be madmen, or fools, not to keep a sharp eye about them,” said I. “They seem confident, sir, in their strength.”

“Aye ; they would else have run under the batteries. They may be deceived. We stood in under their own bunting, and they may have taken us for what we appeared. However, ’tis not over probable ; our movements were rather too suspicious ; ’tis a risk,” added he thoughtfully, and rubbing the edge of his chin with his thumb.

“A risk worth running, however, sir,” I put in.

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“Well, come what will, we’ll have a dash

at them," cried our skipper at last. They provoked me by their boldness, and apparent consciousness of security. They have not yet perhaps had to do with a British cruiser, and by G---d ! if they haven't, they shall find that it's no holiday work. Ten shall be the hour of starting, sir," said he more briskly, "and the yawl and pinnace, with twenty-four hands in each, the force you go with. My first goes with you."

"Very well, sir," returned I somewhat piqued at what I thought a hard preference. "I could not have expected the honour of having the expedition entrusted to my guidance."

"Gasket, you see, is very desirous of going, and I don't wish to disappoint him. He never likes to see any fun of the kind going forward, without having a hand in it. Indeed, to tell the exact truth, the merit of the suggestion is wholly due to him, and to have refused him the command of our force would have been,

if not wholly out of the question, an act of particular ungraciousness. Had I given the command to you, Mr. Warp, provided the hint had originated with my worthy second, no one could have been more confident of the event than myself, but the attempt is hazardous---indeed, so hazardous that I was half unwilling, I assure you, to have anything to do with it, and the odds are far too disproportionate for your unassisted strength. It is not an every day matter to face so well armed and manned a craft. And the schooner, too, might bear up and throw herself into a disagreeable position. No, as strong as you will be, there are some chances of success. If you succeed in taking her, burn a blue light and fire a gun by way of signal to me. I need not say that I shall be looking out with great anxiety. If you make yourselves masters of her, cut her cables and stand out to sea ; and if repelled, make no useless attempts to persevere ; in this case there is no shame in de-

feat; but gather your men together, and return while you have the means of doing it. Inconsiderate persistence might lead to the leaving of three parts of your number dead on their decks, and that is a consummation I need not tell you most devoutly not to be wished. Fare you well for the present. I trust you will succeed, and I don't think you will quite fail."

Saying these words, he re-ascended the quarterdeck ladder, not unfrequently pausing to cast a glance at our intended antagonist, and I went below to seek our first lieutenant, to whose guidance the government of the expedition was committed.

The evening was calm and beautiful. A gentle landbreeze sufficed to gracefully undulate the deep azure expanse of water, and carry over our heads a gorgeous overcircling canopy of crimson cloudlets, which in the west congregated into illuminated groups, or floated sinking separately. The edge of the sea in

the east was gradually fading away, and a stretch of ocean mist, strangely thin and smoky in appearance, spreading slowly along it ; but in the opposite direction the tall blue headlands of Grand-Terre shot boldly upwards in distinct and solitary magnificence, and lent a portion of their fairy colour to the sparkling waves that scintillated a moment into glittering existence immediately beneath their dark richly wooded bases. The sun was just on the horizon, with a broadened disk of the intensest crimson ; but he seemed unwilling to depart, and poured a strong and gorgeous tide of rich red light upon the widening belt of flashing sea beneath the point of his descent. Cerulean was the tide of waters as it softly chafed upon the yellow sands, or broke like flame around an abrupt and crag-covered bluff, standing majestically into the sea out of the luxuriantly shadowed and eccentrically indented line of the coast. Balmy zephyrs were floating from the shore. Dolphins were here

and there to be seen cleaving the translucent expanse about us, starting up for a breath of air like points of gold, skimming lightly and swiftly over the surface, and leaving an arrowy streak of golden light behind them.

The wind was plaintively sighing amongst the cordage ; and the delicious serenity of the evening, the heavy *flop* of the heaving billows as they lazily washed up against and struck our side, the undulating motion of the vessel, the seldom interrupted stillness of the scene, and the drowsy clanking of the loose ropes against the masts, had so soothing an effect upon our senses, coupled with the heat of the night, that our eyelids began to weigh leadenly down, and our heads to mechanically nod from side to side, keeping time with the rocking of the ship.

The crew were stretched listlessly along the decks. I and Gasket lay under the shadow of the starboard bulwark.

“ She lies there quietly enough,” said he in

a whisper. "By the neat way in which her wings are furled I should fancy, that she is strong handed. How many guns does she carry?"

"Eighteen ; but I think no carronades."

"She is a worthy antagonist," resumed the Lieutenant, "finely moulded and well rigged, and perhaps has some brave fellows on board her. At all events we shall try their pluck to-night. Don't you observe that she has brought her head round, so that her broadside now bears upon us?"

"Yes, I have remarked it," said I ; "they probably expect us."

"We must endeavour to pull as near to her as possible without discovery. By Jove ! a bolus from one of these iron devils would send us to Davy Jones before we had time to say our prayers. But she would become a British ensign. She would look well under one, wouldn't she ? Just look at her, and fancy so. She shall sport one before morning, if

our hands fail not. Sharp must be the word to-night, Mr. Warp."

"Sharp, indeed—our skipper reckons on a stiff resistance. One or both of us to-night, Ned, may, like Leonidas, sup with Pluto. I cannot say that I should be contented with such short notice."

"Well, that's all the fortune of war," said Gasket; "it may be your fate; it may be mine, or that of neither of us. But I very much dislike all this—all this sort of talk, I mean. I hold with Cæsar's opinion, who said that the best death is that which comes sudden, unthought of, and unexpected. Depend upon it there's more death in apprehension than reality. By dwelling upon him, and torturing ourselves with expectations of his coming, or of his character, we sharpen his dart. Evils are always more formidable in anticipation than when they have arrived. The soundest philosophy, and it is my sea philosophy, I think, is to take things as they come, top or

bottom as they are presented to us, not annoying ourselves with doubts and speculations as to what is likely or not likely, or looking at approaching shadows through the exaggerated, and often false medium of dreading expectation. You will say I am quite a marine Samuel Johnson. There is a passage in Macbeth peculiarly appropriate to what I would advance, but I can't remember it now. You are a Shaksperian ; try and do it for me."

" You mean," rejoined I, " that—

" Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings !"

" You have hit it precisely," returned the lieutenant ; " that's the passage, and coming from one who knew every part of our nature so well, it must be admitted to be an axiom. But enough of this. Don't let us speak any longer like death's heads with bones in our mouth. You don't suit me extraordinarily well, Mr.

Warp ; you're too melancholy a subject. You have much too great a disposition to sentiment, which I never found agree with me. I've seen you looking over the taffril with as despondent and hopeless a face as if your father had been transported, and all the world knew it ; and then gazing up at a sky with some clouds in it, with as much interest and abstraction, as if the sky, was not to fall and you were to catch larks, but as if you expected, like Danæ, the shower of gold. I think there is no truth so indisputable as that life is good for nothing but for its enjoyments. As it is short, we ought to make the most of its pleasures whilst we can ; as it is uncertain, we ought to omit no opportunity of rendering its flight as agreeable as possible. There are unavoidable miseries enough in the world, to prevent us from making any of our own : we need not fear a deficiency of them, or that we shall run through life too easily and comfortably. Man, says the preacher, is born to trou-

ble as the sparks fly upward ; and as it is the nature of fire to burn, or cold to freeze, and of pain to be disagreeable, so it is the nature of man to be subject to toil, anxiety, and disquietude. There you have sermonizing, if not philosophy, *usque ad nauseam* ;—until the very dolphins about us are sick of it, for you see they are taking themselves off. We have lingered here long enough talking nonsense. By Jove ! 'twill be an auspicious night. Yonder are spreading mists enough to cover a fleet. We ought to bless our good fortune. She is as neatly a rigged craft as I have had the happiness to look upon—hull most symmetrically fashioned — cordage vove in the most approved style—sharp as a witch—swift as an arrow. Zounds ! I begin to be eager to attack her. I'm warming, Warp, you sad dog !'

“ So I see,” returned L “ I wonder that she has not run nearer the shore, if not under the guns of the fort. Does she keep her pre-

sent situation out of bravado, or has she yet to learn that it is a somewhat dangerous one."

"They are bound to the southward," cried Gasket, "and are waiting for a wind to carry her down. The operation of warping out of harbour would have been unnecessarily tedious. Well, to-night will decide the matter; spite of her bold face, I think we shall master her. If so, huzza for the crew of his majesty's frigate, Scintillation! we shall have done a piece of most glorious service, and got our name in the gazette."

"Don't be too sanguine," said I. "Though not a craker, let me clap a stopper on your premature joy."

"Faint heart never won, not ladies alone, but anything else. There is something in an eager and determined front, which, in itself, obliges fortune to succumb. She never favours the timid. She is a cunning witch, that may

be taken with a *coup de main*, but never by a regular siege. She is a creature of impulse, herself, and smiles on the impetuous, and on dare devils.

“ A gentle spirit of moving words
Did never change her to a yielding form,
I'll woo her like a sailor, at arm's end,
And love her 'gainst the nature of love—force her.”

‘ I ken the wight, she is of mind capricious,’ as honest master Pistol says. I think, Warp, *entre nous*, but don't tell anyone so, I was born to be fortunate. If I have a presentiment of this night's event, it is a favourable one. You will therefore have the pleasure of fighting in fortunate company.”

And seized with a sudden flow of spirits, he gaily began to carol forth an old sea song, to tell the truth much the worse for wear instead of the better for practice. Glad of seeing so auspicious an anticipation of our dangerous enterprise, it will be supposed that I did not

attempt to throw a damp upon his merriment.

His mood seemed to be contagious, for, though more temperate, I, though dull before, shortly experienced a similar and unaccountable elevation of spirits.

The night wore on ; one by one the lights of the evening faded away, and, as Gasket had anticipated, the huge piles of mist which had risen as the night deepened, spread far abroad, obscured the rising moon, and shrouded our now motionless vessel in an impenetrable sheet of dense and sultry vapour. Nothing could be discerned of the brig ; all in her direction was as uncertain as futurity ; every light on board her seemed to have been carefully extinguished, and we could only trace her position when a puff of the breeze would partially expand the fog in which she was enveloped, and reveal her dubious and attenuated outline, looming like some shadowy spirit of the waters. Ghastly and phantom-like would she majestically rise and fall upon the labori-

ous heavings of the mighty element around, and seem to wave invitance with her oscillating web of cloudy tracery. All meanwhile was still as death, except the sullen wash and surgings of the ocean, and the prolonged and melancholy sighing of the wind. The moon whose disk was lost in silver haze, seemed wasting fast away: it was but now and then that we could see her, and, when we did, it was but as a gauzy cloud of faint and sickly light. The dark mist would then, as if it envied us the imperfect revelation its temporary expansion afforded, gracefully wreath thicker into itself, and all would again become gloom and uncertainty.

Exactly half an hour before the time appointed for starting, the men selected for the service congregated on the forecastle. They were well armed, and were all stout and able hands. Each man carried in his waistbelt a pair of heavy pistols, and a naked cutlass at his side. Three fourths of the number were

furnished with boarding pikes, or musket and bayonet, and the whole, according to direction, preserved the strictest silence. The boat-tackles were next put into requisition, and the yawl and pinnace got over our larboard side ; their crews being then severally numbered off, Gasket followed his men into the pinnace, and, the word being given, shoved off. I followed, with my division, in the yawl with one of the midshipmen, and, letting go, pulled off into their wake.

The night was particularly stagnant and depressing. Overhead and around the sea fog had woven so thick a curtain, that at about a score of yards' distance the Scintillation's taper spars and graceful pile of tracery became almost indistinguishable, and the deep shadows cast by the channels against her side, with her bristling guns and the exquisite proportions of her hull began to mingle cloudily together. All was silent as the grave except the drowsy stroke of our muffled oars and the plashing

of the water as we cut swiftly through it. As we proceeded, we felt, however, a gentle increase of the breeze in our faces, and in due time afterwards the sheets of mist in the south and south east began to spread themselves, and display the dark breadth of sea beneath them. Behind, however, as the clouds were slowly carried over by the wind, all was enveloped in a double obscurity, and the moon, though now struggling into view, emitted too pale and partial a light to exercise any influence over it.

As we drew nearer, the brig before us rose like a vision into sight. A blue, sepulchral kind of illumination, the effect of the moon's reflection, seemed to hang around it, on which her pair of slender masts, interlaced by a spiderlike web of shrouds, stays, and running rigging, towering proudly in the gloom, and growing more and more delicate as it mounted, seemed dubiously to be imprinted. Rolling grandly on the long swell, her head would

now bow to us, and then haughtily recover its equilibrium. She seemed to exercise a strange power over not only our imagination but our feelings, for when we first discerned her our eyes seemed for a time to be irresistibly fascinated, and a low but soulfelt, "There she is," passed from mouth to mouth in the two boats.

Witchlike, her proportions seemed as we advanced to dilate. We now could discern her serrated battery, and the long strip which disclosed it. But all was still as possible aboard her. We could detect no symptom of her crew ; no light glanced from her side or her deck ; no murmur proceeded from her.

There was something more striking in this complete stillness than in the busy hum of preparation. From her present apparent state of indifference and inactivity, we gathered that she was well prepared for our visit, and awaited it with determination ; that every dis-

position was complete aboard her, and that she only paused for the attack to offer us a desperate and cool resistance. But we had bargained for no easy prize, and our eagerness began to mount into impatience as we pulled on hard for her side.

Tides of vapour rolled off to leeward, and though we were fortunately not as yet perceived, or at least challenged, enough could be made out of our antagonist to suit our purposes.

We had not pulled much further before the watchful eye of her lookout detected our approach, and his hail came hoarsely across the space of sea between us.

“ Boat ahoy !”

“ Give no answer as you value your lives !” said Gasket. “ They must suppose that we are not near enough to have heard them.”

“ Way, my lads ; give way !” cried I to my

boat's crew, with the intention of speaking with Gasket ; and we swept up alongside the pinnacle.

“ Mr. Gasket, you remember our intention was to get as near to him as possible without discovery. But it seems we *are* discovered, and shall have a shot upon us in a moment. Our only mode is in trying to deceive them. Let their hail be answered, and give them to know we've come with a message to the captain from the commander of the frigate yonder, a French 24, one of their own flying cruisers, just come in from a long ramble to the southward.”

“ But, they'll say,” answered Gasket, “ why didn't you dispatch a boat sooner, or make a signal for us to come aboard you ?”

“ Oh ! we'll find excuse for that. We shall never else get alongside of him, Gasket : if they open their fire they'll play the devil with us.”

“ It's a good thought. Mr. Warp, pull in

my wake, and close, till we get under her lee, and leave the hailing part of the story to my care. Mr. Earing, you are something of a hand at the fellow's lingo; do you reply; stop, it's too late; stay till they sing out again."

Shortly afterwards, as we were expecting, we were hailed again.

"Boat ahoy!"

"Now then, Earing," cried Gasket, "answer from what I tell you."

"Hillo!" answered Earing, replying throughout in French.

"What want you here?"

"A message from the craft lying yonder on your lee bow."

There was a pause.

"What name and nation?"

"The French twenty-four gun frigate—— what's her name, sir?"

"D—n it, I forgot to settle what name!" cried Gasket, taken aback; say *L'Artemise*,

L'Achille, Le Pluto, or the devil at once, if you will."

"French twenty-four gun frigate, *L'Artemise*," sung out Earing as bold as brass.

"Whence from, and whither bound?"

"Basse-Terre, from a cruise to the southward."

There was another pause.

"By Jove! they've swallowed the bait," said our leader exultingly. "Now if we could but just pull the pinnace under her quarter, and you, Warp, could get under her bows, three parts of our business would be done. I didn't think they were such fools. Pull warily my men, but with a will. Lay to it, and have an eye to your weapons. Warp, you dog, keep close. We have her boys; we have her!"

I strongly suspected the intentions of our antagonist, and endeavoured to prevail upon our commander to make a dash at once, regardless of the character we had, as it

appeared to me by the upshot, uselessly assumed. But he stood firm to the opinion that they were deceived. We swept onwards ; a partial glimpse of moonlight unfortunately revealed our place on the water, and a gun from the Frenchman's bow was the immediate consequence.

"D---n it ! I'm wrong after all," cried Gasket. There's the stopper to our loving conversation Pull for your lives, my men ! lustily and together. Under their guns in the name of Heaven ! and let steel and shot do the rest. Nobody's to be taken in to-night. The Frenchman's getting angry. Pull, Warp, pull !—after me close."

There was no need for the latter injunction, for we were cutting through the water as swiftly as our leader.

Bang ! another gun. I could hear its whistle with terrible distinctness, as the shot flew past and ploughed the flashing water. Our oarsmen

strained every sinew, encouraged by the energetic voices of their commanders. Gasket looked as if he could have leapt into the water. Presently we swept up, Gasket under her lee, and I under her bow on the other side.

“ We were now saluted with a shower of musketry, but the discharge was too precipitate, and we were too near them for it to do us any serious mischief. In the middle of the smoke, and before they had time to reload, followed by a stout half dozen of my boat's crew, I sprung up their side, and clambered over the nettings. Here we were received by a crowd of ferocious-looking devils, whose grim countenances and glittering arms were illuminated by a couple of dozen of battle lanterns which were gleaming luridly around. Sword in hand, pistol presented, we charged them. More of our seamen followed up the side, tumbling in over the bulwark,

or emerging inboards out of the ports, one after the other. The conflict began to thicken, and many a brave fellow received his death wound unheeded in the shock of the battle on the deck.

We fought hand to hand, and foot to foot, shouts of national enmity and reproach echoing confusedly around, and mingling with the horrible din of the combat. Swords were clashing ; bayonets were thrusting, thirsty for blood ; pistols were popping ; feet stamped to and fro.

My head began to reel. We actually swayed backwards and forwards all in a crowd, as I have seen at a London sight, with the closeness of the encounter.

Blood began to stream—dark blood, which ran in little lively rivulets about the deck, and shrieks and groans of intolerable anguish, and cries of rage, were ringing on every side, undrowned by the constant treading of a mob of

heavy feet, tramping upon the planks, or the sharp unceasing clash and clinking of a field of crimsoned cutlasses.

The Frenchmen fought with untiring desperation, and really gave us an immense deal of trouble. Twice by the mere dint of bodily pressure they were forced back, but as often did they rally, and oblige us to retrace the slippery feet of plank we had so laboriously passed over. Some lost their sabres, and with capstan bars, or handspikes, for clubs, would fell their immediate antagonists. Some clung with frenzied grasp to the forerigging and the timbers, and by means of their elevation rained down upon us a most destructive fire of small arms.

Meantime, with scarcely any aim, we cut and slashed in all directions; grasping some of our opponents by their jackets, trampling over, and stamping upon others, and getting them down as well as we could, or driving

little groups of three or four before us like stags at bay, by the bayonet.

At last, what with shooting, cutting, and pushing, we cleared the forecastle, and tumbled all who offered resistance pell mell into the waist.

Having happily thus gained possession of this commanding part of the vessel, I gathered my men together, and we began to fire steadily into the gangways.

In the meantime Gasket had boarded on the quarter, and had won three-fourths of the quarterdeck; but the resistance abaft was more concentrated, and stronger. The captain of the French vessel, at the head of sixty men, had stationed himself on his quarterdeck, and though he saw man after man, and afterwards three or four together, drop under the feet of his savage followers, killed or desperately wounded, he still persevered in keeping the spot.

Gasket, seeing that this fellow, a large limbed man, with a knot of his toughest supporters, baffled the most determined efforts of our men, and mowed them down one after the other with murderous rapidity when they assailed him and his band, rushed through the confusion towards him, and strove to force him overboard. A long and desperate combat succeeded, and the Lieutenant, who was unequal to cope with his bulky antagonist, being, though strong enough, slight, received a sabre stroke across his shoulder that cut away his epaulette clean to the strap.

A sudden rush towards this point, which they had much ado to bear up against, happened to separate Gasket and the French captain, who really fought his ship like a hero.

The French finding that the forecastle was in possession of their enemies, began to give rapid way, and after losing half of their num-

ber, who were left to bleed unassisted on the deck, fairly evacuated the after divisions of the vessel. The colours were now rudely torn from the gaff, and the British union jack hauled up in their place, though our possession of the ship was equivocal. The deadly contest however did not last much longer. A couple of the deck guns were drawn in by us, loaded with grape, and pointed down: one gun was fired, and by the yells which rose from the French crew our grape must have done splendid execution. Before the second could be discharged they loudly called for quarter, and threw down their arms. We were now undisputed masters of the vessel, and our first care was to secure the prisoners, who were very numerous.

We found that our prize was a fine new brig, mounting eighteen guns, with a crew of one hundred and thirty-six men. From her late officers we learnt that the schooner in our

neighbourhood carried ten eighteen pounders, and had just arrived as convoy from Europe with several valuable West Indiamen. Our loss, as afterwards reported, was four killed and thirteen wounded, among whom was Lieutenant Gasket and his midshipman. But the loss of the enemy considerably exceeded our accidents, six having been killed and twelve wounded on the forecastle ; four killed and thirteen wounded on the quarter deck ; and two killed and five wounded below ; inclusive of the captain, who received a bullet in his cheek, and a sabre thrust in his breast, and his first lieutenant, who was wounded in five different places, and died in consequence at St. Christopher's in five days.

Gasket and I now came on deck, he having bandaged his wounded shoulder with both our handkerchiefs, as it bled very freely. I had fortunately escaped scot free. A watch was set : some of the men threw themselves down

among the guns to snatch a moment or two of feverish repose, and recruit their strength after the unexampled fatigue they had undergone, and we burnt the promised and doubtless anxiously looked for signal. The hollow booming of a gun of congratulation, seemingly coming from a long distance, was the acknowledgement.

Next morning at daybreak the Scintillation set her sails and stood towards us. It was fine and breezy. Meantime we had weighed, and got the Frenchman's head off shore. The wind had partly shifted as the east began to flush with the sun, and blew fairly out to sea.

The schooner took advantage of this, and cut her cables. Passing our weather side, she fired at intervals, and fired well, to cast us up above, and so prevent pursuit. I have seldom seen a more beautiful sailer. She cut aside the water with her sharp and graceful bows

like a witch, breasting the short and flippant sea, and gliding over the waves in magnificent style.

The frigate was yet at long distance, and though she stood fair enough to cut her off, and was a capital sailer, it was vexatiously evident that if the Frenchman could hold his own for half an hour, pursuit would be fruitless. Like a bird when stretching its wings out came her snow-white studding sails, with every inch of canvas that she could show.

The chase grew extremely interesting. Our gallant frigate, as if provoked at the fugitive's impudence, stood grandly on, making a long stretch out to make the most of her distance and cut the schooner off, and now and then giving her a shot. In spite of the disadvantages of the frigate's situation, she sensibly gained on her chase, and at length got near enough to tell her shot in the schooner's rigging. A pencil of light glanced from her

dotted side. Bang !—a globe of pure white smoke followed, and an instant after down came the Frenchman's topmast with all the outspread wings. An unlucky shot it was for her people : she slackened directly ;—the injury was irretrievable.

“ Bravo !” cried Gasket, as he saw the mischief. “ She's lamed—that shot was a staggerer.”

“ Hush ! she stands on as yet,” cried I, watching her with breathless attention. “ She seems marvellously disinclined to haul down her rag and finish it. No, it's hopeless : the disaster can't be got over.”

I spoke prophetically, for the frigate stood majestically on, while her defenceless opponent crept along the water like a barge with a breeze. I could hardly help pitying her unfortunate situation. At last, as she came up, the schooner's people knowing that further resistance would be madness, reluctantly hauled down their ensign. She was taken

possession of, and having closed with the brig, we all stood down towards the south westward, and anchored the following evening, just as the sun dipped down behind the blue mountains, in Port Royal Harbour.

THE CHASE AND THE ACTION.

THE evening of the 17th of August, 1813, had been pleasant, and the breeze though rather strong, steady, and on the whole that which was useful to us. We were, according to our reckoning, about four and twenty leagues to the westward of Madeira, shaping our course towards Grenada and Tobago.

The sun had set in brilliant style, lighting up the sea beneath it first in gold, and then in fiery crimson, and richly illuminating our side

and sails. However, before twilight had well closed in, the south and east had become threatening and hazy ; ominous appearances which fortunately sometime after disappeared. The night was now tolerably fine ; stars were here and there to be discerned twinkling in the fields of azure among the breaking clouds, and, though the blue was in some places obscured with masses of clouds, the atmosphere looked by no means dark. On the whole it was an indescribable kind of evening, neither very fine nor bad ; but the sea ran rather high, and the breeze was what might have been called somewhat stiffish. We had it in a beneficial quarter, however, and so we were bowling along under courses, topsails, topgallants, fore-staysails, and jib.

It was my watch on deck. Tired with tramping up and down the weather side of the quarter deck, I was leaning against the bulwark watching the waves as they came rolling on one after the other, and now and then giving a

glance up to the sky. In the south it yet looked very dark ; and as the faraway sea line and lower stretch of sky were blended together, it was quite impossible to resolve where the one began and the other terminated. Nearer, the dark blue billows, whitening in the dim light of the shrouded moon, as they successively ran over, weltered in ceaseless activity. More distant, a ghostly strip of moonlight was shimmering along the surface of the water, turning cloud and ocean into haze, and solitarily relieving the murkiness of the rest of the scene. At intervals our lee side would glide down into the water, sending the cutwater to sharply splash into the dividing wave, and inclining the cloud of canvas above the hull.

Thus past the time till about nine o'clock. I had been noticing for some time before an object which hung like a cloud in the south-west, and that seemed to rise and fall as we successively swept over the seas, and

appeared neither [to progress nor retire. I could not tell well what to make of it, its shape was so uncertain, and the quarter in which it showed so dense. Often did the clouds seem to drive over it, annihilating its existence with the same ease as if it had been one of themselves, and as unreal; but still again and again did it struggle into sight, and exert a kind of uncompromising independence, nay obstinacy. Its bulk however seemed to be a little on the increase, and whilst I was intently watching it, a voice, as if from the clouds, sung out,—

“Sail ho!”

“Aye, a sail is it?” thought I, put out of doubt at once; “well, what make you of her?” I continued aloud.

“Can’t tell, sir; she seems to be a large ’un, to judge from the shadow, though all’s so dark in her direction I can’t make out what she’s made on.”

“ Well, keep a sharp eye upon her; and report her, you there on the deck !”

The watch all started to their feet, and, she having been duly reported, they began in turn to scrutinize the stranger. Bye and bye up came the captain.

“ Mr. Warp, where’s this vessel ?”

“ Right in the south-westward, sir,” said I; “ you can now discern her just looming into sight. She seems to be upon the starboard tack, keeping nearer to the wind than we are.”

“ I see her,” cried Captain Mainbrace, “ she is doubtless a vessel of force, and steering to the westward. Do you think they have yet seen us ?”

“ I think not, sir, as they have not, as far as I can see, made any alteration in their course.”

“ Well, so much the better: bring your helm to the starboard, and haul in your weather braces. Fill then on the larboard tack, and

bear down towards her. Boatswain's mate, pipe to quarters!"

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Some of you bring me a glass: though I should fancy she is too far to allow us to get a satisfactory view. I shall not go below again."

Having filled on the directed tack, we bore swiftly towards her; and at this moment she apparently had caught a glimpse of us, for she changed her course, and stood partly towards us. While doing this, the clouds drove greatly away in her direction, and we could see she had a large hull, and bore a cloud of canvas. The latter, deeply imprinted upon the comparative lightness of the sky, stood boldly out in majestic and bulky relief, whilst the former seemed to stand upon shadows, and merely stud a void..

We were mistaken in our opinion that she intended to stand towards us, for by and bye

her outline hove gradually round, shutting in like a shifting shadow, and began to grow again uncertain in character. We did not however distrust the qualities of our vessel, and made no doubt of coming up with her when daylight should enable us to see where we were, and what we were about. I could still plainly see her, going away in the south-west by west, and of course we made all the haste after her that was possible. The wind had rather abated, and the sea did not run nearly so high as it had done, so we were able to add more canvas to our yards, and the way we made was satisfactory enough.

Thus past the night. We were gradually gaining upon the chase, which from time to time threw off part of the vapour which enveloped it, and increased in size. In the grey of the morning we could distinguish her to be a large frigate, under courses, top-sails, top-

gallants, royals, and bowsprit sails. When day fairly broke, it may readily be imagined that all eyes were bent in her direction. Looming heavily in the south-west, her proportions were majestically dilating. The morning seemed likely to be fine, and we were busily employed in preparing for battle.

Everything which might be in the way was cleared from the decks. The guns were cast loose and shotted, and double breechings rove; the yards slung, bulk heads down, screens up, fires all out, the magazine open, and the surgeon and his assistants with the dressings prepared. The drums beat to quarters, and the crew, trooping up from below, were soon in their respective places.

It was now getting broad daylight, and we could easily see that our chase was a large frigate; a strip of buff traced along her graceful run and dotted with ports, indicated

that she was of no inconsiderable force. We thought her French, though no colours on either side were as yet displayed. A gun or two however from our bows seemed to make her waver on her course. Presently she threw herself boldly to the wind, and began to stand slowly and grandly across our bows, and we could hear the subdued roll of her drums just beating to quarters.

“You there at the helm,” sung out our commander, “luff,—luff up; look out, my lads, she’s lost way by swinging round, and now we shall be soon upon her. She’s bearing off again---port, my man---port, that’s it! Gentlemen, I dismiss you all to your divisions, with the last direction to fight like Trojans. Down upon her, master---down with you—close with her—close, and be d——d to you!”

The ship again bore up; our helm being laid aport, and our head straining over the

waves, and working out directly after her. We were rapidly closing up. In a little time we swept on within about pistol shot of her weather quarter. She fired a gun at us, and forthwith rose the tricolour to her gaff-end ; this was sufficient. "Fire, my brave fellows !" roared out our skipper, and before the words were out of his mouth, bang ! went the shot.

The whole space between us was instantly filled with a rolling cloud of smoke, but the wind blew it shortly over the whole of the enemy's vessel, and the white drifts eddied down his decks, and between his spars, sweeping through all the standing and running rigging in singular style, and making the ship a phantasmagoria.

The Frenchman did not, however, long permit the smoke to curl about him. Through the midst of it, out darted a sheet of arrowy flame, and the prolonged and lumbering reports echoed far and wide, rattling in the dis-

tance in half a dozen places at once, and bursting on our ears with the ponderousness of a land battery.

The battle became thicker; down swung some of his sails in heavy festoons, as if he was determined to make it a regular broadside and broadside engagement; and the shot-holes through our sails made them closely resemble fringed sheets and rags. Our fire was kept up with becoming determination, and between the smoke we both made, we seemed to fight in a kingdom of cloud.

White clouds were the order of the day, and *l'enfer* by daylight. Spars, like splintered pines, honeycomb hulls, and the drift of loose strings of rigging, all were buried in smoke, or very dubiously disclosed.

Now and then, and that in candour was the oftenest, a transient view of portions of the ships' alow or aloft, might have offered itself, but fresh discharges sent up fresh blindingly white wreathing clouds, tumbling, and curling,

and sweeping one into the other, or weaving in cross tides, and, as we were now nearing each other, the unintermitting popping of musketry, spitting and peppering along the whole length of the hostile and bristling decks, added successive horizontal sheets of smoke, till sea, sky, and men of war seemed the fiercely gorgeous yet uncertain pageantry of a vision.

The engagement continued for two hours with unabating fury ; our men were dropping down much too quickly to be encouraging, and the crashes through the bulwarks, the tearing of the plank, and the singing of the shot, and splinters spreading like flights of birds, evinced that we had no inexperienced or irresolute enemy to deal with.

About this time down fell the Frenchman's foremast in utter ruin and with a crash as if the sky was falling, and his fire began something to slacken. It just commenced to do so in time, for our own situation was not much

better. Our main 'and mizen topgallants, with half of our standing and running rigging, were shot entirely away, and we had a good many dangerous shot in other quarters, and the mouths of the ports widened pretty uglily, to the loss of the fine row of teeth.

We now prepared to wear across his stern, from which was kept up a fusilade which annoyed us a little too much, and give to him a raking broadside ; but before we could do this, good part of his other spars and top furniture fell to pieces, like the sticks and twine of a theatrical ship, and splashed over into the water. His fire fell off immediately, and the smoke clearing a little off, we could see that the Frenchmen were in deplorable condition ; half of the bulwarks on the larboard side were knocked in, the decks were filled with killed and wounded, tattered sails, and shattered poles, and webs and heaps of rope and a tolerable quantity of gimlet holes were made in her side. Re-

sistance they saw was in this situation vain ; the helm had no life, and the late graceful and haughty fabric, stripped and battered, lay drifting in helplessness upon the water.

Seeing us now approaching, they swept the colours from the gaff end, where they had continued flying untouched through the action, threw down their weapons, and knocked deliberately off from the guns.

We shortened what sail we had, lowering the creaking yards upon the caps of the masts, and prepared to send a boat on board her to take possession.

The crew of the jolly boat was piped away, and, letting go, it pulled off for her side ; we were meantime employed in looking after our wounded,, and presently we had the pleasure to see the British ensign hauled up in place of the flag which had preceded it. She was a fine vessel, symmetrically built, quite new,

and well appointed. Her killed and wounded amounted together to nine and twenty, but the greater part of the wounded were so severely handled that a number died in consequence. A lieutenant and fifteen men were left on board of her, who set zealously to work to repair the damages she had sustained in a conflict so fierce, and enable her to carry some sail.

The next day, before evening, she mounted a couple of jury topmasts ; and the absolutely necessary rigging to work her, was replaced in such a manner that she bore her canvas very satisfactorily.

Our own damages were not over important, and therefore were soon remedied ; besides the satisfaction of having made so distinguished a capture, and the prospect of prize money, acted like a spur upon our industry, and caused us to feel no fatigue.

Meantime we bore away for Barbadoes, and

having a fresh wind and propitious weather we made the voyage in a short space. On the 2nd of September we got within sight of the island, and, carrying good sail, soon dropped our anchor in safety off its eastern shore.

THE CHINAMAN.

“ COME, I say, boys, we’re not a going to pass the time in a tarnation sleepy fashion, only nodding our heads at one another, as wise as owls, and arms interweaved like the gorging knot. I’ll give ye a story, and it shall be a real rum one—one what I’ll warrant, as they says, to keep your eyes open and your chins a-grinning. No blinking, now, no winking ; but, blow you, open your mouths, but don’t

shut your eyes, and, come Tom, the tinker, with his wooden spoon, I'll ladle ye out something what shall make you sneeze like pepper."

"Now," continued Bob, as soon as such arrangements were complete as were important towards the personal comfort, at the moment, of the crew, and therefore in his opinion best settled before he commenced his story, to obviate a chance of abstraction about them afterwards and a withdrawal of that fixed regard he wished paid to what he should say :— "now, I'm not particular as to the sort o' yarn I'm a going to spin for ye, for I'd as soon have it a gloomy one, black as night, with only a thread or two of grey, or whiteybrown, at most, if you like, as a flary, flyaway, bran new red and blue. You know I'm not one in such like matters to please myself, for, thinks I, when one talks, one don't talk to oneself, but for hearers, and hearers is best pleased when you don't overwhelm 'em with that you likes only,

but a little of what agrees with their own digesting. That's all fair and aboveboard. I'm not pertic'lar—none in the world. Say the word, and you shall have the story of the three black boys in a turnip field, all cool from the cellar cobwebbed up to the neck—sealing wax unchipped. I'll sarve it up with a longshanked glass or a gorbellied goblet—thick or thin—with a hay fork, a long pin, a short pin, or the reg'lar right down corkscrew."

"Blow you, Bob ;—get on, do, or we'll be hammering here on woolpacks all day, and not hearing nothing."

"Well, here goes—off at once, as the man said when he caught the baker a kissing his wife," says Bob.

"You never, none on ye, knew Bill?" queried Bob.

"Bill--what Bill?" said one. "I've known plenty o' Bills."

"Why, this Bill was a reg'lar Bill—two

ord'nary chaps rolled into one, and the ends knocked in. I'll descriptionize him to ye. He was as round as an apple, and stood plump down on his two toes like a beer barrel a standing in the corner. The face of his figure head was as hard as wood could make it, red as a cabbage head or the Emp'ry o' Morocco done in ochre. He'd got a stuck on, nose shipped, like a dab of soft clay on a wall; and his two eyes was like blue glass beads, a staring like a flaxen headed cowboy a looking over a paling. His wisage was pulled out like a face in a pewter spoon, and he'd got a little running whisker what comed round afore his ears and twiddled along his chin. His thatch was weared away with his contin'al stroking of his forehead, and he'd got a thin piping voice, what when he laughed *criddled* like a pipkin full of pease. O! he was the queerest built craft what ever found his way to his mouth.

“ Well, Bill Poker, for that was his name,

and a odd name it was to have, for I never knew he poked anything at anybody, except a blind spit one a'ternoon in the admiral's kitchen, when a pert, black nozzled monkey was a warming his paws rather too nigh the dripping pan, and the cook's back was tarned a skinning taters:—well, as I'm telling ye, Poker, who wasn't a bad seaman by no manner o' means, and did a good deal in his way, like Simon Spoon who broke the windows to let in the light; Bill Poker belonged to the Wengence frigate, thirty-six, what was then on the South Amerikey station, a burning out the hornets from the creeks in the coast. At last, a'ter a good bit o' badgering about, now up, now down; now standing away under a cloud o' sail, and now dodging up and down under topsails, a ferreting for the warment, with plenty o' boat duty and blue lights;—at last, when all was up, the Wengence received orders to sail for England, and to be paid off

there. The crew wasn't at all sorry to escape from black pepper and the fever, so they stuck reg'larly to it till they made enough easting for soundings, and then they runned up channel with studsails out both sides, and the cheering expectation o' soon getting into port. By and bye through they goes the Needles and runs into Portsmouth Harbour, and dropped anchor in the flow o' the tide.

" Bill Poker had a good bit of cash to receive, for he'd been two years out, and had much prize commodity; so he taked his money, put it into a money box, and rolled it up in his nightcap to sleep upon, for he was a wery careful chap, and, as he said, al'ays when on shore liked to feel his money under him.

" Well, when he'd done with his Wengeance, he takes a shore-boat, put on his overcoat, though it was the middle o' June, and with his hand on his nightcap, and his eye squinting out for the sharks, and other birds o'

prey what he was well persuaded was cocking their peepers for his money, comes safe ashore, and steps out on the Hard.

“ Ah ! what 'fiction,” says Bill :—“ Here's your money, my lad,” says he, paying the boat.

“ ‘ Ah ! bless my stars, what trouble and eximpiety o' mind those sufferers what—Blow you, what do you want ?—wasn't it you what pulled my cuff. Jack ?—why I'm a Jack myself, and have had too much trouble in bringing myself ashore to give you anything for 'tending about, Jack !——go to the devil ! I knows you're a Jack. So am I ;—with this difference, that you're a jackanapes and I'm a jackass.

“ ‘ Now see the difference o' this life. Happy is the seaman, who, a'ter a long voyage, comes home, and steps his foot ashore, and has only to slap his forehead and think o' two or three relations what lives in the town, if they ben't at the waterside a-looking out for him, with a

tear in the eye and a glass o' grog in the fist. But I—I comes ashore and I knows nobody—Here's nobody to receive me with open arms. I haven't nothing of mother or wife—not even a aunt or an uncle.—Ah! bless my soul, too, that 'minds me o' summat. Let me see,' and Bill takes his bundle in his lap, and sat down on a stone by the side o' the landing place.'

“Bill laid his hand on his forehead and sat deep in thought for some time, and then looked up brightly as if his mind was clear made up.

“ ‘ Talking o' uncles, I have a uncle in Portsmouth, who lives, I know, somewhere out away here in the back o' the town, and sells tinder boxes. I remember when I was last in Portsmouth he borrowed my money, and when I went away gave me a bill payable at the bank of Messrs Clouds and Company. Bless my soul, I've never thought of it

since ! but if I go to him now, and stay a day or so with him, I can stop the damage out o' this bill, and then enquire where I'm to go for the balance. So here's fill and stand off.'

" Bill had some ado in remembering the name of his uncle ; but at last he found out that it was his internal uncle, as they calls it, and that his name couldn't be Poker. In consequence o' which he knowed it wasn't no use to ax for the name o' Poker in the town, but he 'membered the relationship, and how close they stood one to the other, and made up his mind to enquire for Tongs—Mr. Tongs. So he started up and cruised about the town, axing and axing, backing and filling, heaving to and hailing. But he couldn't overhaul the craft he was in chase of, till at the corner o' the street who should he chance upon but his uncle himself, the werry 'dential old ruffian, who'd got a short cloak on, and a flat hat, with

his back bent going along & counting his toes, and sniffing at his spectacles.

“ I say, unky,” says Bill, pouncing upon his uncle, and pulling him by the elbow. “ What a lucky finding this here’s been of mine ! I’ve been a hunting you up all over this confounded town ; and I think you must have known I was a’ter you, and been a dodging me about the streets on purpose, all this blessed morn, a follering your nose with your eye round the corner.’

“ ‘ Who’s that a-pulling me ?’ says the old man, and then he looked up and stared at Bill, but he didn’t seem to know him, as he kept a-looking without any marks o’ ‘cognition.

“ ‘ Why surely you’r my uncle, or I was never more deceived in my life, I ’members your whole build, now, as well as if I had hammered at your timbers myself. Don’t you remember that I lived with you a fortnight, some years ago, here, in this very

town, and that I lent you money, and you gave me a bill on Clouds and Company.'

" ' Why, I have some misty recollection that I've seed your face afore, and that you must be my nevee,' says the old fellow a shading his eyes with his hand, and 'specting Bill all over ;—my nevee, Daniel ; but I sar-tain don't remember that you ever lent me any money.'

" Well never mind the money," says Bill. " I'm not a going to talk about that, if you only remembers me as your nevee. You're my eternal uncle ; for my mother was your sister. ?"

" Well, she might ha' been, for all I know about it," says the old man. " You're a sailor, arn't you ?"

" A sailor !" says Bill :—" aye, I'm a Jack ; and can hand, reef and steer with any chap in his majesty's navy, no matter who the other."

" Ah!—well," returns the old chap—old

Tongs as I suppose I must call him, "my nevee was a sailor, and I suppose it's much about the same. But, if you're my nevee, why I'm glad to see ye; and so take my arm and we'll go home. Your aunt knows you better than I do."

"Take ye'r arm!" says Bill to the old feller, says he, "take ye'r arm! D'ye suppose I'm such a lubber that I can't move without a apron string, or that I'm such a d——d slow coach that I can't be got out o' the mud without a two-inch tow-line? If you want to lead into action, unky, for I'm blowed if I'm in soundings hereabouts, and don't know how to buoy the channel, fill away, by and large and I'll shape a course, not in your wake, for I wants to see, but somewheres on your weather quarter, for ne'er a man in the 'nited kingdom shall take the wind out o' me. Come, spread your duck, and make the most of the fair wind."

"You're too 'petuous," says the uncle;

"and, if you warn't my nevee, I might be 'fended with you. But yourn isn't bad advice, and so I'll get as much wind as I can stagger under."

So the old lubber worked himself an offing, closely followed by Bill under his topsails, for the elderly gentleman was a heavy sailer. So they stretched away through some of the streets o' the town, 'till the uncle hauled his wind, shortened sail, and made for a house with the door open.

Here they found Bill's aunt, who, as soon as she'd stick'd on her spectacles to see, threw down a hot iron on a blanket and scorched a great hole in it; but she runned to Bill, and fell aboard him, with her foreyardarm grappled in his lee rigging. She made him out directly, and then there was a main fuss in getting him anchoring ground, and a cheer to moor to.

Well, Bill finding it was all right, and he was welcome at his uncle's, and the old man

was 'fectionate, had his chest brought and stowed away above in a side berth with a bullseye. Here he was werry comfortable for a fortnight, spending his money like the King of England, and smoking his pipe, and drinking his pot a'ter dinner every day like a nabob. He'd got nothing to do but to cruise about the town, sometimes alone, and sometimes in company, staring at the pictur' shops, and sitting on a post on the Hard and a gossiping with the craft in harbour. This was what Bill called his golden age.

"But I turns over a new leaf, now, in his story, and lets you know how that Bill one sunshiny a'ternoon went with his aunt Tongs, leaving the old man at home minding house with the 'prentice, to see somebody up in Mile-end. Bill had rigged out his aunt as fine as fivepence, with a new maintop, and bran new bunting to wrap up her bows in.

"Well, on goes Bill, who was foremost this

time, with the clay in his cheek, and some little distance astarn, just handsomely on Bill's quarter, comes up his aunt, under easy sail. By and bye they makes Mile-end out broad on the larboard bow, and steers in through the street to old Ginger's, whose wife and family aunt Poker---Tongs, I mean, was taking Bill to see.

“Well, Bill Poker finds the house a comfortable little craft enough, with a taste o' starn gallery, and a flush deck, and bulwarks with plants on 'em all a growing and a blowing. At the hatchway they meets old Mrs Ginger, what had got on her head her a'ter-noon cap, and Betsey Ginger, and Nelly Ginger, all in holiday toggery, as bright o' colours as a Chiny junk with the streamers and the gongs agoing. In they goes into the cabin; and there they finds old Ginger brought to an anchor, and riding easy with a yard o' clay stuck in his forred port. Soon they gets, d'ye see me, as thick as fleas in a blanket

and full o' fun, and joy, and all the rest on it.

"Well, they had slops and soft tack; and then, a'ter some conversation, they fell'd to manœuvres at cards, paying out and rousing in as bright and as quick as a bag o' light'ning when the string's run. Bill lost six and two-pence, which he boused on deck out of his starboard becket. So they went on, and so did the clock, till it was time to part company.

"Bill's old 'oman he shoved out o' the hatch and over the gutter; and then he tarns me back a'ter Betsey Ginger, what he'd been mighty thick with, adoin' the handsome, all night. Howsomever he couldn't have no twiddling up in corners with her then; so he shakes her starboard flipper, as it was afore company, and gives her a fist, as he steps off the doorstep, what makes the tears start in her eyes. She, on her part, looks down over her forefoot, and then Bill, struck all of a heap,

heaves a long scythe, and, as he was forced to make sail 'cause o' the old 'oman outside the door who was getting impatient, ups me his helm and works a offing.

“ Well, you knows, come the long and the short on it, Bill hangs about a'ter Betsey Ginger some little time ; and then at last, one cloudy night when there warn't no moon, he makes a declaration of his 'tachment as he parts with Bet, who'd been down in Portsea to buy tea. Betsey said, yes ; and it was as good as a splice 'tween them, for they went to the parson, and only waited for him to get a bran new book, when he said he'd enter their name, 'kase his own was near full and his last leaf was blotted.

“ Bill and Bet was rigglarly called in church, and one Tuesday the parson had his cassock washed, and put it on, and taked his great book under his arm, and his wig in his pocket, and the key of the street door, and married 'em hard and fast, and as tight as tweezers, holding out his hand at the last, with “ please,

remember the parson." Tom gived the cove a guinea, he was so 'stravagant and full o' joy.

" Now, you know, as a manner o' life, Bet's friends, who was 'spectable, objected to Bill's remaining in his perfession as a common sailor. And as it wasn't werry probable, under present sarcumstances, that he should get his warrant quite as quick as he'd look behind a door, they proposed to him, and it was strongly seconded by the lass herself, who had some lofty notions, that he and she, 'specially as he'd got the rhino, and her father would do summut for her, that they should take a crockery shop what was to be disposed of, with good will and all standing, in Landport, not far off the old man's. So Bill said yes, he didn't mind ; and they went and settled about it, and had a 'ventory of the crockery drawed out, and regg'larly inspected up and down and down and up.

" Some misgivings striked Bill about the

consarn, as he didn't know the ropes, and was afraid of fouling amongst such breakers.

“ ‘ You know,’ says he to his wife, says he, “ Bet, are we right in taking the admiral's advice and dropping anchor in such a slippery berth, where we're so devilish uncertain o' ground tackle. 'Spose we was suddenly ordered to up anchor, I'm blessed if I don't think, if I was once to lose my hold o' the ground, that my hands couldn't save me and I should swing smack ashore ; and then you'd see your husband going to pieces, crashing his hull on the rocks like a ship o' glass on a reef o' spiky flint.’

“ ‘ Bill, don't disturb yourself,’ says the young 'oman Bill had spliced. ‘ It's all right. You know it's a safe consarn when you've got me to look arter it ; and I shall al'ays be at home except when I'm out somewhere, which shan't be often, and I shall look a'ter the crockery, and sarve the customers. As it's a tidy store, and everything's ship shape and

Bristol fashion about it, when you're at home, which I hope will be al'ays, my William, you know you'll sit at the entrance port, atop o' the commodation ladder, of the fine days, and smoke your pipe in a clean shirt, and only get up and make a bow, and leave a berth for the people to shove their figgurheads in at.'

" 'Werry well, Bet,' says Bill ; all's that chalk, and I've the board. We'll get on somehow I dare to say. Give me the compass bearings, and I'll work in and out o' harbour, as dext'rous as any well handed craft what swims in blue water. Keep the lead agoing and a bright look out ! And at night I 'spose you make headlands and show lights ; but 'twill be a d—d unsartain passage, a'ter all.'

Well, my lads, all went on swimmingly for some time. The shop looked capital grand. There was basins and jugs, and pans and mugs, and teacups and pitchers, all stuck

about and hanging on lines. You couldn't move for the heaps o' crockery, and the wonder was nobody breaked nothing. 'specially Bill; for sometimes he'd roll heavily a'ter a rouse with his shipmates in working through the strait to his anchorage at the back.

"Now, you must know, that one day the young 'oman, Betsey Poker, had to go up to town about summut, and I think it was to the parish about some custom, or duty, on her 'barkie. Well, she left the shop to Bill to take care of, and to sarve the customers. Bill showed a rueful phiz at this; for he didn't know the top from the bottom of any of the notions what they'd got for sale. But there was no help for it, and off she went, throwing out signals till a bluff hid her what runned out into the roadstead.

"Bill scratched his head, quite at a loss to know what to do with his new charge; for he felt as if he'd got all the world upon his shoulders and nobody to help him down with it. He couldn't sit, and he couldn't smoke,

for he seemed quite queer, the place looked so deserted, and he felt so adrift ; so he snaps his clay in two, and chucks it away—

“ ‘ Devil take ye ! ’ says he, ‘ for he’s welcome. Blow’d if I know what to do with this confounded place ! But it won’t do to hang about here doing nothing. Bet will haze me beautiful if I don’t get off at least a teacup and saucer afore she comes back. All hands, up anchor, ahoy ! I must drop outside o’ the harbour and interrupt the navigation.’ ”

“ So what enters Bill’s head but that he must go into the street and ply for buyers. He works into the middle o’ the stream, and then, hove to across the tide, begins—

“ ‘ Jugs and mugs, mugs and jugs, all o’ the right sort, tight as a trivet ! teacups and teapots, jury rigged and all a’taunto, bowsprit and spanker, tops and tophampers, round starns and square starns ; copper bottomed basins and firbuilt firebrands ; long eighteens and milk-jug to match ; decanters bitted and stoppered ; what d’ye buy, what d’ye buy ! ”

here's all sound as wood and iron can make it.'

"Well, my lads, Bill keeps up this sort o' fun, quite serious for a long time, thinking that he was setting to work in right down real chany-selling spirit. So he sees a old 'oman a-looking out o' the corner on her eye at one o' the craft in the starnlights, and he gives over his public invitation, and goes softly up to her, and, putting his two hands to his mouth, he whispers—

" 'I say, marm, you're head on my harbour, take a wind and steer in! 'Tween you and me, I wants devilish hard to sell summut afore my old o'man comes home, and I'll make it light to ye—you shall have a bargain. Brace up a little; hug the wind, and you're in in a jiffy.'

" 'Are you the chanyman?' says the old o'man looking with surprise at Bill through her barnacles, as if Bill couldn't be he.

" 'No, missus,' says Bill, 'the chanyman's

ashore ; but I'm his mate, and I've got charge o' the ship till he boards us. I'll overhaul the stores for you as quick as Tom Skylark put the star out. Give me your flipper, old lady, and I'll tow you safe into still water. Don't be afraid. I'm honest and aboveboard, except when I dives under hatches and can't find the tinderbox, as I'm blessed if I can here.

" You see, my good man," ses the old lady when she'd got indoors and had seated herself, " I don't know that I'm not in want of a small set o' chany, if I could find one good and handsome, 'specially a teapot."

" Beg your pardon, marm, for axing the question," says Bill to the old lady, says he, " but, to make no mistakes at the outset of our business, hasn't a teapot a jibboom forred and a roundabout outrigger over her stern, 'kase if so here's one," says he, hooking it down, " as handsome a wessel as ever swim-

med the sea. See, you can fasten down the hatches whenever you likes ; and here's the tenders to match, all of a pattern like regg'lotion whiskers and wooden legs. As fine a squadron o' cups and saucers as ever comed up with a teakettle ! Here's admiral, and here's comodore, and false keels to the cruisers."

The old lady taked the teapot, or, as Bill called it, the admiral, out o' Bill's hand, and examines it werry 'tentive inside and out. Bill keeps up, while she's a looking, a sly squint upon the street ; for he wanted to strike a bargain, and show what he could do, afore Betsy comed home. At last, you know, the customer puts back the teapot into Bill's hand, and points out a crack.

" ' Some o' the timbers parted, eh, missus ! but where is it ? " says Bill, anxiously. " O ! I see, starboard side, just amidships. Well, we'll caulk her for ye ; clap her into dock, if you like, and inspect her bottom ; no extry

charge, and I'll take off eighteen-pence in consideration o' the damage, and paint her, and touch up the fancy work about her stern and figgurhead, if you'll have it. Aye, aye, I sees! — she's fouled summut; that's plain enough. A squall here amongst the crockery, and things let down by the run. Well, accidents will happen."

"That there flaw's fatal," says the old lady. "I can't have it at no price."

"Well, I likes doing business," says Tom, "s'pose, missus, you takes a couple o' pitchers instead. I'll warrant 'em strong as the rock o' Gibraltar. Here they is," says he, taking them up. "This feller's a Trojan, what 'ud stand a cart load o' stone shot down on it. He's so steady under his canvas you wouldn't hit him at longbowls. T'other's a clipper—neat and handy; fast as a Mer'ry, and a devil on a wind. Blow you, old lady, see it under sail, and you'd think all the witches what ever rode on broomstick were

playing football with it. It 'ull hold so much that you can never fill it, and pour out the water like another Niagara. You see you stands in your own light if you don't have it. Or these jugs—two for twopence, and a halfpenny a week. Why, what an obstinate old creeter you is, that you won't buy nothing without so much talk. Here's half a dozen white mugs for the six grandchildren, and a odd one for the big uns to shy at. Here they goes, like a flight of flying fish !”

Bill's talk warn't, howsomedever, no use, for the old woman wouldn't buy of him. I s'pose she was frightened at him, for he kept jerking out his arms, and a pointing with his toes in a outlandish fashion, more like a wild Ingyan than a Christian sailor what ate bread and cut his nails. The truth was, you know, he was out on his element, and there wasn't no steady sail to be got out on him. So, you knows, much to poor Bill's vexation, the old 'oman cut her lucky without spending so much

as a shot upon him. She crossed royals, upped jibs, and was hull down afore he could slip cable a'ter her, though he fired a gun and show'd signals to heave to.

Well, you know, the ould devil of a cus-t'mer gone, Bill didn't know what to do to persuade Bet that he know'd how to keep shop.

So he walked fore an' aft the deck, swearing like a new 'un at the rigging, and giving a kick now and then at his pots and pans. He'spected Bet back every minute, so he suddenly thinks he'll weather her somehow, so he whips me up half a dozen teacups and saucers and has a grand smash of 'em in the back yard, and sweeps up the bits, putting 'em out o' sight that he might swear he'd sold 'em.

So you know, Bet comes home; and as soon as she gets in she misses the crockery; so she says,

"Bill," says she, "what's gone o' them

them ten teacups and saucers what hang'd here?"

"Gone," says Bill.

"Gone is they?" says she. "You've sold em', I s'pose. Well, come that's pretty well for your first day's work alone, and more than I 'spected of your capacity at chany-selling. Tain't bad, Bill."

"Glad that you says so," says Bill. --

"D'ye want to know any more?"

"And who did you sell 'em to?" says Bet, who was muc'l more curious than was necessary.

"Who did I sell 'em to?—why," says Bill, "I sold 'em to a old lady what had four new cloths in her mainsail, and a gilt ring on her starboard cathead. She tried d——d hard to beat me out o' the wind, but I called all hands, and luffed beautiful across her forefoot, and raked her three topmasts down, sails and all."

"And what did she give you for the

crockery, and where's the money?" asks Bet.

"Blow'd if I thought o' the money!" cries Bill, slapping his side. "There's a pretty go! Sold cargo, and never taked no money for it. But I say, Bet; we'll up anchor and pursue the old witch. If she won't pay, and 'tempts to slip through our fingers by throwing the crockery overboard, I'm blessed if I doesn't get it out of her bones for ye. You shall tow her back riddled like a old hulk, and we'll seize her 'quipment and sell it to pay the damage."

"Pay the damage!" says Bet, "why, what a fool you must be, Bill. The old 'oman's stripped to her decks by this time, and safe moored inside her own battery. Shut to the door, and put up the shutters, and haul down ensign; for tain't no use to keep shop with you for a lookout."

Well, boys, whether they kept on shop or no,

I don't undertake to defer ; but anyhow 'twas precious stupid to make away of the perishables and not get no satisfaction for 'em, warn't it,"

" Ah ! 'twas indeed," said all, and a general silence ensued.

PEEPS AT PORTSMOUTH.

“Oh ! flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified.”

Shakspeare.

BOOKED for Portsmouth, that town of which he has heard so much and knows so little, which is occupying on the road, as natural, so much of his thoughts, and, as he thinks he approaches, becomes brighter and more defined as an object in his mind, though he still chalks from imagination ;—inked, and pounded, or what not, for the *Portsmouth*, a stranger looks out with some impatience, and more perplexity,

as horses are changed, and he still sees no change from the rustic and the natural—from green hedges and greener trees.

The road, which is fine and level, winds and winds, with frequent dust, widely and clearly, open and breezes, after you emerge through the passes of Clanfield and Cholton, with their chalk cuts, white as the sharp declivities shelve unevenly down, crowned by a shelf of russetty green, and silent in the sunshine, and sacred to the slow clouds and the quietness of a deep broad blue sky.

But it is after leaving these unpland varieties of scenery, strongly imitative of the chalky undulations of the Dover downs, that we again seem to glide into rurality, and find hedges and hedgrows, trees and plantations closing about us. Along the road, amused with the constant grind of the gritty wheels, and the occasional dry rise of a tolerably ambitious cloud of parching, sunsifted dust, “cottages of gentility” with green verandahs

and green palings; country shops, where all sorts of things are sold, but the principal of whose commodities seem to be jugs, mugs, and peas; hair brooms and small ale; and low, roadside public houses, and white bow-fronted inns, and the dingy habitations of poorer people, strong in the sun, and the children in the road, staring with all their might, and a dusky smile at the "coach," and the horses, too, it might be added—such sights as these present themselves, as in your mind's eye you near Portsmouth, and get to think some ten miles nothing, and that you can look it.

But the road keeps on and on, as they say, in the story books, travellers travel, and yet no sign of metropolitanity—no variation from green to red. You seem to give up Portsmouth in despair; think that it's got in a hole. You reflect that you have traced seaports from a greater distance; descried heaps of chimneys, and smoke arising, and a blue

glimpse of the shadowy sea, at longer long-bowls. But no Portsmouth ; only the road.

At length you are ascending. A hill is before you, and from the top you surely expect that rusticality will break and dissolve away, and you anticipate an overlook of a microcosm of a town and harbour, like another Dover.

“ Now, I suppose we shall see Portsmouth,” says the traveller, and lo ! the coach crowns the summit, and from Portsdown Hill the flats of pale green, and the twinkling strips of confined water with no escape to their native element, and a huddle of a distant town spread out under smoke, and the masts of ships, Fareham, Hayling Island, Porchester, and Gosport, and St. Helen’s Road, and Spithead, and the blue island grey and attenuated on the horizon, and nearer groups of houses, and a few scattered villages, and a net of roads are disclosed like a grand still panorama, as far as extent is concerned.

But we have mounted to the top of the hill

at last, and we draw breath, and address ourselves spiritedly to the run down. Coachey pulls in his team, and the horses' backs play pendulum from side to side as the heavy coach presses end on their haunches.

Rattling down, chains and harness jingling, and with a dry, sidelong grate as we seem to slip down, slopes the drag, winding down and dipping into the rows of trees, and roofs, and chimney tops, like the waves of a sea, skirting the base of the high, swelling down. Ports-down, Mile-end, Kingston, are passed, and now we came upon a smooth spell of road, running over green flats, and slopes of sward, and broad, bricksided ditches, and cut hexagonals, and angular avenues, introducing to double drawings, military communications, and the somnolent formidableness of the extensive Portsmouth lines, with their *tenailles*, ravelins, and covered ways. A few hard treads upon a wooden bridge, and a dive into a stone gateway with rustics and the emblematic con-

figuration of a lion recumbent, grasping a banner, and we are rattling and crashing over the pebbly stones of Landport, or Portsea, I forget which.

The first impressions of Portsmouth are of a walled Wapping with an interjectory admixture of the *militaire*. Strait streets, and crooked streets, narrow and stony ; strips of pavement, soldiers in the road, invariably with sticks in their hands ; sailors and 'longshore customers under easy sail, keeping up a diffused or desultory conversation, stopping at corners to prolong their gossip ; these, and thwart-ships' fashions, straw hats and hard hands, wooden faces and gimlet eyes, blouses and blacking, Jews and jewellers, so many, and so ill assorted, and so heterogeneously amalgamated seem the elements of the nature of the place, that one appears to have all the world at once simmered down, from Dutch toys to line of battle ships, and from Laplanders to Levites. Long streets of up and down, broad and

narrow, brick and plaister houses, mostly of red brick and vitrified squares of baked clay ; grotto-like *gaucheries*, chequered up to high gable, and wooden waterspouts, intermingled with churches and chapels of Queen Anne rigidity and primitiveness, and chimney stacks and blue smoke ; innumerable shops of Flemish irregularity, New England quaintness, and Italian slovenliness, make up the features of this seafaring place, and altogether constitute a labyrinth of dusky defiles, ending in a view of the Dockyard defences, a glimpse of the *talusses* of the ramparts, half a mast of a ship, or a corkscrew tunnel with a redcoated sentry with his bayonet and new regulation pipkin.

A crowd of people, little and big, dirty children and indescribable men—the common tide of a maritime population, with its numberless dependencies and offshoots, thick and rusty like their own piles standing row and row in the harbour, greened with seaweed—

speckled with soldiers, like poppies, standing out from the uniformity of colour of the mass of movers, and this assemblage occasionally enlivened by the passage of a short navy officer, or a long legged lieutenant with the gold swabs on his shoulders—such a flow, dirty and dubious, of specimens of humankind, half salt and half shoregoing, pours through numberless gateways with holes bored in brick for wickets, over bridges which clank and clatter as carts go over them and pass away into archways, and by sentry boxes like so many pepper castors. Portsmouth in fact is a town cut into quarters.

But when a full moon shines over the lines and fortifications, and the roofs of Portsmouth, soft and deep are the shadows; and stray lights twinkle and gleam in dull windows, and huge buildings rear their flat mysterious darkness against the deep blue sky,

“So softly dark, and darkly clear,”

and the true garrison aspects of guard houses, and firelocks in rack, and the idle soldiery

chatting and laughing, and the gleam of bayonets, and snatches of ramparts, and the flag-staff, and perhaps a glimpse of a grim gun, suggest more warlike remembrance, till thought, as we pace the streets, deepens into reflection with the graceful wind of the distant bugle, rising above the hum of voices and the sound of wheels, and plaintively accompanying the hollow roll of drums from the barracks. .

A fine sunshiny afternoon ; the sky broad blue, and a few stragglers of clouds resting over the long buildings of the Dockyard.

Pilot yourself to the Hard. Here is plenty of talk, and a huddle of seamen and idlers, boats' crews dispersed about and the scenery off the strand of Portsmouth harbour, the surface of which is gleaming like glass in the sun. On the right are the dockyard gates, and dockyard policemen, and all the living appurtenances properly incident and belonging to the main entrance of such an establishment. To the left, is the Block House and Point.

Before you is the water—near shore, covered with boats, and the landing place with a lengthened slope to the edge of the tide, rough with its uneven stones, and populous with piles. Its amphibious human productions are come up shore for a breath of air. You are descried making a seaboard towards them, and instantly a half dozen prepare to weigh and board you for the chance of a sail or a row.

“ Fine day for sailing, sir.”

“ Fine day for rowing, sir.”

“ Take a boat up the harbour, sir ?”

“ Take a boat to Spithead, sir ?”

“ Go aboard the Victory, or any o’ the ships in harbour ?”

Wishing to go upon the water, attracted by the brightness of the day, you back your maintopsail, and are boarded immediately, and you follow your pilot past the gazers at the newly admitted member of the sailing fraternity, a tyro in tactics, and jump over the thwarts into the sternsheets of a *rowboat*, just to disappoint them perhaps,

though it may be that you do not notice the difference, or know it, even.

Palinurus outs with his oar, and shoves off; sticking it into the gravel, and pushing at the piles till the boat's nose snuffs fresh air out of the ooze and the fleet of tidewaiting and tide-washing boats, bumping, and thumping, and straining at their painters.

Easy as my lord mayor on the cushions in his state barge! This is luxury the Romans never dreamt of. You recline in your seat, with your cheek on your hand, like a pensive shepherd going to sea, and your elbow in the angle of the seat and backboard, your hat shading your eyes, and your legs stretched out, and the pleasant, gentle motion rocking you, like a child, half asleep in the hot sun.

The scull rolls in the rullock. You are down to the water's edge, washing through the clear silent green water. The boatman looks hot, and half shuts his eyes as he pulls a slow,

measured stroke. The water ripples gently and musically away. The dock-yard clock strikes with a muffled sound, dull in the ardent summer air. We are broad out in the harbour,

“ Monarch of all we survey ;—”

so far as looking at it goes.

The boatman is directed to pull round and under the stern of a first-rate line of battle ship, lying at her moorings like a monster rock of guns in the middle of the harbour. There she lies, straight head and stern in reposing magnificence: a Volcano with its fires out ;— a Cyclops asleep, with his hammer in his hand, whose tread would shake mountains and dam rivers. Tier above tier ; strip above strip ; black and white alternately ; sable ribband, and row of guns, peeping out of portholes in grimly long and regular array :—terraces of batteries rising to a deck rampart of monster

thirty-twos. Her giant anchors hang at her bows ; her boats are on the booms ; her quarter boats and stern boat swing in mid air from the overhanging davits, shooting saliently out.

Now we near her. She is a fortress manned with a multitude. Her broadside hides the entrance of the harbour, and the lines of her deck, grinning with their ponderous artillery, climb past channels and chains, shrouds and laniards, and a jetty assemblage of maritime machinery, knotted and studded, crossed and levelled into blocked deadeyed platforms and through bulwarks, and thick and strong, and the white row of hammocks, till all breaks into fore, main, and mizen masts, like pillars of Hercules, mounting into tops like pharos galleries, and climbing still, mast on mast, and spar on spar, with the wide horizontal yards stretching out of sight like monster javelins poised on a rocking centre or paths traced in air, and slung, and bound, and hooped, and fettered in a wilder-

ness of ropes and rigging, till the lofty upper poles, topgallant and royal-masts, fine away and melt, tall lines in the deep crystal blue.

A number of boats, like cockle-shells, are at her side, crowded together as craft at a wharf. Tiny sailors dwarfed by their distance and elevation, are seen standing erect in the open ports, as if in doorways. Above, on the tabled summit of this floating mountain, is seen the far presentiment of a small marine, with his bayonet and cap. The stern and stern galleries disclose themselves with their ranges of glistening windows, private walks, and overhanging galleries; the gigantic rudder; the double port; chains in festoons, and, high over all, the taffrail and ensign. All is black as a big black cloud hiding half of an illuminated sky. She may indeed be called a moving castle, with a little army contained in the wooden grasp of her hollow amplitude.

Hark ! — drums from the interior. She is beating the muster of her fifties, and her hundreds ; and, having satisfied our curiosity, we will withdraw and pull for the landing place.

Hulks lying about above, studding the flat sea of the upper harbour, floating somnolently like great beasts of the ocean with their teeth drawn. Cutter yachts and revenue cutters, lying at anchor, heaving up anchor, or gathering way with white sail spread ; harbour scenery of unusually animated and national stamp ; and the rich and extensive spread, and thickly populated and industrious details of a first-rate seaport, crowded with its manufactories and its stores, and alive with ten thousand resources of naval greatness and proud pre-eminence. All is under the grand illumination of a bright sun.

Portsmouth is a regular hive of curiosities : — the reflex of the stirring genius of a na-

turally disposed nautical people. There is no mistake about its nauticality. It is all genuine and salt. Its military infusion heightens, works up, and adds a tincture of the red to its thorough going, ingrain, persevering, blue-water, caronade and signalising spirit. It does not detract, or interfere with it, but edges off, and fringes the union jack with the regulation glories of the knapsack, wings and sash. The St. George's ensign, with its blood red cross and unstained white, with its truckmounting instead of spearhead, flames in the lights of bayonets with their wreaths of rope. Jack and the jolly ;—sailor and marine—the man of war's man and the stiff soldier walk arm in arm :—the anchor and the musket are united and interwoven in one grand martial group. May the laurel chaplets which bind them together, never be separated or cut asunder by discord, but only distributed to their proper sides by the hand of Victory, when the

necessities of the service of their common, glorious country require that they should each play their part in distinct but equally honourable spheres of action, the one doing its duty on land and the other equally performing its on water !

TOM SOLOMON TIMMS.

A volunteer. Fairly off. A label. Evidences of a true man. The voice and its echo. The shark and the pilot-fish. Perseverence. Give an inch and take an ell. Reciprocal benefits. Sealing and delivering. A loss. Affliction at the disasters of fortune. Despair. Taking to heart. Died of a blue waistcoat and brass buttons. A will. A needle in a bottle of hay. No help. Security too secure. A fine lady. Urania. An invitation. An unadvised offer. Presumption. An undoubted gentleman. Condescension in public functionaries. Smoking and swearing ungenteel. A wise reservation. Grammar. Logical positions. Ascending

the great pyramid and sitting down and resting yourself on the top of it. A visit. Introduction to the throne room. Imitation. Freedom. Candour. Interpreting one's expressions. Wrestling the truth. An expostulation. Sitting on thorns with adders all round to "hiss into madness." Suffering for others. A thorough gentleman though a little like a Jack of all trades. Kindness badly met. Fright at flip. An explosion. An entreaty. A long speech containing a great deal. A cutting of the cord.

"I wolunteers a story if you'll hear it," said William Duncan, a seaman of the 44 gun frigate, *Astrea*, as the watch had gathered into its accustomed circle one fine evening in July,

"All hands to listen," cried one of the party.

"Thankee, Bob—that order's sooner piped than attended to. But howsomever I'm off with a fair wind and a flowing sheet.

"Now, boys, one o' the crew of the Billa-

ruffian,* one of his majesty's best eighties, was named Tom Solomon Timms. You might fancy that he was a Jew from his name, perhaps, but he warn't no such thing—he was as sound and perfect a christian as ever blowed a nose or eat bacon. Solomon was a odd name to give him, warn't it? but I'll tell ye how it was. There was once an old clothes' man taked a fancy to Solomon, 'kase when Abraham comed into the street where Tom's father and mother lived, little Tom would cry 'old cloash' a'ter him as nat'ral as life. Every time that Abraham would cry 'old cloash,' Tom would cry 'old cloash' too, and this made the Jew tarn every time round, and from one thing to another he at last taked a great liking to Tom, and used only to grin when he was mocked, you see, in so impudent a fashion. Perhaps Abraham winked at the impudence for another reason. Little Tom, you know, was a

* Bellerophon.

boy big enough to go on arrands and clean boots and shoes for some o' the folks in the neighbouring streets, and so, having his eyes and his wits al'ays about him, he used to inspec his employers and regg'larly to tell Abraham when old clothes got werry old, and when hats and coats run'd to seed. Then Abraham used to go to the door, you know, and say, quite unconcernedly, 'got any old cloash to day?' and then the person what opened the door used to say no at first, and then I don't know, and then stop a bit, and then I thinks we have, till at last the toggery was hauled into the passage, and Abraham 'commodated with a cheer, if there was one, or a stool, or the stairs, if there warn't.

So Abraham, you see, made a good deal o' meney out o' Tom, and Tom at last made a good deal o' money out o' Abraham, for Abraham used often to look in at Tom's father's, and chat with Tom's father and mother about the boy and his prospects, till by and bye they regg'larly got friends with one another,

and then Abraham promised to make Tom, by and bye, his heir, and only made what they calls a proviso that Tom shouldn't only be called Tom Timms, but Tom Solomon Timms.

"Tom's parents was puzzled at first 'kase Tom was already christened, and they didn't know how they was to manage to christen him Solomon. But Abraham said he'd settle about that, for he'd take him to the synagogue and get his name changed.

"Tom's father and mother looked rather blue at this, and wanted to know if Abraham wanted to make him a Jew, for they said they couldn't afford to let him be made a Jew of unless they had a good deal o' money indeed. The end on it was that a parchment was draw'd up between Tom, and Tom's father, and Tom's mother, and Abraham, that Tom's name should be Solomon as well, and that Tom's father, and Tom's mother, and Tom's friends and acquaintances should call him

Tom Solomon as long as he lived or they lived to call him so. I calls the Jew, you know, Abraham, 'cause Abraham was a Jew, and I calls all Jews Abrahams, but the old Jew's real name was Solomon—the same Solomon as Tom, and that's the reason he wanted his prodigy, as they calls it, to be called Solomon.

“ At last, you know, the old Jew fell sick and died, and I'll tell ye what was set down as the reason of his death. One day he lost a blue waistcoat with brass buttons out of his clothes bag as he was going home. The truth was that this waistcoat had Bank of England notes sewed in the lining of it, and Solomon, the Jew, always carried it about with him to take care of it. He was so 'flicted at his loss, and taked on so about it, that he totally neglected his person and affairs, as they calls it, and did nothing but go all about the streets all day long wringing his hands and crying ‘ O my

poor blue waistcoat ! O my poor blue waistcoat,' as he called this blue waistcoat.

" In vain was fine waistcoats with gilt buttons, and splendid coats all colours and not werry seedy, and pairs of trowsers only wear'd once, and hats and caps all shapes, sizes and goodnesses, and bonnets and gownds, and boots and shoes, and toggery of all kinds and species offered to the Jew at the street doors, and in vain was he looked a'ter from parlour windows, and called to from airy gates, he used to go on and on in a fit o' grief and substraction, shaking his head, not hearing nobody, and only crying like a regg'lar crackbrain about this lost waistcoat.

At last he taked on so much, and the loss o' the blue waistcoat preyed on him so sadly, that he first got thin, and then got yellor, and then got blue, and then he taked to his room, and then he died as other Jews have died before him.

“ He made a will though afore he died, and left all he had, and above all the blue waistcoat with brass buttons if it should ever be recovered, to Tom Solomon Timms.

“ Tom’s parents taked possession, mighty glad that Tom Solomon had got to be so great a man ; but though they taked possession of the Jew’s room, they hunted and hunted about in every hole and corner, day and night, and could never find where the Jew had hid his money. So the money didn’t do no good to the Jew when he was alive, and it didn’t do no good to Tom when the Jew was dead, for the Jew couldn’t send a’ter it and have it again because he was ‘dead, and Tom couldn’t find it out because the Jew wasn’t alive and he couldn’t ask him, and this is all what I’ve got to tell ye about the reason why Tom’s name was Solomon.

“ Well you must know, my boys, that Tom Solomon Timms was a werry fine looking chap, and had plenty o’ what they calls power o’

conversation. Besides he had a capital education, for he'd been six months at a national school and five weeks with a Welsh schoolmaster. So atween his good looks and his education he got 'quainted with a young 'oman what was daughter of a linen draper, and who reckoned herself quite a fine lady. She used to go out all so fine and flourishing, that Tom's shipmates used to laugh at him when he was out with her, and any on 'em met him. But Tom didn't mind their laughing, for he 'spected that the young 'oman's father had got plenty o' blunt, and, as he said, he liked to see her hold up her head a little in the world. And she did hold up her head by George ! for all day she looked up at the sky, and all night at the ceiling, and she never condescended to see nothing under the first floor winders in the street, or to look lower than the mantel-piece when she was at home. I've hard it said, too, on good 'thority, that she never seed nothing o' Tom lower than his chin, and he was a tall one,

too—but as I've not seen this myself mind I won't swear it. I think she ought to a married the monument, and to have looked all day at its golden head, for I don't think she was fit to look at anything else in the world. Howsomever Tom and she agreed werry well together, and as that was the case, you see, why it wasn't no business o' nobody's.

“ Well, my lads, one day a'ter dinner, when Tom Solomon and she was a-walking out together, the young 'oman tell'd Tom that she was invited out to her cousin's, what she said was a werry fash'nable person, on the next Sunday—

“ ‘ And now, Tom,’ says she, ‘ if I thinks that it's advisable, why I'll take you with me and introduce you.’

“ ‘ Thanky,’ says Tom.

“ ‘ I'm almost afraid and I'm werry ticklish about it, you see, 'cause these folks is so werry fine and fash'nable.’

" 'Is they?' says Tom, 'well damme I can't help it!'

" 'What I'm afraid on is, you see,' says she, 'that you shouldn't conwince 'em that you're a gentleman.'

" 'Well, at that rate,' says Tom, 'there arn't no need o' conwincing 'em at all, for I arn't a gentleman.'

" 'Well, but your father was one,' says the young 'oman, 'and you're one too, or how the devil should I have taken a liking t'ye? It's your modesty, Thomas,' says she, 'what won't let you say that you is a gentleman.'

" 'Does a gentleman sell coals and taters?' says Tom.

" 'No,' says the young 'oman, 'I never heered that a gentleman solded coals and taters.'

" 'Then you're wrong, missus, in saying that I'm a gentleman 'cause my father was

one, for my father sell'd coals and taters, and what's more.'

" ' Now, you needn't tell me no more,' says she, ' 'cause if your father warn't no gentleman, when I marries you, you know, you're made one, and when a son marries a lady it's one consumption that the son's father's summut 'spectable.'

" ' That's some comfort,' says Tom, ' though my father was really 'spectable, for he often rode out in a whirligig with the master o' the pickle shop at the corner of his street.' ' Aye, aye, and what's more—

" And what's more?' says the young o'man.

" ' Why, once my father had a nod from the churchwarden, besides a shake o' the hand the same a'ternoon from the clerk of the parish.'

" ' Didn't I *tell* you so,' says the young 'oman. I've no doubt you'll do werry well in the company o' these people, but there's

one or two things what I must 'member and tell you of.'

"Well, and what is they?" says Tom.

" 'Why, in the first place you must say werry little—werry little beyond yes and no, you know, and then you must al'ays say ma'm or sir to what you say. D'ye mind me, Tom?' says she.

" 'Yes,' says he, 'go on and let's know what else.'

" 'You mustn't smoke while you're in their company, for smoking's not fash'nable—at least smoking pipes—and you mustn't swear, because swearing's not 'spectable. Then mind you mustn't look about you and 'pear surprised at anything you sees, for you'll find their ways is werry diff'rent to the ways you've been 'customed to.'

" 'I s'pose I may eat and drink, if anything's offered me to take,' says Tom, 'may 'may I? 'cause if eating and drinking is any o' the wulgar ways what I've been 'customed

to, why, I can't werry well give it up, you know.'

" ' Oh you may eat and drink,' says she, ' but then you must be on your p's and q's about it. Then again there's another thing what troubles me,' says she.

" ' What's that ?' says he.

" ' Why it's the bad grammar you talks,' says she ; ' it's werry 'noying.'

" ' Heaven help it !' says Tom, ' and let us pray that I may get the better on it. Grammar be d—d ! So long as you understand what I says, what matters grammar ?'

" ' It *does* matter, Tom, ' for it shows what you're made on. It lets the cat out o' the bag and shows the world that you're copper instead o' gold. You should strive hard against bad habits, and bad grammar is a bad habit, Tom,' says she, ' and take care what you're about, and al'ays think twice afore you speaks. Pray how should I speak such good grammar, except that I've had, to be sure, the best o'

edications at boarding school, if I didn't take care what I was about.'

" ' Well,' says Tom, ' all I've got to say is that if your relations arn't pleased with my grammar, why they may go to the d—l with their folly, that's all.'

" ' And I may too, I s'pose,' says she. ' Oh you cruel creatur !'

" ' Did I say so ?' says Tom.

" ' No, you didn't say so,' says she, ' but you meant it.'

" ' No, no,' says Tom, ' I taked your advice, and think'd twice about it before I said it. Well, don't let us kick up a bobbery about it. I won't talk bad grammar if I can help it, and your relations mustn't be offended if they can help it, that's all, and you mustn't get in a passion if you can help it. So we won't get foul o' one another if we can avoid it : and if we don't get foul o' one another, we shall agree ; and if we agrees, why it's all werry well ; and if it's all werry well, why

there won't be no cause for quarrelling ; and if there's no quarrelling, why there won't be no cracked crowns and bloody noses ; and if there's none o' that, why we shall all be in peace, and then there'll be a finish of it, and so let's make an end of it, too, and go home and have tea. As to my grammar and edication, why all I've got to say is that I *ought* to have some, for I'm blow'd if my father didn't pay forty-four shillings for it.'

" ' Oh you've got a good edication,' says the young 'oman, ' only these folks you see is so *werry* fash'nable.'

" All the way home Tom was every now and then grumbling to himself about his edication, for he was what they calls piqued, you see, about it, and didn't like no fasthideous inflections.

" Well, Sunday comed at last, you know, and Tom made a clean run of it from truck to keel, quite to his own sat'sfaction, and *werry*

much to the satisfaction of his sweetheart. But *she* was bunting all over—red, blue, and white, all fluttering, and streaming, and twisted, and twirled, all as fine as you please. As it was a fine afternoon, they walked to the young 'oman's cousin's, and gived a smart rat, tat, tat, at the door to show their consequence and let the folks inside know that somebody *was* coming.

“ The young o'man's cousin's husband, you see, kept a stationery shop—that is, you know, not a shop what's al'ays to be found in the same place, and so is called a stationery shop, but a store for paper, pens and ink, wafers, picturs, pamphlets, and notions o' that kind—well, and on the strength o' keeping this stationary shop he was mighty lofty, and looked down with stagg'ring disdain upon the butchers, bakers, and all the other eatable shops. Well, when the door was opened, in went Tom and his sweetheart, and then they was showed up stairs to the quarterdeck, and there they

found Mrs. 'Gustus Brummagem, what was the young o'man's cousin, you know, and Mr. 'Gustus Brummagem, what was the young o'man's cousin's husband. He was sitting o' one side o' the fire a-smoking a cigar, and she was sitting a t'other side o' the fire a-reading some book or t'other out of the shop.

“ Well, Mr. 'Gustus Brummagem got up and made half a dozen bows, and Mrs. 'Gustus Brummagem got up and made a great many fash'nable waves o' the fin and ducks o' the truck ; and Tom's sweetheart made a great many compliments ; and Tom made a round dozen of bows in imitation o' Mr. 'Gustus Brummagem, and a great many waves o' the fin in imitation o' Mrs. 'Gustus Brummagem, and said a great many ' how de do's,' and ' glad to see ye's,' from himself.

“ At last they all sat down and begin'd to enter into conversation.

“ Tom forgot what the young o'man had

said to him about only saying yes or no, or saying werry little, and so he begin'd to talk away, and make himself at home with 'em, and feel himself comfortable.

“ ‘ I say,’ says Tom, ‘ why you *do* seem a little more christianlike than I 'spected to find ye, eh? Here's Lou here, and she kept dinning it into my ears, every day I happened to see her after she said I was to come, that you was so *werry* fine and fash'nable. And a'ter all I finds it's a lie. You *arn't* so fine and fash'nable, is ye now?

“ Mr. 'Gustus and Mrs. 'Gustus, and Miss Louisa, what Tom had actually called Lou, looked very blue at this, and Mr. 'Gustus said he hoped he should be found of as good breeding as he had been so obligingly represented by Miss Louisa Whiffler.

“ ‘ Do you?’ says Tom, ‘ well if any o' my shipmates wants anything in your way, which

it's werry likely they will, and tick for it, I may say you'll trust 'em; may I? Can't do no business nowadays without trusting, can ye, Master 'Gustus? Glad you mentioned it, for it may be some pounds in your way if you takes care and is civil.'

" 'I beg your pardon,' says Mr. 'Gustus, 'all I meant to say was that I trusted you would find, on better 'quaintance, that my character for 'spectability and refinement wasn't altogether undeserved. But all that,' says Mr. 'Gustus, werry graciously, 'will I hope be sufficiently enclosed as time vances. Mean-time Mr. Thomas Solomon Timms must have faith until he arrives at confiction.'

" Well, boys, Mr. 'Gustus said a jolly lot more what I can't 'member, and, if I could, I'm blowed if I thinks you'd understand or make out the head and tail on it. A'ter they'd all sat talking for some time, Mr. 'Gustus desired Mrs. 'Gustus to rise and pull the bell

and order the tea to come up. So Mrs. 'Gustus did as she was desired by Mr. 'Gustus, and she pulled the bell, and the tea comed up. Mr. and Mrs. 'Gustus placed themselves o' one side o' the fire, and Tom and the young 'oman moored themselves upon the t'other side. All was going on werry well, and they was getting as thick as pickpockets."

"Tom, when he got his tea, poured it out into the saucer, but the young 'oman seed what he'd done, and nudged his arm, and whispered to him that he should have drink'd it out o' the cup."

"'You says, Lou, that I ought to have drink'd it out o' the cup,' says Tom, out loud, 'well, and I've poured the tea out into the saucer, and what's the odds? I say, master 'Gustus, is it one o' your fash'nable ways to make your tea as hot as the devil and then burn your mouth a trying to get it down. I wish you'd tell Lou here to be

quiet, for if she goes on like this, nudging my arm every minute, why I shan't get nothing at all.

Blow'd, 'says the young 'oman to herself. 'Oh my goodness! what a horrid word."

" 'Well, and what's the matter with *blow'd*?' says Tom, for he'd hard what she'd said convoluntary, as it was, you know. 'Isn't it as good as odds bobs; or, oh my stars; or, good lork; or, oh, my goodness! what you've said yourself. And what did you point to the handkercher for, what I placed over my knees just now? Isn't it fash'nable to take care o' one's clothes and keep yourself comfortable at the same time? But, as to your tea! why I don't care a d—n for it. Have you got a public-house near, Master 'Gustus? for I'd put on my tile and get a pot o' beer and a pipe for myself, and a pipe for you Master 'Gustus, if you'd like one. Why don't you be a man, and throw away that thing

what you puffs in your mouth. A pipe's fifty times more 'spectable as well as convenient. What d'ye say, 'Gustus, toss up who'll stand treat, eh?"

"Mr. 'Gustus looked 'stonished, and Mrs. 'Gustus began to look werry sing'lar, and as to the young 'oman, why, she looked more stonished and sing'lar than Mr. 'Gustus or Mrs. 'Gustus. All what she did was to nudge Tom more than ever, and to look hard at him, and to say,

"*" Now how can you be so foolish, Thomas? If what you says wasn't a joke, how odd it would be. Any body, to hear you talk such nonsense, wouldn't believe that when you was at your father's you al'ays dined off plate."*

"*" Dined off plate!" says Tom, 'well its devilish queer that you've found that out afore I have. Dine off a plate I suppose you mean, why yes I hopes I do. I don't cut my meat, like bread and cheese, with a horn knife*

and a thumb. I haven't learn't that trick yet, Master 'Gustus, and if to dine off a plate is fash'nable, why I'm certainly fash'nable.'

" 'Is your father, Mr. Thomas, in any per-fession?' says Mr. 'Gustus—' if you'll pardon me for axing the question.'

" 'Oh don't mention it,' says Tom, 'you may ax as many questions as you like, and I'll answer them, if I can, you see. Why, yes, my father sells coals and taters, and has sold coals and taters for a number o' years now. And 'sides taters and coals, he sells wood for lighting your fires, you know—a penny a bundle I thinks it is;—and then sometimes bundles o' matches and things o' that kind. 'Sides selling these, he borrows a truck sometimes, and wheels things about, and he gets a good bit of money by that, and then he or his journeyman, for he's got a journeyman, goes a messages, and carries parcels, and beats carpets, and——'

“ ‘ Oh dear ! Oh dear ! ’ says the young ’oman, looking quite ashamed, ‘ how you *do* joke to be sure. Mr. Brummagem, Thomas is so fond of tarning things about to see if he can’t make people laugh with his fun. His father is a coal merchant in a great way o’ business.’

“ ‘ I’m werry glad to hear it,’ says Mr. ’Gustus Brummagem. ‘ I see you’re a wag, Mr. Timms, and so I shall know how to take you.’

“ ‘ Aye, aye,’ says Tom, ‘ perhaps I should be a wag if I know’d what a wag was. But I’m tired o’ sitting here and doing nothing but talking stuff. Harn’t you got some grog to give us, master Gustus? or perhaps you thinks grog vulgar ?’

“ ‘ I never takes *grog*, Mr. Timms, and I really don’t know, although its werry stupid o’ me, the meaning on it.

“ ‘ Oh don’t talk o’ being stupid,’ says Tom, ‘ you arn’t near so stupid as I ’spected to find

ye. What ! don't you know what *grog* is ? Why where a *you* been all your life Mr Gustus ?

“ ‘ I confess,’ says Mr. ‘Gustus, shutting his eyes softly, ‘that I’m only conversant with the genteeler liquids.’

“ ‘ Ah, there it is,’ says Tom, ‘folks never knows what’s pleasant till they leaves off being genteel. I’ll tell ye what we’ll do. I’ll give ye all a treat. Come, we’ll give up grog; but I say Mr. and Mrs. Gustus ! What do you say to a can o’ *flip*. *That’s* the stuff. I’ll go out and get the the things, and we’ll drink like Gosport fiddlers, and get as jolly to-night as old King Cole. But don’t drink it all, master ‘Gustus, for ‘member I pays for it and should like a little myself.’

“ ‘ Flip !’ cries Mrs. Gustus, ‘ flip ! Oh ! ‘Gustus, as you value your wife, don’t let it come into the house. Mr. Gustus Brumma-gem, I takes my solemn affidavit that it’s the

most vulgar stuff what was ever 'imagined, much less drink'd. Our character's ruined if the name's repeated, and if it should be known——'

“ ‘ 'Pon my honour I thinks you're right,' says Mrs. 'Gustua. ' We can't have no flip, for you see Mrs. 'Gustus is going into 'stirricks about it. A little brandy or Hollands——'

“ ‘ ‘ Blow your brandy and Hollands,' says Tom! ' and blow you and Mrs. 'Gustus, too. Why what's the good on ye unless you can drink like other christian critters. But I see how it is, you're two tom fools, and so I'll be off, and go where I can drink what I likes. Come, Lou, let's make ourselves scarce here, my lass, and be off and get a glass of something somewhere else.'

“ ‘ ‘ Oh *don't* talk to me,' says Lou, ' I'm ashamed of you, Mr. Timma. Don't call *me* my lass, sir. Be off and get to somebody else,

for I've done with you. Oh my dear Mrs. 'Gustus, don't cry and faint about it, for that horrid stuff sha'nt be named again.'

"But Mrs. 'Gustus didn't take cons'lation, for she wring'd her hands, and cried all the more, and looked as if she was a-going off into a swoon, and she did nothing but say, 'Oh, that ever I should have lived to see this day !'

" 'I say 'Gustus, now,' says Tom, coaxingly, 'don't *you* be a fool if your wife's one.'

" 'Sir, I beg,' says Mr. 'Gustus, making a bow as cold as the North Pole. 'Excuse me—Mrs. 'Gustus's nerves—present comp'ny—better be alone.'

" 'Aye, aye, I understand,' says Tom. 'We won't fight about it, for it arn't worth while. But somehow or 'nother I *think'd* it 'ud come to this. What a precious fool I was to come at all among ye ! I tell you what, master 'Gustus, I'm devilish good tempered, but I don't like inciwility, mind. If it warn't

for your wife I'd tell you to your face what I think of you, and that is that you're a d—d, simpering, head-bowing, eye-winking, shoe-scraping, foolscap-fingering, quill-cutting son of a ——. You're a d—d great fool, that's the short and the long of it, and your wife's a bigger fool than you; and Lou's a bigger fool than both of you; and you're all fools together; and the sooner we part company, the better; and so I'm going; but, before I go, I tell you and your wife that I don't never want to see neither you nor she again, nor Lou neither, nor *none* on ye, nor nothing belonging to ye. And so, good bye; and better manners to you; and more sense in your head; and when you see a gentleman, like me, again, I hope you'll behave better to him; for if you don't, he'll set you down for a parcel o' bl——d ignorant swabs and lubbers, just the same ignorant swabs and lubbers that I set you down now.'

"Well, boys, Tom left the house, and went

through the streets, and got aboard his ship, and he never seed no more o' Mr. 'Gustus Brummagem, or Mrs. 'Gustus Brummagem, or Miss Louisa. He blessed his stars that he'd found out what the whole pack on 'em was made on ; and so there's an end o' Tom Solomon Timms.

FREYA THE FEARLESS.

“ There be land thieves, and water thieves, I mean pirates.”

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

DURING the years 1810 and 1811, I possessed a tolerably good berth on board the *Fire Fly*, a new schooner, mounting twelve guns, eight nines, and four six-pounders. She was a remarkably fine vessel, sharp in the bows, a splendid sailer, and of the most exquisite mould that I think I have ever seen. Her run from stem to stern was in such perfect good taste, and there was such a proportionate,

yet almost imperceptible rise in her quarter-deck and forecastle, that what with the elegant and symmetrical form of her hull, the delicate tapering of her upper spars, the taughtness and exactitude of her standing and running rigging, and the neatness of her general trim, she excited an astonishing degree of pleasure and admiration in the eyes of every real sailor that looked upon her.

Our station during these two years was the West Indies.

We sailed from Kingston on the 17th of October, 1810, and stood away to the South-eastward, with a bright azure sky and a smooth sea.

Our cruise was to be one of six months, between eight and thirty-four degrees of N. latitude, and forty and seventy of W. longitude, and we were amply provided with everything that might be necessary for it.

Our craft had been newly coppered, and, with fresh paint and bunting flying, we made

a most gallant appearance in going out of the harbour.

About this time, a pirate, unusually fortunate and audacious, had chosen to make the West Indian seas the scene of his unchristian depredations.

A great many heavily laden ships of all nations, and from all parts of the world, fell into his hands. The crews were generally treated in the most barbarous manner ; often their lives were sacrificed, or they were subjected to the most cruel tortures.

This rascal was known throughout the islands by the name of the " Black Buccaneer of Barbadoes ;" that fanciful piece of alliteration having been assigned to him, first, because he was born in that island, and next, because his distinguishing colours were sable. His mode of proceeding was this : under the flag of some friendly nation, he used to decoy every vessel, that he thought he could master into his power, then, when they were along-

side of him, down went his assumed ensign, and up went his own black bunting.

The conflict was seldom of long duration ; of boarding he was very fond, and at it very expert. A thousand varying statements were made of his vessel and force. By some, the former was described as a large schooner, carrying eighteen guns ; by others, as a powerful brig of twenty ; and again, as a small frigate of four-and-twenty. His crew was computed at between two and three hundred, and some even went so far as to make it amount to a much larger number. However, all agreed in maintaining that he was a most bloody and truculent fellow, and that his vessel was one of the fastest sailers known. Many insisted that no man would be suffered to infest the ocean with such daring impunity, and to defy the power of the law with such barefaced effrontery, unless protected by some evil spell or other. Some even rumoured that he had disposed of his soul to the evil one in conside-

ration of his protection, or hinted that he was the very devil himself in *propria persona*. His *nom de guerre* of "Freya the Fearless" added to the general terror ; and the fact, strongly asserted to, by-the-way, that one day he was seen twenty leagues to the eastward of the Bermudas, in a heavy squall, with his maintopmast down, and in a most perilous condition, and the same evening running between Guadaloupe and Dominica, corroborated the reports of that mystical character which had so readily been assigned to him.

I was told, when in Jamaica, by a person who knew him well, that he was a Spanish Creole of gigantic stature and fierce aspect ; that his crew was composed of refugees and vile characters of all nations, men whose crimes or violent dispositions had exiled them from their several countries, to the amount of one hundred and ninety or two hundred, and that knowing, were they caught, gibbets and ropes would be their only greeting on reaching

the shore, they were fierce and desperate to the last degree.

The accounts of the pirate's force, as I observed before, were so vague and contradictory, that no reliance could be placed on them. We went off, notwithstanding, with no small expectation of coming up with, taking, and bringing him into port.

After two days' sail, with a smart breeze at N.N.W., before which we made a good deal of way, the wind chopped round to the east, and after much fluctuation settled in the N.E. by E.

Towards the evening of the 20th a dense bank of rainy blue clouds rose majestically to the windward, picturing that quarter of the ocean of an inky hue, and marking out the horizon with its white spray with great distinctness.

The breeze began to flag and grow capricious, and seemed inclined to blow up into

a gale, so our top-gallant clew-lines were manned, and the royal yards sent down on deck.

The night was as dark as pitch. The wind had gone down, and left us with heaps of heavy vapour right over head. The moon was struggling hard among groups of ragged clouds and cold grey mists, but every now and then a long and solitary pale beam would burst out and light up a strip of sea in the distance, showing us the tumbling waves gleaming and flashing like liquid silver, and then it would fade gradually away and appear quite unexpectedly in another place. The dull glimmering of the sky, and the heavy monotonous sound of the sea, dashing up against the bows and cutwater, had a lulling effect upon the senses of all on deck.

About ten o'clock, the look-out on our star-board-bow thought he saw something like a speck in the south-westward, and communi-

cated his discovery to Peter Luff, the officer of the watch. While he was speaking, a man stationed in the foretop sung out—

“Sail, ho !”

“Where away.”

“Right on our lee bow, sir,” returned the man.

“What kind of craft is she ?”

“I can’t distinguish, sir. While you were speaking, a heap of mists drove smack before her.”

Of course we were all bustle immediately. Just as I jumped hastily on deck, a misty moonbeam glanced out from a silvery break in one of the clouds to leeward, about two cables’ length ahead of the “Fire Fly,” and glided along the heaving expanse of water right in the stranger’s direction. We looked out with impatience as it sailed along, till at last it settled upon him, and, lighting up the sea in its immediate neighbourhood, a white sail was

distinctly to be seen in the quarter where it had been first discovered.

The officers began to collect in a close group on the quarterdeck, scanning the object of our curiosity, some with glasses, and the remainder with their unaided eyes.

"Tack," said our skipper, in an under tone, and we tacked accordingly; and as we brought the ship's head up to meet the wind, the water, rushing up to, and flashing beneath our bows, flung at intervals, with a sudden splash upwards, a shower of moonlit, fairy gems. The stranger was not long before he caught a glimpse of us, and tacked likewise, standing partly in our direction, for his course when first seen, was S.W. inclining S. As he came bowling along, we could discern by a little help from the partial moonlight, and a great deal from our glasses, that the vessel was a large brig, under courses, jib, and topsails, the latter single reefed.

"Starboard!" said our captain, as soon as he was enabled to make out these particulars.

"Starboard, 'tis, sir," returned our man at the wheel.

"Now keep her steady for a little while. Boatswain's mate, pipe to quarters."

"Aye, aye, sir!"

We soon came up to within hailing distance. The brig had got across our bows, and he was now pulling away at his lee-braces, and shortening sail. I was trying through the night-glass to make out her bunting. I counted nine ports in her broadside, and after a great deal of difficulty perceived the scarlet stripes and white stars of the United States. Meanwhile he had backed his maintopsail, and we hailed her.

"Ho! the brig ahoy—a!"

"Hillo!" came faintly through the gloom.

"What vessel is that?"

"The American gun brig, 'Snarler,' from Boston."

"Very well ! Where are you bound to ?"

"Rio Janeiro !"

"All very good," said the skipper in an under tone, taking the trumpet from his mouth, after he had desired them to send a boat on board us. "you put a good face on it—but for all that, I'm thinking you're little better than you should be. What do you think," my lad (to me) "of the account that he has given of himself ?"

"I'm much of your opinion," said I, "those are not the colours the fellow intends to fight under, depend upon it !"

"Ten to one you're right. You at the helm there, luff ! luff up ! luff, sir ! Mr. Brace," (our lieutenant), "cast loose the guns."

We waited a long time, but nothing seemed to stir on board the brig. We hailed her a

second time, but got no answer ; all was as still as the grave.

“ This is our man, depend on it,” said Captain Taffril ; “ prepare yourselves, for we shall have a tough bout of it. Take my word for it she’s not so quiet for nothing. There’s a squall brewing, or I’m a Dutchman ; and at all events it is better that we should be prepared for the worst.”

The brig came slowly and majestically onwards, as if it had contained not a single living soul. All was quiet as death ; she looked like a huge grim giant, marching sullenly over the seas to battle ; not a voice or an order was to be heard, not even the creaking of a block ; even the billows seemed to have given up, for a time, their roaring nature, and in place of their usual wild dash, only sent forth something like a low, sullen growl, as they washed heavily up against her bows and sides. Up she came, nearer and nearer, until the lazy folds of the ensign at her gaff, could be seen to

slowly expand their gorgeous assembly of stars and stripes with a fierce and dignified undulating movement.

“ The rogue thinks to wear across our bows, I suppose,” said Taffril, “ but he shall find himself deucedly mistaken. Starboard your helm—starboard ! Mr. Brace, attend forward ; and you, larboard guns, keep yourselves brisk and ready.”

Before we had shortened sail the brig opened her fire, and sent her larboard broadside, rattling and cutting along, right for our head and bows. Crash came the shot, and I could hear the grinding of the splinters, as they were shaved up from the decks and off from the bulwarks, with a fearful distinctness. Groans, smoke, fire, stamping, and uproar followed, and in the middle of the bustle I jumped to our men at the guns, and strove hard, by a vigorous exertion of voice and action, to excite them to pay the rascals well in return for what they had given us.

We had both borne up with the wind nearly on our quarter ; we now ported the helm and rounded to, pouring in our larboard broadside upon his quarter. I could see that we had done a good deal of mischief, as noise and execrations rose from all parts of her decks. Smothering clouds of smoke began to ascend into the murky air and curl about our rigging, while the flashing light of the artillery, momentarily illuminating both ships with a fierce red light, pictured the open port-holes and the bristling guns with a beautiful exactitude ; marking out the masts, yards, and every simple cord, as vividly as if a body of phosphoric air had traced them out in fire, and shadowing the upraised ports, channels, and cabin windows. Down came the ensign of America to the deck in a trice, and a large sable flag was hoisted up in its stead.

Up it rose to the extremity of the gaff, and like a funeral pall expanded lazily in the breeze. The pirate vessel had brought to the

wind again ; we ranged up under her lee, all our guns primed, loaded, and pointed, and the men eager, as so many hungry wolves, to let fly at their antagonist.

“Now steady, my boys,” cried our captain, “this is no ordinary rascal that we are dealing with. Mr. Brace, call away the boarders, send them upon the forecastle, and bid them creep low down behind the starboard bulwark. That’s right, my fine fellows, take your weapons and be off with you forward. No noise now ! no rushing ! keep yourselves cool and steady. When the word is given, start up all together, and then board them in the smoke. Mind, through the larboard fore-chains. Helm aport ! port, my man ! that’s it ; steady ! you at the starboard side there, look to your guns !---attention !---fire ;---pepper the d---d thieves well ! Old England and the the British navy for ever ! Hurrah, lads ! Hurrah !”

Our broadside was poured in upon the brig

with hearty cheers, and was almost instantly answered. The shot came thumping through our weather side, and went crashing along the decks, Showers of musket-balls flew whistling about me, and the bullets from the heavy guns jumped bouncing away in all directions, now striking the gun-carriages, bulwarks and bits, and covering us with a rain of white splinters, and then mowing down with fearful rapidity the poor fellows who were firing away with unabated ardour. Good God ! I feel sick at the mere recollection.

While I was intently engaged with seeing what was going on on deck, I heard something split with a sudden sharp noise, as if a piece of wood had been snapped short in two. I looked instinctively aloft, and had the mortification of seeing our foretopmast shot right through, and come whirring down with the velocity of lightning ; the shrouds and stays cracked and parted like lighted tow, and our

men on the forecastle were sent capering about to escape the falling of the wreck and the lashing of the flying cordage. All was smoke, fire, and confusion.

Drifts of hot sulphurous vapour gathered in thick wreaths, and made my eyes smart and ache in a most annoying style.

The pirate, during all this time, looked like nothing but a huge, grey, undefinable mass, all her rigging and spars waving and darkening as the grey drifts of dense smoke faded and shifted about, and her gloomy hull, like some unwieldy monster of the deep, at short intervals vomiting forth sheets of red flame, which gleamed with such a lurid light as a lamp might be supposed to throw forth if placed in the midst of a cloud of fog.

Just at this unfortunate moment, our steersman, who I suppose was as much blinded and confounded as I was, happened to let go the helm, and in consequence of having good way

we broached to and came alongside of the pirate.

During the confusion that reigned on board us from the wreck of the foretopmast, the rogue poured in about fifty men upon our forecastle, and they began cutting and hacking about at our rigging like so many devils. In the light emitted by our artillery, they looked like a company of fiends let loose red hot from hell for mischief.

We turned upon them directly, and the hoarse cry, "We're carried on the bow," soon brought all our boarders to the fore-castle.

It was a desperate combat ; I even shudder now when I think of it, although it is nearly three-and-twenty years ago that these events occurred. Steel clinking and glancing in all directions, like so many lightning flashes, blood streaming, pistols and muskets popping, and bayonets and boarding pikes clashing with an

unremitting rapidity—groans, shrieks, and horrid imprecations were mingled on every side. At last we contrived to get them overboard, after killing and wounding about one-half, and losing a great many men on our own side.

Poor Peter Luff was among the hurt; he received a deep sabre-cut over his right shoulder, and a horrid gash along his cheek. It was fortunate that the vessels separated.

The litter and wreck about our forward guns were partially cleared away, and we set to work with them with renewed energy and perseverance.

As yet the brig was untouched in every particular, as if she had been protected by some mighty spell of saving power. She filled her topsail, and began leisurely to fetch way, in order to put herself across our bows.

I thought the game was up, and that the proud old British union would be shortly

obliged to sweep the deck before a black-guardly buccaneer, as the carnage of our men was excessive ; four out of the six guns on our larboard side were rendered quite useless on account of the falling of the masts, and we had no means of extricating ourselves from our disagreeable position. Luckily, however, a good shot flew smack through his foremast a little below the fishes.

A shout burst from our lips as the tall pine, like a lanky giant, came tumbling down and went flashing over into the sea, splashing up the water in silver jets, and feathering it into a cascade.

We worked away meantime with all our might. The shot, I could see, was telling fearfully, and drilling great holes in his sides. His fire slackened a little ; a cloud of smoke began to rise ominously from his main hatchway ; it grew denser and denser.

By-and-bye we had the pleasure of seeing long streaks of yellow flame leap up, and

hearing the splash, splash of buckets of water. We worked hard still, and peppered her without intermission.

Confusion and dismay seemed to prevail on board; gruff voices were issuing rapid orders, and the crew were plainly to be seen flying about from deck to deck as if they were bewitched. A long pillar of scarlet fire now flew brilliantly upwards; it spread joyously to the right and left, and waved and flickered about, the small flames licking like fiery serpents and crawling up the rigging and sails, which were soon in a blaze. The roaring and humming of the fire in her hold begun to redouble, and red strips to look out at the ports. The guns one after the other became heated, and went banging off, and clouds of lurid smoke, pile above pile, rose majestically far, far up into the illuminated firmament.

The sea, the skies, the tumbling billows, the clouded moon, our shattered vessel and its tattered rigging, our bloody decks, and even

our very faces, were wrapt in one uniform and brilliant scarlet light. The brig meanwhile glowed like a red hot coal in a fiery furnace. Her bristling guns, her chains, her raised ports, her stays, her wales, her anchors, and all her furniture were etched out so vividly, that to an excited imagination they seemed as if all had been bathed deeply in a flood of red light ; while her sable ensign fluttered high in the smothering air, like the angel of death rejoicing over his sinking victims.

Her last hour rapidly approached. Our shot had sent in some of their planks, and the hissing waters were gaining hard upon her. Down!---down! she went, stern foremost, the scarlet waves gurgling and tumbling about her, and the cries of her ill-fated crew ringing through the still midnight air. The flames gave a loud hiss, as they touched the water and were suddenly extinguished ; her masts still kept burning, flaring, and fizzing, like a couple of blazing sticks, but sunk gradu-

ally lower and lower. At last she gave a sickening lurch, the flashing water boiled and curled about her like a whirlpool, and a deep expiring groan, emitted from the very bosom of the ocean, told that chief, crew, and vessel, had been destroyed.

END OF VOL. II.

MY
MARINE MEMORANDUM
BOOK.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY HARGRAVE JENNINGS.

"Wherein I speak of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field."

SHAKESPEARE.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
T. S. NEWBY, 72, MORTIMER ST., CAVENDISH Sq.

1845.

MY

MARINE MEMORANDUM

B O O K.

KATE FIFLE.

A YARN.

Taking it easy. The *raconteur*. Batch of titles
Introduction. A voluntary. *The craft*. A discern-
ing skipper. Matter of history. An observation.
Life in the Indian seas. A very true story. A
quoted authority. Linois and Dance. Ho, for
England! Again on shore. Well rigged. Sunday
morning. Curiosity. An agreeable neighbour.

VOL III

B

Boarded by Captain Cupid. Taken aback. The communion. A Psalm *extempore*. A respectable character. A *Tiler*. Love *via* acquaintance. "Popping the question." Celebration. An unwelcome visitor. No help. More service. Once more released. Surprise. Time works miracles. An ill reception. Established with circumstance. Going into action. Long odds. A flight. A laudable resolution.

"I SAY, Tom, have'n't you got some good story or t'other to tell us to night, to make the night a little shorter," said one of the quarter gunners to a tough and weather beaten, yet withal good-looking sailor, who was sitting comfortably on a thick watch coat, disposed in the most advantageous manner on the carriage of one of the larboard carronades, and turning his quid with much self-complacent gravity.

"A story is it you want, my boys," returned he, squirting the tobacco juice over the

bulwark and pinching up his right eyelid. "Well, I don't see as how I've any objection to tell ye one, only mind that you don't put me out by axing questions or break in upon me in the middle on it. Let's see---what'll ye have? now there's the old yarn o' Captain Mainstay, and Dick Crosstree the foretop man; only you've hard that I think, and a story told twice over's not good for nothing, Then there's that un of old Duncan and Pat O'Reilly the queer Irish middy; and that of the black skipper, and Quashie Bumbo the Martinico Buccaneer; and then there's my breeze in the inner dock-yard at Plymouth; and Billy Bunting's keel-hauling, when we lay off the Bay of Funchal in Madery, and---but lord bless my soul all these are as rotten as a piece of old junk. Let me see again;---um---ha, ha, ha! I say, my lads, did ye never hear what a d---d scurvy trick I was sarved by a pretty wench called Kitty when I was last at Plymouth?"

“No, never, Tom, never, so let’s have that story by all means,” they all cried in a breath.

“Well, that shall be’t.—Avast there a bit though! I tarn’t nothing ’ticularly interesting, and it’s all about myself, so if you don’t like it don’t have it, you know, and say so.”

“If it’s about you it’s all the better, Tom,” returned his companions, “so crack on and let’s have it.

“Well, boys, in the summer o’ the year, 1804, I sarved aboard the Seizer, a fine seventy-four, with a captain named Gunnell. She was a clever craft, and she had as pretty a run from stem to stern as ever you’d wish to see. All her timbers from figurehead to taffril were as tight as a leather bottle, and I’ve known her carry on through as stiff a gale as ever the old blow-hards aloft spent their wind upon, without straining a single thread in one of her cords aloft, or starting an inch of her plank a-low. She’d got a precious nice way o’

going through the water at these ere times. She wouldn't stand taught up, you know, under her canvas, as I've seen some ships do when the puff's upon 'em, and come up against the seas as if they longed to have a knock at 'em, but she'd down side'ards, as it were, and she'd tarn her head to starboard or port, as the case might happen to be, and so catch the seas clean on her bow, and let 'em wash quietly off along her beams. She had as fine a set o' fellers aboard her, too, as ever you'd wish to clap your two eyes upon:—right down, reg'lar good uns; none o' your half and half, sniggering, fair-weather customers, all as bold as brass when giving chase, and fighting an enemy, or when 'board' was the word, and as clean-handed as could be when any of the handing, reefing, or furling work was a going forreds.

“ Then there was our skipper, too, who was as good a feller and as generous a commander, though I say it, as ever walked a

quarterdeck or sat on a court martial. He'd seen a good taste o' sarvice afore he was appointed to the Seizer, in diff'rent parts of the world, and d——n *me* if he didn't know, now, every bit of a common seaman's duty as well as if he'd been nothing all his life but a water-dog instead of a lord's nevee and all that there sort of thing, you know, as he is in reality. I was with him at the Battle o' the Nile, when he was first luff aboard the Culloden, seventy-four, Captain Troubridge, and I was so great a favourite of his'n, thof I say it, that it was at his instance, and through his good word at the Admiralty, that I got a berth aboard him when he was made captain, and was made a quarter-master six months a'ter we sailed.

“ The Culloden, as mayhap you have hard afore, my lads, just as she was a standing in for the van of the Frenchmen's line, carrying a good pile o' canvas and looking as proud as you please over it, struck her bottom on the tail of a d——d shoal what run'd out from an

island there in the bay, where the enemy had pitched some mortar and gun batteries. I wish you could ha' seen the face that old Troubridge made when the first leestenant marched up the quarter-deck and told him we had grounded. All the luffs looked as glum as so many bears about it, and most o' the men begin'd to swear. Lord, I never seed afore nor since such a damnable to do as there was aboard us all the day, all in the smoke, a trying to get her off. But all wouldn't do :— there the old lady had stuck, and she was determined she wouldn't stir a jot for the best on us, though we pulled hard to get the old witch away from it. I thought once or twice we was going to stick there till the day o' judgment, and the noise o' the firing you may be sure didn't put us into no passion at all, as by keeping in that ere sittivation we was prevented from having any hand in the fun going forred afore our eyes, and peppering the Frenchmen about us. We didn't get the

old b—— off till the day a'ter the battle was all over ;—that was the 2nd of August, you see, and in course by that time, all the moun-seers who hadn't struck was lying about here and there—masts by the board—slits in their sides—and beaten to mummy. There wasn't one to thump.

“ There's an old saying, my hearties—many and many's the time I've heerd my mother, God rest her soul, poor old sinner, repeat it to me and the child'en when we were little uns—that misfortunes always comes in squadrons, and we found the saying vitrified with a vengeance. The Culloden had got a good sight o' damage, and her rudder with a taste of the starn post, was knocked clean away by the thump on the shoal, so that she could hardly be kept on her legs with all pumps going. Howsomdever we worked very hard to get her to rights, and in four days a new rudder was made and shipped, and we was ready again for

active sarvice, though the old lady was still very leaky.

“ Well, in process o’ time the first leef-tenant was made a post captain on and appointed to the Seizer. I was transferred along with him, and we was sent off a short time a’ter we joined our new ship to cruise in the East Ingy seas and protect the home’ard bound traders. The summer was as hot as hot could be—our skins grow’d as brown as mahogany—our hair was curled so small with the heat, like the niggers, that it all curled away, and there was a precious deal o’ sickness on board us. It was doctor here, and doctor there, and doctor every where:—some had got the scurvy, some fevers, and I don’t know what besides, so that almost every day we tossed over something for the fishes, and at last we got so many fish about us that it was really quite frightful.

“ By the bye, I’ll tell you a good story about that. One day a pair o’ ducks was hanging to

dry somewhere on deck ; the day was breezy though it was very fine overhead, and a puff of wind carried 'em strait out astarn. Up come one of the men, named Thomas Whisker, in a great taking, whose they were. He run'd to the taffril and looked over ; the sea underneath was as full o' fishes as it could cram, and so, after thinking a bit, down he slips and walks over their backs, as he would upon deck, till he comes up to his trousers, and with something of a stretch he hauls 'em in. By this time a boat was down for him, which he got into and comed up again. But the wonder was how the backs o' the fishes could ha' kept him up like a floor. 'Twas odd, warn't it ?"

"Is that true ?" asked one of the men, doubtfully.

"True ! I'm d——d if it isn't. D'ye ever catch me telling stories that ain't true. The captain wouldn't believe it at first, 'cause he wasn't on deck at the time, but there was too

many who seed it ; and there's a long yarn about it, so our boatswain told me, who reads books, in the 'losophical distractions ; so all who are able to read are able to know the rights on it."

" Well, well, go on."

" Well, d'ye see, we was about a couple o' year a dodging about from one place to t'other, and devilish sick o' the work I was, too, a looking a'ter an old swab of a French admiral, what they called Linen or Linois or some such a name, who had two or three fine ships out with him there and sadly cut up our trade. Let's see now :—first there was the flag, a craft called the Merrygo, or Marengo, or summut sounding like that, an eighty-four ;—then there was the Bill-pull and Semi-lante, heavy frigates, 'sides a corvette mounting twenty-eight. That was the feller you know who had the brush with Commodore Dance in the Chiny seas, Febevery 15th, 1803. But all our tricks to nab him wouldn't do at all ; the

Frenchman was as cunning as the old covey down below who sits on his brimstone wash-handbasin, and he taked confounded good care to keep out of our way. Now he was to be met with here—then he had been seen off such and such place—then he had steered so and so—but when we taked all the places in rotation devil a ship was to be seen.

“ Well, at last you must know we got orders from the admiral o’ the station to take in water and provisions and sail with despatches to England. I’d been away now altogether a matter o’ three year, and was deuced glad, as as you may suppose, to see old England again.

“ We had a prosp’rous voyage, and worked up channel with a spanking breeze at S.S.W. but it soon went down and fell calm, and just as we got abreast o’ Plymouth Sound there wasn’t enough wind to stir a feather ;— the bunting hanged like a rag at the gaff end, and the water w as as smooth as a pond.

“ As this was the case, we made for Plymouth Harbour, and we went in in fine style, all the land swabs and shore-going toddlers cheering us lustily, and swarming about us like herrings.

“ Well, this was a Saturday night, d’ye see, that we got in, and I got permission from our first luff to go on shore for a week, for our skipper had started off for London directly we had dropped anchor and laced the sails to the yards. I had an old messmate a living there, and so I stayed in his house whilst I remained ashore.

“ The next morning up I got—tumbled out of my hammock and stowed it away, and looked out o’ the port what lighted the little state room what I snoozed in. It was a fine breezy morning, and so I swabbed my head and bows, got all my yard-tackles up, and rigged myself all taught from truck to keel in a bran new suit, jacket, ducks and castor, what I bought when I comed on shore. A’ter

that I goes below---takes my tarn at the mess table, and upsets a kid I was so glad to be on shore again. Then I set my topsails---hailed up jib---let fall my courses, and got sail upon me.

“I was going large, at a spanking rate, down one o’ the widest soundings, when I comed up to a large place where a cracked bell was making a devil of a row, and a swarm o’ folks was a going in. ‘Oh, ho,’ thinks I to myself, there’s summut or t’other a going forred here, and I’ll go in and see, so I backed my maintopsail---clapped my helm hard a-port---hove round---filled again, and steered smack in.

It was a rummish looking place inside, and I don’t know how it was, but it struck me all of a sudden that it was a church. I’d not been in no rigg’lar church since I was a kid this high, and couldn’t tell what to make on it. There was a pair o’ little boxes at the a’ter part, and two queer old coveys stuck in

the boxes, one with a white head and barnacles, with summut like a white sheet on him, was a laying down the law as solemnly as Phil Davis when his wife ran away from him with his cannister of snuff."

Well, my lads, on one side o' the seat what I squatted on, for I thought I might as well stop and make out what it was the old gentleman was a jawing about, you know, there was such a precious beauty a saying her prayers, and, when the people got up, singing beautiful. Summut like a gal, indeed! Her head and bows was finer tarned than I'd seen any 'oman's afore, her nose was quite a genteel one, and as thin as a backstay, her bow-port was as nice and as little as could possibly be, and as red as the scarlet stripes in a Yankee jack. Her rig both fore and aft was as neat and as complete as ever you'd wish to see, not a spare cord was to be seen in her whole 'quipment, not a single rope was out of its place, nor a rag of flaunty

bunting about her from stem to stern. Well, boys, directly I cast my eyes on her I felt a rum sort of sensation a flying about my hull and gathering about my upper works. I looked here, and I looked there, I looked up aloft, and I looked alow, to port, and to starboard, while my heart begin'd to thump, thump, and to flutter, flutter, as fast as the jib when we're hauling our wind. Blow me if I could tell at all what was become on me! thinks I to myself, thinks I, this arn't the first 'oman I've seen by many a one, and I'll be —— but I'm yawing about somehow or t'other d——nably in my course. Howsomever, to clip the yarn a little shorter, I contrived, but *how* I'm sure I don't remember now, to get into conversation with her. Hang me if she wasn't civil enough to lend me her tiny red log book to read the sarvice out on, and find out the psalms for me herself; but it warn't no use, I couldn't read without a

good taste o' spelling, and every now and then she would nudge my arm and give an eye up to me as much as to say 'why don't you sing like the others?' Well, I think'd to sing anything would be better than not singing at all, 'specially as I saw 'twould please her if I did sing, so I striked up the 'Bay o' Biscay, O!' and had got as far as 'there she lay,' when all the people begin'd to fidget about, and tarn round, and look at me in such a d——d queer fashion, that I was glad to give it over."

"By and bye all the folks weighed and made sail, and the young 'oman got up to go, too. Though you may think it rather 'markable, by this time we'd got to be such good friends that we cracked along in company down two or three roadsteads, and at a signal which she hang'd out at her main top we bring'd to at her father's door. The old gentleman kept a little tile shop, and, considering

his age and sittivation in life, looked well enough for a shore-going feller. He gave me a good deal o' palaver, but I suppose that was bekase I cut such a splashy figure, and had all my standing and running rigging in such exact order. He told me his name was Fifle, that his father's name was Fifle, too, and that he was glad of having an opportunity of making friends amongst folks of my calling, so I said thankee, and walked in-doors to blow a cloud with him and ship a tumbler or two of grog.

"Well, boys, whilst I was at Plymouth I used to see Fifle and his daughter every day, and at last I think'd I couldn't do a better thing than ax the poor gal to cruise for the remainder of her life with me in company. I axed her next day while her father was gone out with a castor to a customer, and I had the pleasure to see her tarn more colours nor a dolphin a dying. Howsomer she consented, and a week a'ter we all got under

weigh for the parish church. Kate was rigged out as fine as a new frigate, with all her light duck spread to the wind and dressed in all her holiday bunting. Old Fifle had bought a new close covering for his main-top the day afore, and he weared it on the occasion."

"Just as the parson begin'd to open his bow-port, and the t'other feller what says amen had dropped anchor a little astarn on him, in walks old Ben Backstay, captain o' fo'castle aboard my ship, the Seizer."

" 'Yo, ho, brother Binnacle,' says he to me as he comed in, 'have you got to the splicing business, already? You've given me a d——d deal o' trouble to find out where you'd run to, but I've cut you off now, my boy, so I'll just do my business and sheer off again.'"

"What d'ye mean, Master Backstay, by coming here just at this 'ticular time,' says I. "Tain't polite."

“‘Mean,’ says he, ‘ha, ha, come that’s a jolly good un! Look here, Bob, here’s a bit o’ paper atween my finger and thumb what’ll make you clap your helm hard a-starboard and make a broad sheer off to seaward afore you can say, haul in. I know it’s a deuced hard thing, but I can’t help it; your craft’s a neat un, and I’m confounded sorry to put distance atween ye:—but fretting’s not no use at all. Come, make the best of a bad bargain, give her a parting smack, and sheer off.’

“Up I takes the bit o’ paper, and sure enough it looks as if it was directed to me. I handed it over to old Fifle, and he readed it out loud. I was ordered to go on board directly, for the Seizer and a lot more o’ the crack ships was ordered off without a minute’s delay, ’cause Boney and a whole shoal of his cursed Frenchmen was expected over every hour.”

“In course nothing in the way o’ business

could be done that day. Kate went back again, quite down in the mouth, with her father without a husband, and a'ter giving her two or three hearty smacks and a few kind words I toddled off, too. Poor devil, she taked it sad to heart! she unplugged her scuppers every minute, and once or twice I think'd really she was a going to founder in downright arnest, 'cause the water gained on her so fast and her lower stancions begin'd to shake and cross each other. She rowled and yawed about a good deal, and it went to my heart, my lads, as you may suppose, to leave her like a poor wreck, with her spars over her side and ne'er a rag o' canvas to set, to settle down at leisure."

"But off we went. I seed a good deal o' sarvice both a-sea and ashore, and weathered a number o' stiffish gales. Fair weather to-day—foul to-morrow. I was in the battle o' Trafflgar aboard the Royal Sov'reign, which I had been drafted into while the Seizer lay

up in Gibraltar bay, and I lost my larboard eye by an unlucky shot from a marksman on the poop o' the Santa Anna, a big Spanish 112,

“A'ter being away for three year more, I come+ back to Plymouth full o' nothing but poor Kate and her old father. With these cheerful idees and 'spectations I landed and bear'd up for her house;---but good lord it was painted up fine, like a Chinese junk, and so strangely beplastered and transmografted that I scarcely know'd it again. Howsomever, my hearties, I find's the forred hatch a little ajar and in I toddles, expecting that when Kate should see me that she'd set up a precious sight o' squalling and hugging. Well, I opens the cabin door, and what d'ye thiuk I seed? there sat Kate, dressed up like a lady, with a thingumbob on her head, fringed and fallaled about with red and blue streamer ends, sitting by the fire a drinking tea, while the kettle was a singing away on the hob; you can't

think how pleasant it looked. On the star-board side o' the mess table there was an oldish looking covey as bluff in the bows and as heavy in the sheer as a Dutch dogger. A sudden misgiving comed slap athwart me. I stood stock still a winking my eyes and a twiddling my thumbs ahind my back. Then a something comed jumping up to my heart, and up higher, and up higher, till it lodged in my throat and prewented me from giving a hail. I claps my hand to my throat and feels as if I was a choking, at last the emotion all went a bubbling down again, and with something of a spit I cleared my pipes and managed to sing out,——

“ ‘ Hillo, Kate,’ says I, ‘ here I am, my dear, come back again to see how you and your father are a getting on. Why you look quite strange at me. Don’t you know me again, or is this a put on? What the devil are you staring at one so for? I know I’ve lost an eye, but I’m not the worse for that, and I can

see you yet, and I don't think there's such a mighty difference in me. Who's that rum customer a sitting in that there chair?

" 'I don't know you, my good man, at all,' says she, in the most barefaced way that ever I seed, 'this is some mistake.'

" 'Don't know me, Kate!' says I, 'ha, ha, ha, that's a very good joke. Blow me if I arn't desperate hungry: come, come, Kate, fill us up a dish o' your tea water, and overhaul your galley stores for summut more substantial than the trumpery I sees here. Old gentleman, you're welcome---you're one o' Kate's relations, I suppose; aye, aye, you needn't say so, I know'd it directly I comed in---there's the likeness in the face. Come let's all be jolly. Kate, my lass, run out and see if you can't get us summut to make a can o' flip on. I makes the best flip on board the Seizer by all allowance, and you shall have a treat.'

" 'Ha, ha, ha, I feels so comfortable. I've got to port at last,' says I; 'blow high or

blow low I don't care a d——n. I've got plenty o' shot in the locker, and a good appointment into the bargain;—loads o' tin about me, and more where that comed from. All our breezes and battles are over now, Kate, and I've come home to marry ye.'

" 'Marry me!' says she, 'marry *me*!—bless the man's impudence! My dear Mr. Whifflewhimper I takes my affidavy I never seed the feller afore.'

" 'Go about your business directly, you tar-plastered, red-faced, rope-hauling, yo-hoing son of a swabbing mob,' says the old feller, 'I'll teach you to insult my wife in this here impertinent manner, that's what I will.'

" 'Your *wife*?' says I, quite knocked down backwards.

" 'My wife,' says he.

" 'In arnest?' says I.

" 'In arnest,' says he.

“ ‘ Gammon !’ says I.

“ ‘ No, it arn’t,’ says he.

“ ‘ D——n ye both then,’ says I, ‘ that’s all,’ but directly I said it the old chap started up in a towering passion and swear’d he’d make me brush.

“ ‘ Be off with you quietly,’ says he, and he looked as white as a sheet all the while, ‘ or I’ll send for a constable, and I’ll charge you with a housebreaking.’

“ ‘ I shan’t stir a peg,’ says I.

“ ‘ Shan’t ye,’ says he, ‘ aye, aye, we’ll soon see whether you won’t. Kate, clap on your bonnet and run for a constable.’

“ ‘ Take that, you tarnation lubber,’ says I, ‘ while he’s acoming,’ and I run’d slap at him, and boarded him afore he had time to cry out or get under the table. Well, we had a reg’lar set to, yawing and pitching about like the very devil to discharge our broadsides, and pouring in from the tops, showers o’ shot from

the jaw lockers, till he was glad to get to his close quarters and sing out peccavi. But the action war'nt over yet, for Kate sets up a scream and shoots up alongside on me, letting out in right down reg'lar man o' war fashion, and boarding me on the quarter. Atween the two my rigging and upper works comed in for a benefit, but luckily I got athwart the old feller and raked him beautiful, fetching out now and then a longer shot at his consart. In a heavy lurch down went the glims, and we were all left in the dark ; at last I contrived to get the free use o' my hands, and knocked somebody down. I don't know who it was, but directly I found I had dismasted 'em all and that they was unfit for future sarvice, I bolted out o' the door like a cannon shot, and run'd along the streets as fast as if the devil was behind me, got down to the shore, jumped into a rowboat what I found there belayed to a timber head, and pulled off

to the Seizer, then riding snug at anchor about a mile off the Breakwater.

That was the last time I've been at Plymouth, and blow *me* ! if I ever ax a pretty wench to marry me again while these old timbers stick together.

THE MERCHANT CAPTAIN'S STORY.

FIRST PART.

The story which I am about to tell, is of things in which I acted, and therefore I have no need to draw on my imagination to amuse you. I have seen much of life, and some of

* To remove an impression which might occur that the mysterious ship in this tale was suggested by two tales upon the subject of the Flying Dutchman, Captain Marryat's "Phantom Ship," and Mr. Neale's "Flying Dutchman," it will be sufficient to state that the Merchant Captain's Story, in its original form, was written in May of the year 1837, two years before the Phantom Ship was published. Mr. Neale's book appeared, if I remember correctly, in the same year as Captain Marryat's. The phantom ship had appeared to the author a good subject for a tale, years before the Merchant Captain's Story was written. It is now published for the first time.

its incidents have been so impressed on my memory, that they recur at times when their presence is not desired. For the tale I am going to tell you I need not bespeak your indulgence, for it is in every part true.

In the year 1813, I had the command of a splendid Indiaman:—the *Pleiad* was her name. It was my first command, and you may imagine the pride and gratification with which I first stepped on her deck. My owners were the proprietors of a Chinaman in which I had served my proper time as first and second mate. In both capacities, especially the last, I had been spoken of so highly by my commander, that our owners determined to entrust the next vessel they should send to sea to me.

A fine vessel of large tonnage they had just purchased of the assignees of a ship builder at Limehouse, who had become bankrupt, and the opportunity occurring just in the nick of time, as we say, I had the luck to be constituted her master. Her lading my owners took care of; but the first day I was informed of

my appointment, I bustled down to the East India basin to get a sight of my new craft. As my story deals with her, you must not be displeased at my giving you a little account of her.

You are too familiar with the cut of a regular Indiaman (the craft we are on board of is a case in point) for it to be necessary that I should dilate on mine. But there are some particulars that I cannot help noticing:—there is a pleasure in calling to mind how she looked, especially as she is now far below the salt waves.

Her run was beautiful—so beautiful that she more appeared a thing to dream of than buffet with the heaving dark blue waters. Her mould was the *ne plus ultra* of naval architecture. I have seen many fine vessels, but the Pleiad beat them all, especially in the matter of her hull. Above ran her bulwark, black and shining as jet, studded with deadeyes, shadowed by channels, and concealing behind its row of lowered ports the grim row of deck guns. Below this was the broad

ribband of snowy, dazzling white, seeming almost a glass in which the waters might see their face. Under this she sloped away in a jetty profundity of colour, only broken by the glistening row of cabin lights, with the glittering glass, neatly finished mouldings, and gilded wreaths.

Davits above suspended our stern boat, while a quantity of black anchors and stout cables hung and twined about our bows and forecastle.

The figurehead was a noble piece of sculpture; at least it looked so then to my eye. A star was on her head, a wand in her hand, and one foot was raised and one arm extended, as if she had a mind to start before the craft over which she presided, and weave her spells around our onward course.

The mast of the ship towered above till they fined away into wands, mounting from lower-mast to topmast, topmast to top-gallant-mast, top-gallant-mast to royal. White they were, crossed by the black yards, from which de-

pended the jetty blocks, while the tackling passed and repassed, climbed and drew out, in a web that to an inexperienced eye was more complex than that of the spider.

At our gaff end floated the colours we were entitled to carry—the red field and union which wander the world over.

When I first saw her, her masts were unstepped—her rigging was unrove. But I saw enough of her to like her, and thought that I should be able to make her do anything. A mate and some part of her intended crew were aboard; the rest and other officers we had to pick up.

The owners intended to freight her as soon as possible, and therefore they directed me to fill up the list of hands as soon as I could. A first and third mate were soon sent aboard, after having been submitted to my approval, and about the docks we picked up sixteen

hands, some few shoregoers, but the majority regular seamen.

In about a fortnight I had completed my crew, and was busy in getting ready for sea. We had warped into the outward dock, and were at the wharf, every day taking in goods with cranes swinging and waggons unloading. Eighteen days after we entered outwards we had good part of our cargo on board.

We were to sail on the 2d of September, and it now wanted but ten days to the time. Every new day made us busier :—we were scraping our masts, painting inside and out, blacking the bends, examining our sheathing, getting up our higher masts, and fitting and reeving the rigging ; stores of all kinds were coming on board every half hour, the crew were asking holidays to go and see their sweethearts and friends and take leave of all previous to their voyage ; some requested and were given wages in advance, which were laid

out not only in necessaries for the voyage, but haberdashery and copper trinkets for female friends. In short, as the day for sailing approached, the ship grew a regular Babel, and I longed for sea ; which is a wish that I dare say every master of a ship in the like circumstances has shared.

I had as yet had few applications for passages. I was not quite surprised at this, as our ship was not exactly of the first class ships trading out of London, and as there were one or two of the East India Company's ships starting nearly at the same time with me. They of course had the preference ; and the fact of its being a new ship, and that I was myself a new commander, had, perhaps, some share in my being passed over by passengers seeking berths or cabins. But I did not mind ; my cargo was good, and I did not fear carrying one or two passengers after all.

Some few days before I sailed, I was as usual at the Jerusalem. About twelve o'clock

a young gentleman waited on me soliciting a passage. In course of conversation I became aware that he was going out with a considerable quantity of cash to meet the engagements of his uncle, whose affairs were in a somewhat embarrassed condition. There was a species of partnership existing between his father and uncle:—one belonged to an extensive house in London, the other was doing business for himself at Madras. The consignor was unwilling to trust so large a sum of money to any person but a relation, and therefore was sending out his son in charge of it, communication with India not being then quite so rapid and so sure as it has become since.

“I have come for two passages,” said the young man, “one for myself, the other for my sister. She is going out to her aunt, who is in bad health, and naturally wishes to have some of her relations about her. I hope we shall be able to make ourselves mutually

agreeable during the voyage. Have you engaged with many passengers ?”

“ Perhaps I shall only carry out yourself and your sister,” said I.

“ Few enough, captain, you’ll carry, at that rate. But you may secure more passengers yet.”

“ We shall see,” replied I, and after bidding him a friendly good morning he left me.

I took his age to be about five and twenty. He was tall and handsome, though dark complexioned. His eyes were black, his hair was of the same colour ; and singularly white teeth, and a very pleasing smile, made his physiognomy altogether attractive. His manners were gentlemanly, and he appeared both intelligent and well disposed.

I saw him several times as the day of our departure drew on. His baggage came on board the day before that appointed for our starting. The same afternoon arrived himself and his sister ; but in the bustle consequent upon

a large ship making ready to leave port, I had not leisure much to notice them. Our decks were filled with all sorts of things :—at this time all placed in confusion, and left to be arranged when we had done with shore. Two of the owners were aboard, and I had to attend to them. Some of the crew, too, were ashore, and they had to be looked after. What with one thing and another, we found it impossible to cast off till morning, and so lay where we were.

Early the following morning, all hands being got on board, all stores shipped, and every thing settled, we cast off our moorings, and began to warp out of dock. This was a tedious business. Any one who has been in the the habit of observing these things, must know the lazy, desultory way in which ships are worked out of the black labyrinth of hulls a large dock presents. But the basin being entered, and the swivel bridges thrown open,

we got out by little and little, till we breasted the tideway at Blackwall.

We took our pilot on board, and, steam tugs not being then in fashion, had to tide it down to Gravesend. I remember the day very well. It was one of those beautiful days we see in our own dear England sometimes in September. The atmosphere was intensely warm. But very few clouds were in the sky, which was blue as that above us now. The river shone like silver—the shores looked green as paradise, with the blue strip of distant, dreamy country stretching above;—everything, river and land, was brilliant in the sunshine. I could not help admiring everything as we passed. Woolwich with its dock-yard and elevated church and church-yard; Erith with its ivied spire and the broad wood which forms its back ground; Greenhithe; Grays; lastly Gravesend, with its picturesque front of houses and wharfs, where we clued up our sails and dropped anchor.

Here we remained two days, waiting for a

wind, and taking in our supplies and pilot :— the last was to quit us when he had carried us safely into the Downs. On the third morning, the wind being tolerably fair, we let fall and spread our canvass, called in all stragglers, weighed, and stood down the lower Hope. How eagerly do we lookout, as the first broad blue of the billowy ocean opens to our eyes, when we round the point and get fairly into Sea-reach !

By dint of tacking we made no inconsiderable way, and were not long before we brought up in Margate Roads, waiting for the wind to change, for it had lately become was too baffling for us to proceed in comfort. Fortunately that night a breeze sprang up, and we bore away, getting into the Downs in a few hours.

Our last communications were here made with the shore ;—our pilot quitted us, and with all sail spread we shaped our course south westwards.

Things were looking a little more comforta-

ble now on board. I had time to make acquaintance with my passengers ;—the two noticed before being those only I carried, excepting a female servant of Miss Revel's. The young man I have already described ; the sister I discovered to be a young lady of great personal attractions as well as of sensible and accomplished mind. She was much like her brother, but her complexion was singularly fair. Her eyes were if anything more black and expressive, and her voice had a pleasing softness in it, that not one of the roughest sailors could listen to scarcely without emotion. She played and sung with much taste ;—sketched beautifully, and was altogether a most delightful companion.

I found the time pass away very pleasantly. Our first mate was a young man of good education, and very gentlemanly in his manners, and my two passengers, my mate, the surgeon, and myself, made a very agreeable *coterie* as we sat to

our office in the cabin or gathered a group on deck.

Rounding the southern coast, we touched at Portsmouth, and then bore away through the Needles. As we stood to sea, so did the white cliff-line of our native England fade into distance, till all that remained was a thin vapoury streak, which at last melted altogether in the water. By this time everything was in its proper place on board :—the cargo was stowed, the decks were cleared, and the passengers were beginning to settle down in their new situation.

Our second mate, the one you will remember I saw on board when I first boarded my vessel, was a singular man. His berth had been given him by a Scotch partner in our house in the city, who seemed to have a high opinion of his nautical knowledge, and had had him recommended by a cousin in the Highlands. I had not much liked him the first moment I

clapped eyes on him, but tried to get over what I considered a prejudice. He was about five-and-forty years of age, a Northumbrian by birth, very tall, very broad shouldered, and seemingly possessed of a frame of iron. He generally stooped—wore his hair long—had a slight cast in his eye, and a rigid and knotty forehead. Two sharp lines were drawn down from his nostrils to the corners of his mouth, which gave the latter a disagreeable expression. His eyes were grey, and seemed to look at you from their corners, while owing, to weakness of vision, or habit, they were always half closed. He was superstitious and ignorant, though a bold and able seaman. However he went about his business regularly enough, and therefore I had no reason to complain of him.

In due time we made Madeira, where we took in some of its delicious fruits, as well as water and other necessaries. We stopped

here three days, our passengers going ashore each day.

On the morning of the fourth, the capstan was manned, the anchor drawn out of its bed, the sails cast loose, and we drifted out of harbour with the first of the tide. Passing out of the mouth of the harbour, the sails were sheeted home, the yards hoisted, and the head sails sent flapping up.

We were soon out of sight of the island, and were bearing off southwards.

The fifth morning after we left Madeira, I was on deck with Wolf Davis, our second mate. He was conning to the helmsman, and I was directing some fresh canvas to be let out, and the studding sails up to the royals rigged. I was standing near when he opened the conversation.

"The young man below," said he, "would lose if we had a bout with a pirate."

"So should we," said I.

"True," he returned. "The cash is considerable, is it not, captain?"

"I believe so," I said carelessly.

"Hasn't he told you the amount?" asked Davis. "I've heard it's nigh five thousand pound."

"Something above that, I'll be bound," replied I.

"Above that?" he answered in a vacant tone. "Five thousand pound is a great sum, and I didn't—I mean I shouldn't have thought it had been more. Well, I wish him well out of the ship with his money, for if he lose it in the *Pleiad* 'twill get the good ship a bad name."

"If he lose it" said I, "the ship's bad name will not much matter, for she will go to the bottom. But what makes your mind so dwell on the chance of his losing it, Davis?" I asked.

"These seas have a good many cruisers,"

he returned, "and five out of six will make free with his money."

Further conversation was interrupted by Augustus Revel and his sister Matilda coming on deck. They walked aft, and we all began to talk of the weather, the ship, and a hundred other topics.

Having made St. Helena, and taken on board some fresh provisions, we set all sail for the Cape, nothing particular occurring from the day of our departure to that of our entrance into Table Bay. The wind had been fair, the water tolerably smooth, and with a few calms now and then, and one squall, our passage from the island had been unusually prosperous.

THE MERCHANT CAPTAIN'S STORY

SECOND PART.

On the twenty-fourth of October we entered Table Bay, and were soon busy getting in fresh water and provisions. Pigs, poultry, sheep, and cows were taken on board, with vegetables, fruit, and other matters of the like description.

We lay abreast of the town, examining our sails and rigging, and preparing ourselves for

the buffeting which we might expect to meet with in getting eastwards.

At last we got our topgallants up, our royal yards athwart, and everything in order on deck.

It was on the 29th of October, about seven A.M., that we clapped hand to capstan bar, worked ourselves short, and catted the anchor we had down. This done, sails were spread, and in the last of the tide we got fairly out to sea.

The day was beautiful; large masses of purple clouds were floating like mountains above us, and the bright and even fiery sunshine gushed out between them, and threw over the wide waste of waters alternate stripes of dazzling glory and lurid gloom. It was a peculiar day, but one not unfrequent in these latitudes.

Late in the afternoon we were a good many leagues from land, and, as the wind still held fair, we carried on with studding-

sails all abroad, and everything spread which would draw.

About seven, P.M., it came on to blow, and by nine o'clock the sea ran high—a heavy, mountainous swell, which rolled our ship to and fro like a toy. The motion was monotonous, though great.

The night was bad, and seemed to threaten to become worse. The moon looked dimmer though much larger than usual, and she glanced faintly out of the rolling masses of immense clouds. Jets of her watery light would sometimes gush out, as it were, stream down across the vapours of the horizon, and light up in a ghastly manner long strips of sea. Equally as soon would she pass in again, and all become black as midnight, till a silver line of light traced itself silently along the gloomy sea distance, and gradually broke into breadth and strength.

Thus passed the night in cloudiness and uncertainty, the wind blew in strong angry gusts, and

by eight the next morning it was hard. The clouds seemed to thicken all the forenoon; one or two squalls came driving and roaring, lashing up the whole breadth of distant sea, till it seemed to form a long and rainy fringe to the ink-blue curtain that shut out all beyond it, and spread far up into the sky. Often did we see the squall, when our sails were flapping against the masts, coming hissing and boiling down upon us, bringing the wind with it, and bursting on us with a demon's fury. Rain-clouds occasionally splashed and burst up right above us, and enveloped us in a sheet of watery, smoky, driving mist, in which we had much difficulty in seeing anything.

Thus wore the hours till evening. I perceived a strange mystery and anxiety about my crew. They seemed to be restless and fidgetty, and were looking out every now and then ahead. They appeared to go about their work with slowness and dissatisfaction, and their minds were evidently depressed and pre-occu-

pied. It was at this moment that I overheard one of my seaman saying in a half whisper to one or two of his fellows.—

“It was in just such a sea that I saw him seven years ago.”

“Was it?” was asked by half a dozen anxious enquirers;—then they spoke so low that I could not catch what was said.

I walked up to them. “Come, my lads,” said I, “this won’t do. The sea is increasing, and you must bestir yourselves. Bear a hand and ease the vessel by the head, or we may chance to get a little worse taste of the weather than we should like.”

“What’s the use!” said Davis. “If the ship’s to carry through, she’ll do it—if not our labour’s vain. Better, to my thinking, to——”

“To what, Davis? How is this?” I asked. “You don’t presume to question my orders.”

Davis did not answer, but looked abroad and grumbled to himself.

"I don't like the look of this," I said. "What makes you look so strange, men? See to your business immediately, and if Davis refuse——."

"Refuse!" interrupted Davis, sullenly. "I didn't refuse."

"I hope not," I said, significantly. "See to your duty and reef the foresail and foretop-sail. Double, mind you."

Davis walked off doggedly, with an expression on his countenance which I did not like.

"What can be the meaning of this," I asked of those who remained. Surely you are not such swabs, boys, as to care for the few puffs we have had. The worst we've seen, depend on't, and if it had been ten times——."

"Ay, ten times worse," interrupted the boatswain, "we shouldn't have cared a d——n; — God forgive me for swearing just now! Come high or low, let it blow great guns, and let the sea run as high as it

like, I don't care a rotten ropeyarn, that is, so long as I've got a clear sea, and am likely to meet with nothing worse than myself. But this is just the time ——"

"For what," I demanded, "for what, Gaulty?"

"Just the time to see the Flying Dutchman, that's all, your honour:—just the short and the long of it."

"Flying Dutchman!" I cried. "Flying devil! I've heard of him, but I've beat up these seas over and over again without seeing a sign of him. I didn't think my crew were lubbers enough to believe such tales."

"Don't be too bold, captain. It's just the way to bring misfortune upon us. We're perhaps like Jonah's ship."——

"Jonah! how dare you, Gaulty, make use of such an allusion to me?"

"Cap fits, I s'pose," he muttered. "No harm done, captain. I hope we're going to run clear, that's all."

Fearing the men might get more perverse

in their idle fears, I ordered them instantly to disperse to their business. The behaviour of Davis and Gautly disturbed me much, and it was with no small anxiety that I superintended the reduction of our canvas. Davis looked to the mainmast. Seyton (first mate) directed forward.

The sublimity of the scene at this moment struck me forcibly. The evening was deepening into twilight. Mountains of clouds were rolled and heaped in the spectrally half-purple sky. In the west was a fiery blaze, casting a deep red illumination over a broad belt of billowy, sparkling sea. But this was getting dimmer and dimmer every instant. Lurid sulphury hues were spreading among the grandly convoluted clouds, and streaming over the ghastly, as it looked to more eyes than mine, breadth of the gloomy sea distance. In the east the sky was black and turbid. Thunder rolled and muttered along in the distance, and pale lightning quivered and streamed through

the breaks of cloud, and along the surface of the water. I never saw so singular and even awful-looking a day. Colours of all kinds were in the sky and ocean; and with all this there were the mighty rolling waves, grandly heaving our noble vessel, the vast breadth of sea—nothing but sea, the thunder of the wind, now loudly mixing with the thunder of heaven, the tremendous sense of solitude, and the overpowering idea of space—immense space. But I had not time to look much longer, for my men were drawing together and hurriedly whispering.

“I must know what all this is about,” I said, going up to them. “I cannot believe that the Flying Dutchman alone——”

“You’re right,” interrupted Davis. “We’re going to hold on no longer. It’s going against fate. I’m sure the voyage is doomed, and I’m resolved to ’bout ship and see if I can’t make something better of matters.”

"What do you mean, insolent villain?" I cried, walking up to him and looking him full in the face." You are mutineering, sir. Do you know that?"

"Why I suppose I am," he answered, coolly, "but I can't help that. We must take care of ourselves. We've no right to run our head into the bear's mouth because the captain bids us."

"Mutiny!" I cried, turning round. "Mutiny! Mr. Seyton, fasten the hatches! Arm yourselves, gentlemen, for we shall have need, I think, of something of the kind before we've done here."

At those words Seyton drew his sword; and the other officers ran up at the alarm with pistols and other weapons."

This was the work of a minute. The crew seemed to stand irresolute.

"Come, my men," said I, "let's at least see who are our friends and who enemies."

Those who will abide by their captain, and do not wish for a swing from the gallows, walk over to my side."

After an instant's consideration I had a good third of my crew behind me, besides all the officers except Davis and Gaulty. The first pulled out a pair of ship's pistols.

"I'm sorry," said he, "we can't get it without a blow; but we must have it. Come, my merry men, there's gold enough aboard to make you all. Pull out your tools, and let us set bodily about it. Gaulty, head some of these bull-dogs, will you? and drive us the sheep aft. The voyage is doomed. Look at the day, and see if it doesn't frown black as hell upon us! The Flying Dutchman's afore you as sure as there's thunder in heaven. Those who don't want to meet him, will follow me, and get the command of the ship before we sight him looming."

I advanced to seize him, and an immediate skirmish was the consequence. The whole

thing had come so suddenly upon me, that I was at a loss to understand it. The first shot was fired by the mutineers, and we were all instantly in a pell-mell species of struggle. The first clash of cutlasses caught my ear. It was all like a fearful dream. Some few bodies fell heavily to the deck, and over them one or two of my men tumbled. Muskets were presented, and balls began to whiz and sing along the deck.

In a few minutes the mutineers were driven along the gangways, and some were jumping up the forecastle ladders. I feared they might turn some of the guns in and rake us, and so pushed them not so hard as I might otherwise have done. We kept them at bay some time, and then were obliged to retreat till we had mounted the quarter-deck. Here I ordered the hammocks to be torn down and made a breastwork of, which I strengthened with all the ship's furniture that I could lay hand on.

Fortunately we had the helm in our power, and so kept the ship before the wind. But our state was highly alarming. I feared that guns would be pointed aft, which would have swept the place on which we stood from right to left. Augustus Revel and his sister were both on deck with us. The latter was trembling fearfully, but still she endeavoured to calm her fright and not distress us by her agitation.

“This is a pretty business!” said I to Seyton. “What will my owners do!—our lives are not safe!”

“We are not weak,” he answered.

“Thank God for it!—we are not,” I cried.

“My good lads,” I said to the crew, “you are my friends for ever. If we master those villains, I promise every man, on the part of the owners, fifty guineas. Revel, it was your money which brought this upon us.”

“Was it?” he replied. “I will be cut to pieces before they have it!”

"Oh let them have it," said his sister, "if that will content them and let us proceed in peace! This state is so dreadful—it is too dreadful."

"We cannot, Miss Revel" I said. "Fear not; we will die, every man of us, before you fall into their hands. Are they stirring, Seyton?"

"No, sir, I cannot see anything of them."

"Hush!—do you hear nothing?"

"Nothing—they've piled all the stores forward. I can't see; there may be the deck-guns behind the lumber."

"God in heaven forbid! What would you do," I said, "shall we risk an attack of them?"

"I say not," returned the third mate. "They may mow us down with their grape if we quit our defences, before we can get at them."

"What arms have you on deck?" I asked.

"Plenty of arms as well as ammunition," answered Seyton.

"Very good," I said. "Load all your muskets and pistols, and we will see if we cannot get some of the guns inwards."

"The sea is far too high," observed Seyton. "They would roll and crush us. If they have them in forward, they're lashed tight, depend upon it. But it's quite impossible:—they would not have cast them loose."

"Look out, Seyton," I said, "and see what tack they are upon."

Seyton raised his head, but cautiously.

"By Jove," he cried, "all in a moment, there is a ship!"

"A ship! Thank God!—thank God!" I cried, while tears, for the first time, burst from Matilda Revel's eyes and coursed down her cheeks.

"What does she look like?" asked Augustus Revel.

"I hardly know," returned Seyton, still intently gazing. "Look up, Captain Robinson, will you?"

I raised my head and looked over the bulwark. I could not keep myself steady, the motion of the ship was so violent. At this moment a rain-cloud broke over us, and we were instantly buried in sheets of wet blue vapour.

"She's gone in," whispered Seyton:—"the fellows forward are observing her. I hear voices."

"'Tis an interposition from heaven for our rescue," said I. "They will be daunted and take her for the Flying Dutchman."

"I never was more inclined to believe the story of the Flying Dutchman than now," said Seyton.

I could have joined him in his declaration. The wind blew off the whole body of cloud and mist like an immense curtain, though colossal vapours were still flying by the ship we had seen. The sea was awfully grand. It was the last of twilight, but sometimes a strange kind of illumination appeared to float over dif-

ferent parts of the ocean. The atmosphere soon got clear though dark. Cloud-piles were towering up into the sky :—these clouds were so electrically charged that they seemed bathed in sulphur, and they had all the thousand varying hues presented by its combinations.

At this moment, a cry of “the ship! the ship!” burst from the forecastle. We forgot our situation at the shout, and gazed with intensity upon it. Every one in the ship seemed attracted, and all rose and strained eagerly over the bulwarks.

There is something in the appearance of that wonderful ship which has puzzled me often. Though the wind was blowing fiercely, there she was, rolling grandly on the immense swell, with everything set ;—a cloud of canvas—every inch abroad that her booms could spread, even up to the royals. A queen of ships indeed she looked. I can see her now, as she rolled almost gunnel in ;—a pyramid of sails rising majestically above her black and mysteri-

ous-looking hull—no colours spread—her boats at the davits, swinging at the quarter and stern—no ribband traced along her beautiful run—not a figure to be seen aboard her even with the glass—every sail packed on from truck to decks. We saw her for full five minutes in this distinct manner, though we were hardly able to believe our eyes, and credit the possibility of such a vast pile of canvas in so high a sea.

Hardly to be believed, she seemed making no way. There she was, motionless, spectral, *frightening* in her strangeness and mystery. At length she began to loom. Her gigantic outline printed itself on the lurid back ground :—she grew a dull leaden grey ;—clouds of mist came driving and wreathing about her, and she disappeared by little and little, like an apparition. In ten minutes from our first seeing her she had totally disappeared, and left us asking each other if such a thing had been there.

We recovered ourselves with a long drawn breath, and addressed ourselves to our arms. I could hear some motion among the mutineers. I wondered how they had borne the sight we had seen.

"What could that vessel have been?" said I. "She took no notice of us. She passed by as silently and unsubstantially as if she had been a phantom."

"We've been too occupied to once think of making her a signal," said Seyton.

"It never struck me," I returned. "I seemed to think that we *could not*:—that it would be like signalling a phantom. How broadly, majestically, gigantically she passed."

"*We* passed rather," he rejoined, "for with all her mass of sails she did not appear to advance a yard. It was our motion which carried her by."

"Singular enough!" said William Anderson, our third mate. "Would not this appearance nearly make one believe the story

of the Flying Dutchman? Like you, Captain Robinson, I almost believed I was witnessing some optical illusion. Where can she be now?"

"There is too much vapour in her direction for her to be just now visible," observed Seyton. "We may see her again."

"If we do," said I, "we'll make some signal——endeavour to make our situation understood. She couldn't have been a cruiser:—I hardly know what to think of her."

"A cruiser would have closed and spoke us," answered Seyton;—"would have observed us as sure as the craft we have seen did not notice us. The mists are opening a little. Revel, hand me the glass, will you?"

"What are they about forward?" I asked of Anderson; "they appear quiet."

"This sight has calmed them for a time," he returned,—"they believe her the Flying Dutchman as sure as they're masters of half the Pleiad."

"What a fool I was," I exclaimed, my

thoughts reverting to the chief mutineers, "to go to sea with such a cut-throat villain ! Where could he have been picked up ?"

" On the coast—the east coast of Scotland, as I've heard," said Anderson. " He has been in his time something of a smuggler, I believe, between some of the fishing hamlets northward of Aberdeen and some place or places on the continent. He has only played some of his old games aboard the *Pleiad*. The man's a little more inclined to be commander than commanded. Besides I really think he did not admire the idea of the *Flying Dutchman*. Your gold, Mr. Revel, had formed a strong temptation, and now of course, as they've gone so far, they will fight hard before they knock under."

" We've run ourselves into a pretty mess," said I. " Not a chance of a king's cruiser, and leagues upon leagues of sea, without a sail except these jacks o' lantern, that only glimmer before us to fade into nothing or glance off

some hundred leagues hence. Do you see anything, Seyton?" I added, observing him still intent upon the cloud in which the strange ship had disappeared.

"There is something in the cloud yonder," he said, "that looks a little like her. A dim shadow which you can just discern in the grey. Look abroad, Captain Robinson; can you distinguish the place where she vanished?"

"Yonder it is," said I, pointing with my finger; "but I cannot tell the precise spot!"

"Do you see that point where a line of sea seems breaking thinly and whitely? Raise your eyes, and towards the centre you will perceive a roll of cloud which appears to rest directly upon the water. It is like a vast grey curtain, but in the middle there is a vague outline—a strange shadow, which assumes something of the form of a ship. Have you caught the place?"

"I have," I said. • "I see it distinctly.

Give me the glass, I think I can make something out of it."

I took the glass, and caught the point to which my attention had been directed. The cloud and haze were very thick. It was gradually shadowing down all around. I had not looked long, before the shadow grew denser and more defined. It now assumed an outline in contradistinction to its hitherto waving, ghostly appearance. The outline grew sharper;—it seemed to be breaking through the cloud—a moment more, and the figure of a large ship, hull and sails, became plainly distinguishable. She loomed broadly in consequence of her outstretching stud-sails. Just at this moment a long rolling peal of thunder began muttering in the distance, and gradually deepened as it seemed to sweep round the horizon. It rattled as it spent itself in the west. A flash—a gush, rather, of red lightning, streamed down across the sky, and seem to deluge not only

the mysterious ship, but the ocean with the sky and its clouds around it. All seemed in illumination. I never gazed upon a more glorious though awful sight. Ship, sails, hull, sea, sky, and cloud, seemed instantaneously bathed in a flood of red light. Everything became distinct in a moment. I could see her row of bristling guns, her chains, her boats, anchors, masts, tops, booms, and every individual sail in her pyramid of canvas. But the vision was as transitory as it had been grand. The flash had passed—darkness rushed over all—the ship was lost again in its ocean of gloomy cloud—shadows settled over the whole sea in its neighbourhood—every light waned away, and we saw the ship no more.

Not a word had been spoken all this time. We had quite forgotten, in our excitement and abstraction, the signal we had promised ourselves. It would, however, have been of no service.

Had we been more satisfied of the character

of the mysterious vessel, our distance was too great for any motion we might have made to be seen and understood by the people, if any, on board of her. We feared to cast loose the guns, and besides we had no cannon-loadings on deck. The ship, therefore, departed, and we set ourselves to consider of our situation.

Both Seyton and Anderson were confident that the stranger was no cruiser, as no notice whatever was taken of us, and no sign given that we were even seen. The whole affair was buried in mystery, and we turned our eyes again on board with a hundred strange and wild speculations.

Night had now come on ; the clouds were a little dispersing ; the wind seemed to be going down. Thus we remained for an hour or two, debating what had best be done. Nothing was heard of the mutineers.

About nine o'clock we were startled by hearing a sudden bustle forward. Voices were

loud, and we immediately concluded an attack was preparing. We sprung to our arms immediately.

I could hear the voice of Davis issuing some orders, and presently the gleam of battle-lanterns was thrown along the decks and streamed on the night air.

All forward was illuminated, and by their light we could see the dark figures of our crew gather together on the ridge of the forecastle, and begin to descend the ladders.

“Look to your arms !” I cried, starting up, “the villains are coming. Let every other man let fly at them and charge again as quickly as possible, while the reserve pour in a second volley. Protect yourselves as much as possible by your breastwork. Now’s your time ! Take them in the crowd before they’ve time for a rush. Look sharp, men, and take good aim !”

I had scarce time to get out the words before the mutineers had descended the ladders.

Just as they were advancing, my men poured in their volley—whiz ! went the balls, rattling on the timbers, and bouncing away in every wild direction.

A cloud of snowy smoke drove along the decks, filling every part of them, and for the moment concealing our enemy. But the next instant the wind blew it off, and the whole crowd of villains was plainly distinguishable.

Their reception had staggered them a little I did not perceive any fall, but there was a cry and an oath or two, which showed that our balls had taken effect.

The next moment our reserved party threw in another volley—the reports rattled over the ship, and the smoke again concealed all forward. But crack !—crack !—now came the muskets of the mutineers, though the balls whistled over our heads without doing us any mischief.

“Let us rush down upon them,” said Seyton; “a strong push will clear the decks,

and we may drive them into parties, and so master them."

"What say you, Anderson?" said I, suddenly.

"Not a bad idea just now," he answered.

"Forward then in God's name!" I cried, and with a hearty shout we all began to rush down the ladders.

In a moment I was on the gangway, and charging ahead without hardly seeing where I went. Seyton, however, was on my left hand, while Anderson, with a good half of my crew, was taking the lee gangway. We soon closed with the mutineers. Davis was just before me. We were so close that muskets without bayonets were useless.

Several pistols I saw presented and flashed; but in the confusion I could not see whether they took effect. The clinking of the steel was fearful, and I began to see blood trickling down in the press, and running in little streams

along the deck. Spite of a tremendous struggle, and a most determined pressure forward, I found myself slipping inch by inch, together with all the brave fellows I had about me, till we had almost been forced back the whole length of the waist.

On the other side the villains had been still more successful. They had driven all our people rapidly enough to the foot of the quarter-deck ladder, and they were now about to take us on the flank.

Just at this moment, Davis, who was foremost, dealt Seyton a cruel cut on the arm, and the poor fellow instantly dropped. I pulled him up, however, and thrust him up the ladder just above me. Under these circumstances, I ordered all to mount after him, and ascended myself last with Augustus Revel. I whispered him to step up and look after his sister, and with my cutlass waved clear space for me to ascend without interruption.

“Up with the ladders!” I cried—no, you

cannot do it. Unship them!—cast them down.”

It was not long before we threw them down, just as some of the villains had their feet upon them to hunt us into our citadel.

“You are a set of d—d fools!” shouted Davis. “Throw down your arms, unless you’ve a mind to be slaughtered like sheep every one of ye! You can’t escape. Gaulty, unmask our battery there, and bring these fools to their lubberly senses!”

At these words the barricade they had erected on the forecastle was swept down, and over it we saw with horror a row of our deck guns pointed down upon us, and over each a seaman standing with a lighted portfire in his hand. Resistance would have been madness. They could have blown us into the water in a moment.

I threw down my sword, and ordered all with me to do the like, only stipulating that our lives should be spared, and that we should

be put on shore somewhere when land should be made.

Davis and the rest of the fellows were now masters of the ship. They all came on the quarter-deck, took our arms, and bound us. The sea had gone much down, therefore two guns were drawn from the quarters, loaded with grape, and pointed forward, while a couple also were retained on the forecastle, with men standing over them, so that at the least alarm, or least attempt at resistance, they could rake the ship fore and aft.

Look outs were stationed at the bows, in the waist, and on each quarter, while a man was sent aloft, and ordered to keep a sharp eye all round; sentries were placed at the cabin door and hatchways, while a gun was loaded up to the muzzle with grape, and pointed down the companion; two seamen now took the wheel, Davis planting himself at the binnacle and giving directions.

The course of the ship was changed; the

reefs in the courses and topsails were shaken out ; the spanker was set, and the foretopmast staysail and forestaysail run up.

The wind had gone greatly down, but the *Pleid* was going through the water with very great speed.

There we stood, bound in a row, waiting the commands of a fellow whom I could have willingly knocked down. He ordered us below in a stern but careless tone, and we were all dragged down the companion and shut up in the cabin.

My heart bled for Matilda Revel. When the men approached her, I thought her brother would have sealed his fate by throwing himself upon them. But Davis interfered.

“ Let the young lady alone, will you, you devils ? We needn’t be such fools as to revenge ourselves on school girls. I’ll allow no ill treatment, to a woman, in the ship, and I’ll fetch the rascal a d——d good cut that doesn’t behave to this young person like a lady. Just think

of that, now! We must see what's to be done with them all. Walk off with them— clap 'em all up below, and guard the door. As for these poor wretches," he continued, pointing to the crew, "set them free, but take care they have no arms, and let them help to work the ship. You've mistaken your side, eh, men? We'll knock about for the gold by and bye. Steddy, you there at the helm! keep her well up to the wind."

We were now shut in the cabin, with guards outside, and nothing but discomfort within. Plenty of provisions, to be sure, were given us; but there was the dreadful uncertainty and anxiety of our situation. Our cargo was lost—our lives would most likely be sacrificed. I knew that Davis would carry the ship quite out of her course, and most probably turn pirate with her.

It is of no use dwelling on the miserable monotony of this part of our story. Here we were five days, with scarcely a breath of air

and quite ignorant of what was occurring above, or where we were going. We every day expected some dreadful fate, and made up our minds for the worst. Matilda Revel seemed the least depressed of all of us. She consoled her brother, and seemed an angel sent down on purpose to make our captivity lighter. Davis surprised me by offering to keep such strict discipline aboard the ship, and I even almost felt grateful to him for it.

THE MERCHANT CAPTAIN'S STORY.

THIRD PART.

On the sixth day, about two in the afternoon, as nearly as we could guess, for all our watches and timekeepers had been taken away, we heard a bustle over head, and a distant gun fired. What could it be! I crept to the only cabin-light that was left open, for the rebellious crew had shipped the deadlights, all except one, for the purpose of keeping us the more secure.

I could not see anything but the wide waste of sea. Presently, however, I knew we were hauling our wind, and again looked out, and saw a ship some miles off. What was our joy at the discovery! The stranger loomed large, and I took her to be a vessel of war. The wind at the time was easterly, and we were somewhat in advance of her. When I first saw her, she had courses, topsails, and topgallants set; but I now could perceive her royals loose and filling. They first fluttered, then filled in semicircles, and were gradually mounting the three slender wand-like spars. The canvas over the bowsprit too was thickening, and I saw preparations were making on board for a closer acquaintance with us.

From the voices and bustle above, I knew that we were pressing sail upon the ship, and, knowing the excellent sailing qualities of the *Pleid*, was greatly anxious as to the result. We were seemingly cutting through the water at a great rate. Still, from my position, I

could command a view of the stranger. She now was fairly laid up for us; her figure was end on, the hull black and grim as death, the bowsprit above, the spars like lines, with her broad sails rising one above another and massed within a single outline. She loomed darkly and greyly, though distinctly, with a heel to port, which added much to the picturesque gracefulness of her appearance. The sea rolled grandly and gigantically. The sun was shining on a strip of sea between us, and in appearance increased the gloom which hung over the sea in the neighbourhood of the strange ship.

“There is a gun,” cried Revel.

I looked;—just in time to see the arrowy jet of snow-white smoke succeeding the flash. It rolled out and gracefully expanded, gliding softly over the water to leeward, and curling upwards as it thinned. In a little while the sullen boom came upon our ears from the distance.

"That's to bring to," said Seyton. "A cruiser, by Jove!"

"English, French, Dutch, it matters not which," said I. "She will deliver us from our deplorable situation, and we are sure, at least, of escaping the miserable expectations we have now."

"It must strike them there's something wrong on board us," said Seyton. "They'll hold on and close her if it take them a week. Fortune fill their sails!"

"They're determined to lose nothing for want of trying," said Anderson. "See!—there go out the booms."

Anderson's eye was at a glass which had by accident been left in the cabin.

"The wind crosses their course," said I; "but fortunately not very directly. But it will make their stud'sails of more trouble than profit. The starboard ones must be useless. Now the Pleiad can lay on as much as she please, provided she run before the wind, and leave the stranger to do the like in a

parallel direction. To cross upon us would make her lose time, and cause her to tack."

"She gains nothing as yet," said Anderson, in a melancholy tone.

"Nothing," said I; "not a foot. She is just as cloudy as when I first sighted her."

At this moment I thought I could perceive a slight variation in her course. She was falling off, and hugging the wind not so closely as she had hitherto done. By this change of direction we could catch a glimpse of her weather side, and through the glass we could perceive a double row of ports—that is, the rows of guns of the main and upper decks. Her weather stud'sails were spread abroad, while skysails were crowning the royals and adding to the pyramid. Her lower tier of ports were closed, but above that tier the deck guns bristled out like needles'points. No colours were set.

The Pleiad continued to make way. The waves swept swiftly by her cabin-lights; the bubbles and foam were no sooner seen than

carried into distance. All this time we heard nothing:—the people were silent above, by which I knew we were under a press of canvas, and the men were at quarters.

In half an hour the sky cleared and the sun came brightly out, illuminating the whole ocean, and brilliantly dwelling on the strange ship. Some large masses of white clouds were in the sky, which was as clear as the sea below.

It was now a race between us. By slightly altering her course, and putting herself more before the wind, the stranger had considerably lessened the distance. She was now more plain than she had been. The greyness which had dwelt upon her was wearing off, her sails, were softly whitening in the sun, and her glossy side was more clearly distinguishable. We were running in a parallel direction, though she was considerably to windward, and some miles astern. From the time that I had first observed her, we must have run many leagues.

Matters remained in this position for another hour. The ship was sensibly though gradually gaining upon us. Our hearts beat wildly with expectation and anxiety. We seemed to wish we had some giant's power to impede or interrupt the progress of the ship we were aboard of. We appeared *vexed* at our feebleness, and impatient at the ease with which we were borne helplessly away from the salvation we saw endeavouring to approach. I longed for a capability of increasing the speed of our pursuer, and deadening or stopping that of the ship which bore us, and which was flying so much against our will away. I never longed for some superhuman power so much as at that moment. I wildly yet fondly fancied myself with a colossal power arresting the ship's onward course, and detaining her in my grasp till her pursuer had grappled her. I hugged the idea of striking powerless the wretches above, and sweeping down the sails which carried us so swiftly--blindly forward.

These dreams were the result of impatient longing and excitement. I felt my own miserable powerlessness, and involuntarily amused myself with thinking what I *would* do were my wishes my capabilities.

Time passed on. The ship drew nearer and nearer. Her size increased—she looked more grand, more proud, more threatening, more warlike. Oh, how our eyes devoured her! A little more and she would get within gunshot. A lucky hit might sweep off one of our masts;—the ship's speed would fall off;—she would drift with the mere, not yet expended, onward force;—she would not possess the capability of *continuing* her speed; it would become fainter and fainter;—she would lie like a log.—Here our wishes took our thoughts in hand, and whipped them beyond the bounds of probability.

Bang!—a gun. We all started as if with an electric shock. The ship was nearing us. Oh! how musical—how sweet—how joyful

did the report sound! Our hopes grew brighter. There was the ship---near in comparison to what she was before. She was nearly abreast of us, though a long space intervened between our parallel courses. This distance she had to master and cross, and then came the worst difficulty, for she would be obliged to take a wind. The wind passed across between us. She was now rapidly closing in our side. I thrust my head out of the cabin-window and caught another glimpse. In a little while she disappeared forward, and all I had to see was the wide ocean-space.

I knew that she would not go ahead, and that she must tack. This I supposed was now in operation. Our own course was shifted. We fell off several points, and laid the ship's head to the south-westward, by which means we threw ourselves before the wind. I supposed the stranger would still continue on her new tack, though the result I felt must be that she would cross astern.

By and bye the ship came in sight, stretching grandly across, and considerably nearer. She was now directly opposite the cabin windows. When she had reached our track, she hauled her wind;—her head swung round;—and she laid herself directly after us. She was now as first seen---stem on.

Both ships were before the wind, and it was a trial of speed, though we had the heels of our pursuer. But she was now so near that she made trial of her bow-chasers. A flash shot from her black-looking head—a thin bright pencil of light, that glanced but a second. A puff of white smoke followed rolling up into a globe, and taking some time before it opened. The boom of the gun next struck our ears. The shot we saw nothing of, and knew that it must have spent itself wide. We were still apparently cutting through the water at a great rate. The chase grew more animated. Another gun flashed from the stranger. A moment or two after the light, a ball came

skipping from wave to wave, feathering up a shower of spray, and splashing close by in a roaring cloud. Before the smoke spread out another gun followed. I saw the shot before I had time to think about it, ploughing up the water, and leaping wildly from one wave to another. The last shot darted past, though not without dipping a little astern and sending a dash of silvery spray right in at the cabin windows.

I again looked. The ship was astonishingly near. She seemed to tower now like a thing of might. They must have been terrified above. Bang! bang! came two more guns on the heels of each other, and whiz!—whiz! came the splashing shot, one striking above, and the other passing overhead without mischief.

In a minute I heard a noise above, and thump—thump, came something, which I guessed to be a topmast. A crash on the larboard bulwark, that seem to shake the ship to its centre,

was followed by a thundering, splashing noise, as the mast took the deck in its descent and tumbled overboard. The ship seemed to stagger and pause, though the next moment she again stretched forward. I looked astern. The ship was now plainly a man of war. She rose broadly, nobly, highly above us. She was close to us. While I was looking she came to the wind, swung round, and laid open her terrible broadside. A fearful battery it looked. A moment more and she was stretching past the window ;——another, and she was on our quarter.

I compressed my lips, at every second nervously expecting to hear the dreadful rattle of her artillery. Bang! bang! came two or three guns, then five together, and at last the whole tremendous broadside. I frowned with dread and expectation. Crash——crash——crash, went the balls above, tearing, and rushing, and splintering. The whole ship seemed shattering to pieces.

Matilda Revel threw herself into her brother's arms, who fixed his eyes on the deck above in silent, awful expectation. For some time there was nothing but the falling together of ruined spars and ropes :—clattering, and splitting, and tumbling, and rattling to the deck.

The crew seemed to be paralised. There was silence for a time, and then I knew our head was swinging round. In a little while I heard the guns above run out, and presently a succession of reports, loud enough almost to stun the listener, thundered on the ear, and clouds of smoke came rolling thickly past the windows, and smoke poured into the cabin.

“ Why do we stand here ?” I suddenly said, “ Let us burst the door, overpower the sentry, and get upon deck to disturb and, if possible, to put a stop to their resistance. We shall be destroyed here if these broadsides continue : —let us make a bold push, and hazard an attempt, at least, to save our lives.”

“With all my heart,” said Seyton, “but we’ve no arms”

“No matter,” I said, “we’ll win some. Now all your strength to this door.”

By main force the cabin door was burst open, and we rushed on the sentry, who had recoiled two or three paces. He was prostrate in a moment, and we armed ourselves with his weapons. Seyton took his musket and bayonet, I his cutlass, Anderson one of his pistols, and the surgeon the other.

We all rushed up the companion. A terrible scene of destruction was above. The decks were cumbered—ruin was in every direction. The ship was at a little distance, and with English colours flying. The smoke was rolling so about the decks that we were not instantly noticed. There were seamen at the guns;—there was a crowd of figures forward. But my senses were in too great a whirl to distinguish accurately,

We lost no time. I rushed forward, see-

ing Davis on the ridge of the forecastle. My companions kept close to me, leaving Gautly and others who were on the quarter-deck. There were five of us, though one of our number was unarmed. The fifth last, however, snatched up a cutlass and pistol from the deck.

We ran on and mounted the forecastle, where before he was aware what was threatened, Seyton and I collared and overthrew Davis. I left him prostrate, and turned to some others I saw about. Our cutlasses were so well handled that in a minute or two we had routed all, confused as they were with the cruiser : — some threw down their arms, others were struck to the deck, and the remainder rushed down the ladders or up the bowsprit or shrouds.

Hardly before we knew what we had done, we found ourselves masters of the forecastle. But all in the smoke and confusion came more guns from the man of war, who of course

could not distinguish that there were two parties on deck.

A ball bounded just past me, and bored a hole through the opposite bulwark. Splinters were shaved up everywhere, and were flying in showers. Good effect had been done abaft. Several of the crew fell, and the remainder were so perfectly in confusion, that at our appearance on the quarter-deck, all the seamen on it threw down their arms or fell on their knees and implored mercy. Gaulty and some others were in the stern-boat and labouring to lower it.

The decks were full of smoke ; but it was gradually dispersing. No sooner was the quarter-deck in my power, than I ran to the flag-line and hauled down the colours. I knew that had they remained we should have had other guns upon us. The man-of-war was already swinging round to give us his other broadside, and to close with us. In our confusion he had got some distance ahead. I

feared that he would stand across our bows and give us a raking fire. But the wind was powerful enough to carry off all the smoke like a cloud, and the frigate's people could soon see that our colours were struck.

All was quiet aboard the *Pleiad*. The decks were in terrible confusion owing to the wreck of the masts, and some wounded seamen lying on the deck were gasping, or groaning here and there. I gathered together all the men I could find above, bade them stand to their arms, and keep command over the ship. I caused the yards to be swung down, and the sails to fall loose. Meantime I prepared to clear the deck, look to the wounded, and get the ship again in some order.

Thus we lay for a little while, riding on the long waves. Presently I saw a boat lowered from the stranger, and the crew with its officer rowing for the *Pleiad*.

The ship was lying to, with her courses in

festoons, and nothing set forward except her jib. She was a thirty-six gun frigate.

The boat came alongside, and the officer began to mount the side of the ship. I had him introduced to the quarter-deck. The man of war was the Vivid, thirty-six gun frigate, and he was midshipman of her. I gave a detail of all that had occurred aboard the Pleiad :—the mutiny, with an account of how we had been treated, and the final overthrow of the mutineers and recovery of the ship. He offered any assistance I might require, and promised to send aboard eight or ten men, till I could thoroughly re-establish order and get the ship perfectly to rights. He returned to his ship, but presently came back again with a message from the captain congratulating us on our getting the better of the mutineers, and promising to keep company with the Pleiad for two or three days. I accepted the offer, and also an invitation to go aboard the Vivid.

I went on board the frigate, and, learning that I had passengers, the captain asked both them, myself, and my first mate to dinner with him. The boat went back for Seyton, Revel, and his sister ; but I declined the invitation to dinner, wishing not to leave my ship for a moment in her at present unsettled condition. I set to work with Anderson and the surgeon and his assistant, and we soon got the lumber out of the way, a new maintopmast and top-gallantmast nearly ready for mounting, and the wounded looked after and in a fair way of doing well. The bulwarks we repaired, stopped the shot holes, and got forward another jib-boom, the former being badly wounded.

Gaulty and the few who seized the jolly boat contrived to lower it ; but a gun brought them up, and they were soon mastered and laid in irons. We had them sent aboard the Vivid, willing rather to work with short

hands than have the ringleaders of the mutiny in our number.

All my crew returned zealously to their duty, since all fear of the flying Dutchman, and the hope of obtaining the gold, had passed from before their eyes.

Revel, his sister, and Seyton, returned to the *Pleiad*, and were eloquent in the praises of their entertainer.

I learned privately from Seyton, that the second lieutenant of the *Vivid* had been much struck with Miss Revel, and had made himself particularly agreeable to her brother. I was interested in Matilda Revel, and was anxious to know what sort of person her admirer was.

The next day, in course of conversation with Captain Mordaunt of the *Vivid*, I ascertained that his second lieutenant, Henry Pennington, was a highly respectable as well as an amiable young man ; that his father was a

gentleman of property in Kent ; that he was much valued by his commander, and a great favourite on board ; and that he expected, on arrival in England, to be appointed first lieutenant to some first class frigate.

Captain Mordaunt was no less curious respecting the history of the *Revels*, which I told him so far as I myself was acquainted with it. He knew the uncle at Madras very well, and had often dined with him. While we were conversing, Lieutenant Pennington came up to us, and I was introduced to him. He proved a very gentlemanly, highly intelligent, and strikingly handsome and superior-looking young man. The conversation into which we entered grew so animated, that it was some time before I could get back to the *Pleiad*.

In two days we were in perfect order ; the crew were again in subordination, masts whole, and every damage was repaired. Affairs took

their old channel, and our circle in the cabin was as cheerful as ever.

Fine weather succeeded the late tempestuous changes, and we were standing on with royals, skysails, and studsails all abroad, keeping the best company with our convoy.

Though a very superior sailer, I found that the *Pleiad* could keep very good pace with her. In due time we made Ceylon, and, steering towards the coast of Coromandel, cast anchor in Madras Roads.

We parted company with the *Vivid* about a week from the day on which we first held communication with her. She was shaping her course to join the Admiral, and was expected to be sent home with despatches.

Augustus Revel and his sister left us at Madras, and took up their abode in their uncle's residence. By help of the money brought out, the latter contrived to meet great part of his engagements, and obtained time for the remainder.

While we were loading homewards, I spent several days in company with Revel, his sister, and his uncle. I was appointed to load home with East India produce, and expected to be ready for sea in about six weeks. Before I left I had the satisfaction of seeing the Vivid come into port. She had been ordered to Madras, thence to cruise off Ceylon, and intercept the French India, and China trade.

As I expected, Pennington had not been here five days before he made formal proposals to Revel, and was accepted by him on the part of his sister, who he was inclined to think, he said, with a smile, would offer no very formidable objection. Thus all parties were made happy. Captain Mordaunt, who knew how matters stood, wrote to the Admiral, and caused Pennington to be appointed to carry home despatches to England, the captain being already aware that not one ship of war could be spared from the station for the purpose.

The Admiral's answer was a very kind one ;

he bade Lieutenant Pennington ship himself on board a fast-sailing Indiaman, or travel overland, whichever means of getting to England might be most convenient, or likely to be most expeditious. Being just ready, my ship was selected for the passage, especially as I had taken aboard some excellent hands, and had acquired in my passage out a character for speed.

Under her new circumstances, Matilda Revel was of course to embark with her brother, and I looked forward to having a most agreeable knot of passengers. I found no lack of these at Madras. I had engaged with an old nabob, who was thinking of mending his constitution in our less burning England, a colonel who was returning home having been left a fortune, the widow of a civil officer, two missionaries, a merchant, his wife, and family, a lawyer who had realized a fortune, and desired to return to his native country, and one or two others.

The cargo being shipped, and all ready for sea,

my passengers came aboard, and we prepared next morning to weigh anchor. The Pleiad was in fine condition. I had given her a thorough repair, had had her newly fitted up, her rigging and spars most carefully examined, and fresh painted inside and out. I caused her to be re-gilded, her figure-head renovated, and the decks and all the wood work and brass most industriously scrubbed and polished. With these advantages, under the bluest of Indian skies, with our new bunting streaming in the wind, and our snowy canvas expanded to the sun, we weighed anchor and stood out to sea.

We gave a salute to the forts and commodore as we departed, and were honoured with guns in return.

I shall not enlarge on our homeward voyage. My story has already extended to sufficient length. I should be sorry to tire your patience.

We ran down the coast of Coromandel,

looked in at Columbo, and then bore away through the great Indian Ocean. We touched at Joanna for water and necessaries, and then shaped our course for the Cape. No incident worth relating occurred, and we cast anchor in Table Bay on the 18th of February, 1814. We stayed here five days, and then bore off for St. Helena.

At St. Helena we found several homeward bound vessels, among which ships we got a berth, and in whose people we found pleasant society.

There was also a brig of war ordered for a cruise in the Bights of Benin. She would convoy us to the latitude of Cape Three Points, or Palmas, and we were waiting but another arrival or two to get up anchors and stand out.

In a week, a brig from Australia and a Chinaman came in, which were followed by three English East Indiamen, escorted by a sloop of war. The next day but one all our

foretopsails were loose and blue Peter was up, and when morning came there was no small work among us in heaving short stay apeak, and catting and fishing, and getting way.

The convoy stood off in grand style; the sloop and gun-brig taking the lead, and the merchantmen following in succession.

We had a most pleasant voyage to the latitude where we were to leave the brig, and then we bore away in closer order for Madeira. Nothing occurred to interrupt the excellence of our passage except a squall or two on the African coast.

On the 21st of March we made Madeira, cast anchor, and took on board everything which might conduce to the pleasure of the remaining part of our voyage.

To shorten my story, the merchantmen and their convoy the sloop set sail on the 23rd, and running along the coast of Spain, and weathering cleverly through the Bay of Biscay

we arrived in a short space in the mouth of the channel. The sloop kept with us till we arrived at Portsmouth, where we landed nearly all our passengers.

Revel and his sister intended to round the coast and go ashore at Deal or Gravesend; but Lieutenant Pennington put off the moment we arrived at Portsmouth, and posted to town. In due time, with favourable breezes, we arrived in the Downs, where I shook hands with Mr. and Miss Revel, who went ashore in the pilot-boat at Deal. Seyton, Anderson, and I, worked the ship round to the river; but meeting with a strong westerly breeze, we cast anchor at the Nore.

Wishing to see my owners and consignees as soon as possible, I went ashore at Sheerness, passed across to Chatham, and travelled per mail to the metropolis, where I installed myself in lodgings in Craven Street, Strand. Three days after my arrival the *Pleiad* got into the London Dock.

We made some stir in town with our singular adventures. The mutiny, and the appearances of that strange ship which I could not account for, formed the subject of numberless stories. I visited Augustus Revel, his sister, their father, and his family often, and generally dined at their table once or twice a week.

Lieutenant Pennington was of course a constant visiter. He soon pleased all the whole family. Matilda's father had at once assented to the match, and declared his perfect satisfaction at it. Preliminaries settled, they were to be united at a time which I found fortunately permitted me to be present at the ceremony.

I found people ready enough to believe that I had seen the ship I have described, but I was gravely asked by some why I did not speak her. How should I have *logged* such a communication? "*Twilight—wind and sea high—some thunder—spoke the Flying Dutchman, from*

Amsterdam to heaven knows where !—out beyond her reckoning—had baffling head winds—couldn't make way—all sail set—most eternally long passage." Joking apart, however, I thought the affair serious enough at the time, I can assure you.

I have to append to my story the following announcement, which appeared in the papers of the day. The insertion was among the "marriages :"

"Yesterday, at St. George's, Bloomsbury, by the Rev. Barron Pennington, Matilda, eldest daughter of William Revel, Esq., of Broad-Street, City, and Keppel Street, Russel Square, to Lieutenant Henry Brandon Pennington, of H. M. S. "Vivid," second son of Walter Brandon Pennington, Esq., of Park-Street, Grosvenor Square, and Seafeld House, near Maidstone, Kent."

I may perhaps mention that Davis, Gaulty, and the chief hands in the mutiny, were brought to England in irons by the first man

of war which left Madras. They were carried to the Cape, and shipped there by a transport for Plymouth, aboard of which were the head quarters and right wing of the —— Regiment. Davis was tried, condemned, and executed ; and Gaulty and the others were transported for life to Botany Bay. No one was more astonished at his conduct than the Scotch partner in our house who had recommended Davis, and he was the most hearty of us in the prosecution.

Pennington is now a captain in his Majesty's navy, but he is at present on half pay. I do not believe he will enter again into active service. He and his wife reside constantly in London, and when I was last there I had the pleasure of seeing both. Augustus Revel is a partner in his father's house, and head of the foreign department of it. My first mate, Seyton, is in command of a Chinaman ; Anderson is in the West India Trade ; and every person I have mentioned, except those whose fate has



been noticed, is I believe alive and doing well.

The mutiny, and the sight I obtained of what I was then inclined to think the Flying Dutchman, are the chief events of my life. All the rest is as uniform as tolerably good fortune could make it. I never caught a glimpse of Vanderdecken again, and, whether he boded evil or not, never wish to see him again. I have had no romance to tell you, but truth itself, which is sometimes

“Stranger than fiction.”

And thus then ends my story .

BETWEEN DECKS.

FIRST PART.

Otium cum dignitate. Free and easy. *Pro omnibus bibo.* Singing and story telling. Like father like son. The way to get custom. Utilitarianism. Sympathy between names and callings. A mythological adduction. An important point started. A metaphysical question satisfactorily determined. Logic ; conviction *sequitur*. Retrospections. Easy service. A disaster. Slumber proved an evil. An *officious* visiter. Nicely done. Something capacious. Naval stoicism. Nothing impossible in love. Connubial felicity. The tar and the tea caddy. An unlooked-for catastrophe. A real philosopher.

“ Now for a jolly evening ;—our watch don’t

come yet these two hours. Bill, nick off the cabbage end of your mutton and hand us over the grog :—that's all right. Send us over a little of the baccoer, too, if yov've got any beside ye—my clay runs short of its lading ; thankee ! Who'll sing us a song ?" cried one of a group of bronzed seamen gathered closely around a mess table on which were disposed no end of conveniences for drinking—pipes, tobacco stoppers and boxes, half burnt paper, etc., etc.

" I'd sing a song," returned another, " only my voice is a little out of horder, and besides you've had all my stock o' songs over and over. But mine's the right sort o' singing when I'm in the way on it—an't it, boys ? and I makes no bones over it, and that's better."

" You never larnt ?" enquired a neighbour seriously.

" Larnt ?—larnt what ?"

" How to sing ?"

" How to sing ?—devil a bit ! it coomed

by natur'. My mother was a precious good hand at giving you a song, and some of her talent has comed down to me. Like father like son's you know an old saying, and I don't see why like mother like son shouldn't be one, too. Her father was a innkeeper—a very 'spectable kind o' person——worth plenty o' blunt, had kept house for a matter o' twenty year——and he got lots o' custom to his place by squatting her in the tap room and letting her sing of a evening to the visiters. She sing'd what they call Bacchanaly songs, and trolled 'em out so deuced well, and gave 'em such a flourish, that all those what heard her listened with such relish that they drank like fishes, and spent their coppers like so many kings. Many and many's the half crown my mother's put into her father's pocket. He wouldn't let her marry, though there was plenty tugging at him for her, because why——because she kept the chink going at the bar, and draw'd more drinkers to the Adam and Eve—

that was the sign of the house, you know—than all the other public houses in the street could get together. The voice had been in the family on the mother's side for a long time; her mother's maiden name was Nightingale—perhaps that was one of the reasons for it.

"It might have been," cried one of the speaker's neighbours, "for sometimes people's names wonderfully agrees with their employments. I know'd a lawyer's clerk once at Truro, and his name was Clutchem: the schoolmaster said he was born for the profession, and his parents think'd so, too, I suppose, for they put him 'prentice to the lawyer in their town."

"Well, I says," cried another, "that some of you had better sing us a song or tell us a story. Bob Wilkins says he can't sing, and you know he's our Apollyon, and so——"

"Apollyon——what's an Apollyon?"

"What's an Apollyon!——'Tan't a *thing*, man, and you never says an to anything but a

thing. He was a human creatur' A god what fiddled, and sing'd to his fiddle, a thousand—aye, two thousand year ago."

"And do you call me a god?" said Bob Wilkins; who looked puzzled "perhaps you mean that this Apollyon was the god of singing."

"Bob, you're as sharp as a needle. Apollyon was the god of *music*, you know, and singing and music are nigh hand the same thing, I take it."

"I say, Bill," whispered one of the group on the opposite side of the berth to his immediate neighbour, "Hardfist's been reading a book——"

"A strange book to talk about gods," was the reply. "Whoever hard of so many?"

"If nobody'll sing," said a third, who had hitherto puffed in meditative silence, looking alternately at each speaker, "I'll tell you a story," knocking the ashes out of his pipe, "and it shall be a true story. We've had lately

enough friction to last us our life time. Who votes for my story? Those who says aye, hold up their hands, and those who says no, keep 'em down. That's a strait forred way o' doing business. So;—let us see : what five up and three down. Carried, *crim con*, by George !”

“ Slip off,” cried two or three, making away with the grog and again looking out for their pipes.

“ Well, give us the licker. I can't talk till I've just moistened my throat a little.” The speaker, whose name was William Duncan, took the readily proffered goblet, and gulped down half a pint by moderate computation. He stopped suddenly in the draught, and breathing hard, said, holding all the time the beverage within an inch of his lips—“ some people thinks—it's just comed into my head, and so I out with it, you know that this here bump was brought into the throat by Adam :

—the man you know what was put into a garden, and——and——had Eve along with him.”

“ Aye, aye, we know,” ejaculated all.

“ Well, some says that the apple that he eat that Eve gave him, stuck in his throat, and there it has been ever since. What d’ye think ? d’ye think it’s likely ?”

“ It was the devil what gived to Eve, wasn’t it,” suggested Bob Wilkins, after a pause.

“ The devil no :---doesn’t it say in the scriptures it was a serpent ?”

“ A serpent !” cried Bob, “ ho, ho, that’s a jolly good un ! I’ve heered she was *persuaded* to take it, and whoever heard of a serpent’s having a woice to persuade.”

The laugh ran mightily against the wight who had mentioned the serpent.

“ Well, that’s neither here nor there,” interrupted the promised story teller. “ It might have have been the devil, or it might have

been the serpent, at all events Adam eat the apple, core and all, and according to the popular version of the story paid for it by not having it altogether digest when he had swallowed it. Now what I wants to know is whether you think it likely that his eating the apple caused this here bump in the throat."

"Why look you here," returned another, very gravely, swaying himself backwards and forwards in his seat as if he were labouring to get out something extremely profound, and frowning all the time in deep consideration, "the devil gived the apple to Eve, and we know the devil's very wicked;—now, if the devil's very wicked, it's not likely he would bear any good will to Adam;—if it's not likely he bore any good will to Adam, he wouldn't have tried to do him any good;—if he wouldn't have tried to do him any good, and gived the apple, it's plain the apple must be intended to do mischief;—now if the apple was intended to do mischief, it's plain the

apple wasn't good to eat;---and if the apple wasn't good to eat, the apple couldn't go down, and if it couldn't go down, it must have stick'd in Adam's throat; and the end of it is that if the apple stick'd in his throat, as there wasn't no doctors in those days and it couldn't be distracted, there it must have stick'd to everlasting---and that's the reason we've got it now---and there's plenty of logic for ye."

"Logic!---what's logic?"

"What I've been talking;---it's putting a thing in a conwincing point o' view; so there you've got it all now, and tip me over the grog and some baccar."

"Are you conwincenced, Bob?"

"Yes, I suppose I am;---arn't you?"

"Not altogether. This logic may be all very fine, but I'm blow'd if I understand it. Howsomever, we're certain that Adam eat the apple, and we suppose that it stick'd in his throat. Come, now for the story."

"Well, boys," cried Duncan, "it was about

a matter of ten year ago that I sailed for a cruise of fifteen months in the Firedrake, a bran new, beautiful going, thirty-six gun frigate. By George but she *was* a beauty!— I fancy I've got her now in my eye—all sail set---duck to the wind — starboard tack — bowling along like a witch as she was—water hissing up at her bows---green ripples flashing all about her, and her streamers flacking aloft in the wind like trains o' fire. I was young at the time---that is, younger than I am now."——

“That's devilish certain,” cried Bob——

“Hold your jaw, Bob——and as merry and happy as the day was long. Many's the watch I've held on her decks, with the moon a blinking above, and the water flopping below, the wind sighing through the cordage, and sights o' dolphins sporting about us, poor things! all looking as merry as crickets. Many's the good story I've heard aboard her, such as 'ud make you crack your sides with laughing, and

many's the jolly song we've sent to the clouds of a quiet night :—but I am getting a little out o' my reckoning. Well, we cut across the Atlantic in glorious style, sometimes hard down with a burst o' bad weather, and sometimes slap becalmed—sails like rags—sea like glass. But on the whole we had a very pleasant voyage of it—no end of amusement aboard us :—by the bye, blessed if we didn't get up a play !—upon my soul we did ! and I was the Fair Penitent, as they called me, in it, though I didn't make a very good hand of it, and our boatswain was a feller in it what they calls Coragio, or Boragio, or summut like that. Well, more o' that another time. We got to our cruising ground all in health and spirits, and began to look about us, but we hadn't much work. Now and then perhaps a tail of a gale would take us and oblige us to take in some of our wings, but they generally didn't last long, and we had the old row-time, as they call it, of our service to go over agin. We overhauled

a few merchant brigs, and so on, sometimes we let 'em go 'cause there wasn't anything to keep them for aboard 'em, and sometimes we kept 'em for prizes and had 'em condemned. Well, the time passed on speedily like this for seven of our fifteen months, and we begin'd to look forred for the time o' being relieved. Not having much to do, a good many on our men took to fishing :—good sport we had too, sometimes, catching all manner on 'em, good, bad, and indiff'rent. Well, one day—'twas a precious fine un—I remember it very well, the sun was up above all burning as hot as possible, the sea looked so shiny that you could scarcely bear to look at it, and it was so dreadful close that all on deck got quite drowsy. I and another man, named Tim Dowling---by the bye he was a bit of a Irishman, at least his father and his mother was Irish ; they kept a crockery shop at Cork, very 'spectable people ; Tim's grandfather had a post in the excise, with good wages and now and then a good deal of con-

demned wares—pass us the grog, will ye; Bob—well, as I was saying, Tim Dowling an' I---he was a short, sturdy-looking chap, with a devil of brogue—was a stretching over the starboard bulwark, with what we called our haggling rods in our hands, and a bit of sheep's heart apiece on the hooks. I said afore that the day was very sultry. Well, I was a shutting my eyes, and feeling a little inclined to fall asleep over my fishing, and Tim was agoing off in downright arnest. By and bye out slipped his rod out of his hand, and over he fell—aye, right overboard, head foremost, by George!--But I forgot to tell ye that he had lost one of his pins---the larboard one it was---and wear'd a wooden one. I'll tell you how it was : he happened to fall in a gale from the fore yard when he'd been sent up to help in taking in a reef ; the doctor spliced it as well as he could---a clever feller he was, too—I could tell you a dozen antidotes of what wonderful things he did, but

a inflammation comed on, and nothing could be done but it must be lopped off, so——but I'm steering a little wide, arn't I.—Let's see. Where did I leave off?"

"Why you'd just got Tim overboard."

"Aye *now* I've got it. Well, Tim fell smack over, and a devil of a fuss there was aboard when I sing'd out. I cocked my eye over the bulwark, and what should I see but a perdigious great shark rising out o' the bottom o' the sea, as he seemed, and making way directly for poor Tim. Poor devil, he screamed like I don't know what. Down went the swings o' the jolly through the davit-blocks like lightning, and the crew pulled out hard for him, for by this we had made some way, you know, and he had drifted astarn. They warn't in time for the shark had got hold of his leg—but it was the wooden one though, and master shark had no soft morsel with it. He looked as if he couldn't make out for all the world

what he'd got in his throat. Well, the shark tugged at Tim's pin, and the boat's crew tugged at Tim, till there was such splashing and tumbling in the water never was seed. You never seed such fun. But they got the shark at last aboard, and he begin'd to beat about on the deck with his tail like a fury. A hatchet soon bring'd him to his senses, and a'ter Tim had been brought aboard again, and the boat was run'd up, we had leisure to cut him open and see what was inside of him. A mighty fine feller he was indeed ; I don't know how many feet long. We found inside of him a boat's rudder, a straw hat, a baccar box, a spirit flask, a sugar box, compass, and beer barrel, all in a very undisgested state. We got off his skin, and throw'd him overboard, and there's my story."

"Talking o' falling overboard," said Bob Wilkins, as William Duncan resumed his pipe and began to smoke vehemently as if to make up for lost time, "puts me in mind of a gallows

good story what I knows myself for a fac'. When I was aboard the Dry-head,* 40, Captain Trunnion, there was a fo'castle man named Ned Curtis, a very good feller and one what taked all things very easily. I remember once he fell overboard much in the same way as your man did, Duncan, only he was in a worse perdicament as the sea was running high and we was making good way. The captain jumped to the side,

“ ‘ Hillo, Curtis,’ says he, ‘ is that you overboard ?’

“ ‘ Aye, aye, sir,’ sing’d out Curtis.

“ ‘ Forward there ! down with a boat—quick—a man’s overboard,’ cried the skipper.

“ ‘ No hurry,” said Curtis, ‘ take your time, I feels very comfortable.’

“ But Ned wasn’t left to feel himself com-

* Dryad.

fortable very long ; he was soon hauled in and set again on his pins on deck. Well, we was lying snug enough off Havant, and this Ned Curtis had a wife, a strapping craft, broad in the beam, with a high starn and very bluff in the bows—enough to have made five o' Ned. She was a taller-chandler's daughter, and Ned had taken a fancy to her when he was passing by her house when she was down below in a cellar on a melting day looking at the men. Ned happened to leer down, and she happened to leer up, just at one moment, and it was a slap shot o' both sides. So he stopt, and not, knowing well how to get another sight on her walked into the shop and asked the price of eights dips. He bought a pound on 'em, and dallied about the shop waiting to see if she'd come up, taking a long time in forking out the blunt, and another long time in counting it and passing the change into his starboard locker, and another long time in

looking at piles of soap, tin things full o' oil, and papers o' starch.

“ But at last up comed the young 'oman, looking as red as the field in a marchantman's bunting. Somehow or 'nother, they all scraped acquaintance, and after a little conversation forred they bear'd up for the parlour and cast anchor round the fire.

“ Ned was at that time jolly good company, so I don't wonder that he made his way among 'em ; he'd ha' done it with Old Nick—he'd got such a confounded insiniwatin' way with him. I never seed anybody like him. Well, the short and the long of it is, that they was spliced, and she used to come and stay a week or two aboard sometimes along with him. They lived very comfortably together ; she was of a 'commodating temper, and he was of a lighthearted, and pleasant, and yielding disposition, so they got on famously, and was, as the second leeftenant used to say, a pattern of connubial facility, never having many breezes,

and keeping, generally speaking, very fair weather atween them.

“ She was a little fond o’ drink to be sure, but that warn’t no great harm, as every body’s got their failings, and a taste o’ grog is very comfortable sometimes as we all knows. How somedevery I’m steering a little wide.

“ Well, one day she was a-leaning out o’ one of the weather bow-ports a-draining the water from a pot o’ ’tatoes, and the craft giving a heel over, she was fairly tumbled overboard like a sack of sand. A precious scream she gived when she found herself a tumbling ; all on the deck was in fine commotion, and Ned comed running up quite flabbergasted ; he runs to the port and looks over. But all warn’t no use ; the poor ’oman swim’d like lead, and down she was afore you could say Jack Robinson.

“ ‘ Shiver my timbers,’ cries he, slapping his hand against his forehead, ‘ if she hasn’t gone

over with the key of the tea-caddy ! Stupid woman ! Bless'd if I mustn't, now, break it open. Hollo ! Mary, Mary, can't you send us the key o' the tea-caddy ?' That's a fac', 'cause I was standing by and I heard it.

BETWEEN DECKS.

A SKETCH ON BOARD.

SECOND PART.

Strictures on convoys. Philosophical resignation. Wit much diluted. The modern Hylas. The lexicon at sea. Definition of a seraglio. The Grand Seigneur and Great Mogul satisfactorily identified. Attached to the weed. The way to settle a disputed point. By a view of the sample you may guess at the commodity. Turkish Arcadia. The Bosphorus, Dardanelles, Pera, the Seraglio, and Constantinople. A respectable character. An aphorism. An original. A sheer hulk. A road without turnings. Lost one's way. A pull up. Steps retraced. Good entertainment. A good appearance the first letter of recommendation. Very good fellowship. Three

sheets in the wind. A capsize. Tightly stowed. An intruder. A very singular mistake. *Vox clamantis in deserto*. An assertion with something to second it. In port. Leave of absence. Shot tightly stowed. Off for London. Landed. An awkward navigation. A first rate. Blessed with a surly crew. No answer. Respect for discipline. To it again. *Nil desperandum*. As before. Ordered to walk on. Signal obeyed. Enquiry and answer. Quite satisfactory. Birds of a feather. A striking illustration of the blessings of matrimony. Not quite so particular as one would wish to be. The victim of circumstance. A resolute determination. Put into execution. A recommendation. A gradual rise in the profession. A long voyage. Length of service. Homeward bound. Relaxation after toil. Live and let live. Liberality. Without much ballast. Working to windward. Bad night. Much surprised. An uncomfortable situation. Necessity is the mother of invention. A brilliant idea. Putting one's friends to a very good use. A demand. A laudable consideration for the convenience of others. An explanation or the alternative. A candid declaration. Borne fairly out by logical deductions. Upbraiding with good. Complete innocence.

"I say, a precious hauling the old trader got to-day—eh?"

“Precious! I think the skipper fancied two or three times she’d drive aboard us. Never trust him for not keeping a ship out o’ danger. He shaves as clean off a craft with no hand on her, as our last barber. I can’t see the fun o’ sending such clippers as us to conwoy old heavy-backed marchantmen. Howsomdever duty’s duty, and order’s orders, and having orders we’ve no business to make no complaint. So if we’re sent to Davy Jones with a running foul, we must screw up our bow-ports, shut up our hawse-holes, and say nothing to nobody.”

“If we’re sent to Davy Jones with a running foul, we’re not unlikely to catch a Tartar. Ha, ha, ha! Summut like a chase into the devil’s mouth—eh?”

“He talks o’ the Tartar, 36, on the Ame-rikey station. She’s not an ugly craft by no means, but the old gal’s a-getting a little into years, and has started some of her teeth.”

"That's what all on 'em must come to sooner or later. What way?"

"Why, in a spanking squall off cape Brightun she laboured so hard that the Tartars was obligated to throw over half on her main deck barkers. So there's pipes for the mermaids, and a long Tom into the bargain."

"Lucky dog!" quoth one of the group, "got into quite a searaglion."

"I——say, that's a devilish long word. Bill Highkite, where did you lay fin on it? Some o' your lighter wares, I suppose, only to be sported 'fore particular customers. Gad, boys, I thinks it ought to pay duty."

"Very well," said two or three, "settle the tarewhiff, and we'll play custom-house sharks. Now, master Bill, you didn't declare it, so it's lawfully liable to be seized for condemned wares."

"Condemned *wares*, you speaks in the plural. Well I'll fork over the fine, and it shall be the bottom o' rum in this ere rummer.

Toss it off among ye, and much good may it do ye. But you're a *leetle* out at present, my hearties, for it tarn't an exhibited article. If you take the trouble to look into Johnson, you'll find it cut and and dry among the list o' comeoddities."

"Johnson, look into Johnson. Who the d —— I's Johnson?"

"Oh, he means," observed another, "the surgeon's third mate aboard the Pollyfamous,* eighty-four; he had a book aboard with him with the names of all the places he'd been to and the ships he'd sailed in. Mayhap this John's son's one o' the last."

"Not unlikely," said another. "Well Bill, what's the insignification on it?"

"Why, it's the name of a harbour, devilish landlocked and with a great bar at its entrance, where the blackamoors cable up their lighter craft. You must know when I was in the

*Polyphemus.

Deadnose,* thirty-two, on the Medit'anean station, we was sent on some 'bassy or other to the old chap in Turkey what wears a turban and is a relation to the Great Mogul--the old fellow, I mean, what mounts a gallows long beard and has a deal o' stuff--so they said what seed him, for I didn't see him myself, for it was my forenoon's watch on deck at the time the boats taked our 'bassador, and some others what belonged to him, and some of our officers what was appointed to bear him company and keep the old boy in countenance over it--as I was a saying, he has a deal o' stuff farled in round and round him. You've seen his picturs in the pictur shops at Portsmouth and Plymouth, I dare say :--an old gentleman, you know, jolly brown, and generally with a pipe in his forward port,—puffing away like a new un.—You've bought baccer ?”

“ Aye, aye.”

* Le Dedeigneuse.

“ Well then you *must* ha’ seen it, for he’s in all the ‘baccar shops in the town, sometimes represented in one way, sometimes in another. In some shops you’ll see him with a white table cloth wrapped about his noddle, and in others with a circle of feathers.”

“ There you’re out o’ your reckoning now,” cried Bill, “ for once I axed what the old black gentleman was at the hatchway, and the man what was sarving in the store said he was a image of a Indian prince.”

“ That don’t make no odds,” rejoined the first speaker. “ Indian prince and Grand Seignor I takes it comes to much about the same thing. ’Tall events they both live in a hot country and their subjects are niggers.”

“ Then you didn’t see this Turk a’ter all,” said a third.

“ No, but I had as good an account of him as if I had seen him myself. Besides I seed plenty o’ people in gowns and turbans of a afternoon getting down the reaches with the

tide, when we'd cut through a strange place they have there with a devil of a funny name—I wish I could remember it. Let's see: strange that the anchor o' memory can't bring it up. Don't put me out now, for I'm a trying to get it afore the wind."

A pause, during which the grog materially suffers.

"Blow'd if I can get the luff! Howsome-dever, guess or no guess, 'twas called summut like the Darningneedles, and a devil of a awkward anchorage it is. Let's see; wasn't it Sir Thomas Duckworth what was banged there with marble bullets in 1807?—Aye, to be sure it was.

"Howsome-dever the Turk was a little more civil this time, and didn't make no bones at our passing. Well, 'as I was telling ye, when we'd shot through these thingumbobs, and got abreast o' Pera—that's one o' the hubbubs you must know, boys, of their capital city, Constantinople—I used every day to see plenty o'

the inhabitants, and from their rig I made a 'cute haul at that o' their hemperor. Where's the wonder?—one devil's like another all the world over. Peas is peas.

“ Right down regg'lar comfortable places some o' these seas are. You always have land in sight, you know, on one side or t'other of you, all green and grassy, with fine thingumbobs—plants and those kind o' things, all a growing, and bearing fruit like the skipper's after dinner table top in the West Ingy seas. Then there's plenty o' pleasure houses, with begilded cabin lights, a great taste o' starn gallery, noble 'commodation ladders, and a flush deck. There you'll see the old bearded toddlers cruising up and down, as lazy as a Flemish herring-boat, afore their bird-cage looking houses, and staring at their Guinea colour, ugly old figureheads inflected in the water. Many's the hearty laugh I've had at 'em, though a little in my sleeve, for they're devilish ticklish fellers, and if you give 'em of-

fence you run no small chance o' supping upon cold steel, or getting an iron pill sent through your upper works afore the sun's hauled down. Howsomedever we lay comfortably enough there for the little time we had to stay, with a place they call the Bussfourous ahead, and the Darningneedles astarn, the capital city and the searaglion on the starboard side, and the incontinent of Asia heeling off to port."

"I've hard say," observed one of the circle named Christopher Gallantpole, "that all along the straits you call the Darningneedles they mount no less than a double row of heavy iron teeth. A devil of a awkward sittivation for a craft to slide into. And they say those Turks, too, are no bad hands at setting on their bull dogs. By Jove, you ought to have been glad the old coveys was in a good humour."

"Aye, aye, and so we was. As old Ben Bailey used to say—he was a good hearted feller, as good a one as ever cracked a biscuit or clapped a hand to capstan bar—jolly old

veteran ! I think I sees him now, lying to under his bare poll and jury stanchion—sarved aboard my ship as quarter-master—aye, aye, and with as good a character as a honest man might wish to shove off to heaven with—you'll never see him taken aback on the day o' judgement for a answer, I'll warrant—well, as old Ben used to say, when you've got your head in the lion's mouth draw it out as quietly as possible. By the bye, now I'm upon the tack, d——d if I won't tell ye an adventure of his'n. Fill up your cups, and I'll cut my cable. Hand us over the 'baccar box and some grog, Kit, will you, there's a good feller ?" the requisites handed. "May your anchor never drag, or an inch o' the plank start in your barkie. Now, my hearties, each look to himself, for he shall hear thunder."

A spell at the liquor, and a squirt of the tobacco juice over the bulwark.

"Now you must see, my lads, that Ben

Bailey was a good natur'd craft, what 'ud al'ays do one a sarvice when it didn't lay much out of his way, and never grumbled but when he didn't like a thing. He was a square-built, wall-sided, heavy-starned, Dutch-finned, short-poled, broad-faced old devil, and as tough as a bower cable. His truck was as hard as a dry old Dutch cheese, and as bare o' hair as a ship under bare poles is clear o' canvas.

“ When I seed him last he was as riddled as a old hulk dragged to shore for breaking up, sported only one hawse-hole, for the t'other was close bunged up, and the starboard that stood squinted like a Lapland witch, and he hang'd together like the tumbling timbers of a stranded wreck. 'Sides this, his parchment canvas was wariegated with black quarterings, caulking up three dozen o' scars of many years' standing, and his gaping sea toggery of a mortal old fashioned cut. Like a superannuated ship, he'd lost all his teeth, and what with

his sober old phiz, his pompous conversation, and his square cut tile was the queerest figur' 'maginable.

“ Well, what I'm going to tell ye happened at Falmouth, when the old feller and a messmate, a'ter being paid off, was a-coming to London to see if parson Ben, as we used to call him, could get to lay up his timbers in Greenwich Hospital.

“ Well, Ben and his messmate—his name was Tom Weathergale ; I happened to meet him at a public house in West-street, Gravesend, and getting into talk, and hearing him start about parson Ben, thinks I to myself, thinks I, why this parson Ben must be old Ben Bailey, so I made the 'quiry and sure enough it proved to be Ben himself, and this messmate of his'n told me a whole load o'—very agreeable craft, by the way, all crank from truck to keelson and as glib as a 'torney, know'd lots o' antidotes about all our best officers, and paid out the history of all his

battles with a queer grace. He 'lated a strange accident what happened to him at the relief o' Gibraltar, when old Howe, you know, steer-ed down a British fleet to the 'sistance o' the garrison, and throw'd in supplies afore the face o' Dons and Mounseers, both of 'em. As good a do up as the Frenchmen ever had to shrug their bow bulwarks at—aye, aye, I'll lay a wager they had enough on it.

“ But, hil—lo ! where the devil am I getting to ? Driving hard down to leeward with a press o' canvas. Come, we must get her up again. Hard up with the helm, and a taught pull upon the weather braces !—ye—o ! Well done ; steddy ! Luff again into the wind's eye.

“ Well, Ben and his 'panion gets, you see, to Falmouth, and wanting to lay up a little while, for they'd run down a good length of coast, you know, for the two days afore, they steers into one o' the s'termest reaches, and tacks into a free port what they finds there

with a summut good-looking outside. Here they gets hauled into a dry dock, and, unreeving some o' their outer rigging, prepares to take in provisions and water, and caulk all partings.

“ The landlord wasn't slack with the stuff, and they soon got 'bundance o' good licker deivered on the wharf afore 'em all tight for shipping. But they didn't want company, neither. The space 'tween decks was fully occupied, and that too with 'spectable company. Tall events they all out tol'able 'pearances, and that's one consumption all within's as right as it should be.

“ Two or three o' the squadron looked like clippers, and they all loomed like barkies o' the proper complexion. Aye, aye, no letting things go by the run when the squall comes down there, I warrant.

All canvas farled in in the crackest manner ; bows swabbed—yards squared—no snapping o'

the stuns'l booms—all taught—colours spread—
anchor apeak. Truepennies all, I takes my
'davy.

“ Well, in such jolly good company who
could 'void answering signals? Soon as the
stuff begin'd to warm, up fly'd the bunting—
signalmen at their post—rags to truck—guns
o' congratulation—boats out, and a friendly
hail. They woted one commodore, who, pass-
ing ahead, steered under all canvas, and was
followed by the whole fleet in the closest line
o' battle, the flying jib-boom o' the ship astarn
over the taffril o' the ship ahead.

“ They calls for more stuff, and gets into
the best o' conversation. Lots o' stories gets
told, and their laughter can be heard as far
as the harbour head. By George, I wish I
know'd one-half on 'em. You wouldn't want
for entertainment. They'd make a dying man
laugh. As for the songs—bless your soul,
there was no counting 'em ; only think of a

dozen o' clever hands, and all true blue. Joke indeed, if some on 'em couldn't tarn out summut creditable !

“ The landlord swear'd there'd never been such a night aboard his craft in all the days of his life, and as to *work*, blow'd if he could get any done at all.

“ All the folks in the house was so eager to see the fun, that when they wanted fresh stuff, no body would stir a peg to draw it. This, you know, in course damped the spirit o' the conversation, and made some o' the hands think of a tarning in.

“ Old Ben was sky high, in tip top, royal glory, jawing faster than one would think one of his years was capable o' doing, cracking his jokes as well as the best on 'em, and full o' entertaining antidote. Somehow or 'nother he shipped more stuff than his hull could fairly carry, and getting more flying kites aloft than was altogether convenient, he lost his helm power, and throwing compass over-

board, got out of his latitude and drifted down with the stream of intostification. 'Sides this, taken soundly aback with the puff, his hands wasn't strong enough to fling in his flapping duck, and so with a heavy lurch smack over he went. He bring'd down some o' the pots o' beer along with him, and one o' the glims. But there wasn't no lack o' help. Some o the neighbouring craft generously hauled their wind, and drove quick down to his assistance. He was taken up and towed away, a little damaged in the hull, carried up to his hammock, and tossed in.

" They kept up the jollification belowstairs, till they'd no more stuff, and half o' their number was a lying on their beam ends. What o' one thing and another, I reckons the landlord had the best o' the business, for on casting up their cash next morning, they found the some total three parts evaporated.

" Well, parson Ben, you know, in the interhim was a lying snug enough in bed, think-

ing o' nothing, and a shouting out now and then a werse or two o' the ' Bay o' Biscay, O.' I told you afore, you know, he weared a timber toe.

" Well, the hammock wasn't—d'ye see—of very 'commodating immensions, and so his pin considerably intended beyond it.

" Well, my hearties, you must know in this ind was a wisitor summut waletudinary, and going to snooze in a state room what hadn't for some time been occupied, this old grunter was very desirous that it should be properly warmed.

" Ben, you see, by this had changed his tack, and instead o' singing, was anchor apeak, for the voyage o' slumber.

" The chambermaid o' the ind was sarching the house for summut she wanted, and not knowing—d'ye see me—that somebody was abed in Ben's cabin, making a chance landboard to'ards it, as she was a coming up the deck ladder, she think'd she'd go in and see if any-

thing was in it. So, tarning the hatchway fastening, she drives in, and fort'nately, as she thinks, she sees the very thing she wanted, and lays hold o' Ben's timber pin. Ben's head was buried in the bed clothes. A taught pull, and he wakes up.

" ' Hillo, master,' cries he, ' what's the cheer? Cast off, brother, or you'll tow me out o' my anchorage. D—n it, you lubber, what are you pulling me so for? "

" The chambermaid hard the voice, and got as frightened as if the devil himself was afore her.

" ' Oh lord, sir, sings out she, ' I didn't know nobody was a sleeping in the room.' "

" ' You didn't, eh,' shouts Ben, ' then cast off your gripes, will ye, and sheer to a distance. D—n my eye, if I didn't think it was the night mare! Another such a pull would have stranded me on the deck. Clear off, will you, and get to your quarters. Split my mainsail! what did ye take me for? "

“ ‘ I beg you a thousand pardons,’ cries she, ‘ but I taked your timber pin for the handle o’ the warming pan.’

“ ‘ I don’t make a doubt of the ’thenticity of the story, for it carries truth upon the face on it. Funny accident it was though, warn’t it ?”

“ Folks do make auk’ard mistakes sometimes,” observed Christopher Gallantpole, “ and to carry out my ’sertion I’ll tell you a story. You’ve heered o’ the Paleus,* 36, a craft what was detached to the channel fleet in 18---, I forgets the year, but howsomever so it was.

“ Well, aboard this Paleus was a feller named Jack Leebrace, a tol’rable good seaman, and a good natur’d shipmate. A’ter a West Ingyan voyage, what they made as convoy, you know, to a stagg’ring lot o’ Liverpool traders, his skipper, a’ter touching at Ports-

* Pallas.

mouth, stood up for Sheerness, where he was 'pointed to lay up. A'ter business—d'ye see—had all been done, this Jack Leebrace got leave from his skipper for a few weeks' absence. So, having got leave, you know, it popped into Jack's head, that as he'd never been to London, not in all the days of his life, he'd clap on all sail and fetch it up now he'd got the opportunity.

“One of his messmates—captain o' the fore-top—what was seized with a sim'lar inclination, agreed to bear him company.

“Well, you must know, my boys, that, with this object in chase, they looked into their rhino cases, and, counting the shot, stowed all tight away in the end on a old handkercher. So they cut off, and mounted a coaster, called the Comet, Banks, master, bound from Sheerness to the 'tropolis. They kept the deck, you know, all the voyage, to clap a squint upon the country, and only got ashore to stow away sperits and provision. So, coming to the su-

perbs, you see, they fetched the middle o' the town in two or three tacks, and cast anchor afore a place they have there---a ind---what they calls the 'Swan with Two Necks'---a funny kind o' swan, by the bye.

" Well, a'ter getting ashore, you know, and paying passage, they gets afloat again, and, with a stiff breeze astarn, stands off for the distance.

" The reaches was very crowded with craft o' all kinds---big and little---East Ingymen and herring boats---men o' war and colliers---clippers and heavy sailers---river craft---bum-boats---lighters---barges---tenders---store ships---transports and steam frigates---neat tarns out and wall siders---top-hampers and close reefa. Much ado they had to steer clear---a stiff hand upon the wheel all the time, and passing the word from one to t'other to keep a gallows sharp look out ahead. Howsomever they carried on at a spanking rate through all constructions---fairweather poles aloft, flying

kites spread to the breeze, and all canvas crowded, hailing every now and then the neighbouring traders, and firing a musket shot, over the more promote.

"They'd by this time fetched gallantly through half a dozen roadsteads, and at last they swept smack into a inner harbour, where a first rate full rigged and fully manned lay close before 'em at anchor. I thinks they found out 'ventually that the shore-going lubbers mustered this first-rate as the Cathedral of St. Poll's. A hell of a fine un, too, she was. I've never seen her myself, only I expects she's a fine un from the description. Some o' you have, I dare say--a devil of a great un she is, isn't she?"

"Aye, aye, big as a mountain. Clap on though, and get aboard."

"Well, Jack and his messmate, directly they seed it, slackened sail, and stood slowly abreast on her. They think'd they'd get aboard, only they seed no 'commodation ladder and didn't

know who to hail. By and bye, howsomever, Jack's messmate spies half a dozen chaps on the fo'castle."

"Jack, says he," "look ye there. D——d if it arn't some o' the crew, and mayhap a officer among 'em. Clear your pipes, will ye, and give 'em a shout.'

"'D——d stuff!' says Jack, 'don't you know those old gentlemen are the twelve 'postles, and it 'ud be a gallows shame to make so free with 'em. I knows 'em again 'kase our chaplain once said the twelve 'postles was elderly barkies and weared great gowns and long beards. 'Sides you see one on 'em's got a log-book under his arm, and claps a stagg'ring gripe upon a couple o' keys. I s'pose he's the captain's clerk or master at arms. We can't interfere with their regglations, bekase you see what a taught hand their skipper keeps over 'em, by their not winking a eye or stirring a finger. Get some on 'em into the black list, eh, by disturbing 'em on in-

spection. Stay till they're past in review, and then we shall see 'em all jollily asperse. 'Sides we can't hurt by keeping. Ax that old feller what's passing ye now, if you like, of what I'm telling you arn't the truth. Trust me for not keeping to discipline.'

"Jack's messmate, you see, as he was told, axed a person what was passing what the old gentlemen was above, and whether they could get aboard their craft."

"'Aye, aye,' said the man they axed— 'get aboard? to be sure. They're now having sarvice, but when that's over, they'll let you in and show all 'commodations. As for the old gentlemen up there,' says he, 'I think'd every body by this time know'd they was the twelve 'postles.'

"'There, there, ' says Jack, 'd——d if I didn't tell ye so. They're now upon sarvice, and when its over trust me for a hail.'

"Well, Jack and his messmate waited, you

see, some time, at last the clock begin'd to strike, and they taked that for a satisfactory signal that business was over. So Jack cleared his pipes, and prepared for a hail."

" 'Aboard the craft, ahoy—a!' sings he, 'I say, you sir, can't we get aboard your barkie, to see if you're fit to be put in commission. 'Spection over, eh? Not true blue' I'll be sworn, or you'd have aspersed afore this.—Nót fond o the grog, eh, master?—Ahah! I'll warrant you is so, only you don't like to acknowledge it afore company. Send us a boat and we'll come and drink with ye. Or come ashore; we've got a bagfull of coppers, and we're not disinclined to stand treat. I say, Tom, this old feller's as dumb as the mainmast. Try *your* fortun', will ye? I can't get nothing out of him, the sulky brute, and I'm as hoarse as the devil.'

"But you must know, my boys, that they'd made so much noise that a crowd o' folks had collected round 'em, and a straight-backed

feller in a blue uniform told 'em to move on and not make no more noise. Well, Jack and his messmate, seeing that there was no chance o' seeing the inside of the ship, think'd it 'ud be better to obey directions, so they repeated the signal and stood on. The crowd gradually aspersed, and Jack and his 'panion was a warping out o' the harbour where this place lay at anchor."—

“ ‘ Jack,’ says Tom, howsomever, afore they lost sight on it, ‘ that there feller said those chaps what we taked to be the crew, was the twelve ‘postles. D——d if I didn’t count ‘em, and, odds my life, I could only make half-a-dozen !’

“ ‘ What’s the odds ?’ says Jack. ‘ You can’t expect ‘em to be on deck all at one time, can ye? Precious hard sarvice if they was obligated. No, they takes it in watches.’

“ There now you’ve got it all and I’m devilish thirsty. So hand us over some o’ the stuff.”

" This chap o' your'n sarved aboard the Paleus, didn't you say, Kit, eh ?" enquired one of the circle, named Joe Piper. " I once know'd a feller what *did* belong to the same craft. Topman, when I know'd him, aboard the crack frigate, Furryhailus,* commanded once by Blackwood : --- aye, aye, wasn't it he what commanded her in the Battle o' Traffilgar. Let us see---that was fought in October, 1805, and when I know'd this cove---Bill Spanker was his name---by the bye he wasn't regg'larly bred to the sea, for his parents put him out 'prentice to a cheesemonger at Sunderland, and this cheesemonger was married to a wife what was summut of a bad temper, and this wife with the bad temper was, as may be supposed, for gen'rally bad tempered women is fond o' drink, 'ticularly partial to the liquor, and this 'ticular partiality to liquor I dare say principally caused her bad temper, and her bad tem-

* Euryalus.

per I makes no doubt had its effects upon her husband, for he was al'ays very cross, and used often to beat she, and she used often to beat he, and they used often to beat one another, and the house was often in diffusion, and the 'prentice often got beat among 'em, and often got besides a lacing on his own 'ticular account. 'Tall events they had a devilish bad character in the town, for Bill's master wasn't altogether honest in his accounts, and, being short sighted, he often didn't give the proper change to his customers, and his wife would very often in mistake borrow things out o' shops without axing the consent o' the owners, and forget to return 'em, and swear she didn't take 'em, and one thing and t'other—piccadillys o' the kind. Well, with this and with that, Bill Spanker led a hell of a life among 'em, and one day, a'ter being undeservedly started, he swear'd that he'd not stand it no longer, but show 'em all a clean pair o' heels and be off to sea. Sunderland

was a good place for a dissolution o' the kind, you know, and so Bill went aboard a collier and worked his way to London. He worked so well on the voyage, and conducted himself so audibly, that the master recommended him to the commander on a West Ingy trader, what was at the time taking freight for an out'ard bound voyage. Well, Bill went the voyage to Tobago, and from there he went in another craft to Rio Janerio, and so, from one thing to t'other, having a good many 'ventures and so on, he got at last a berth aboard a king's ship. Well, boys, in this king's ship—I think she was the Harry Hadney, a fine 40, Captain Reefpoint—Bill Spanker made a long voyage to the Bay o' Bengal. He was in the East Ingy seas a long time—nigh hand three or four year I believe—but at last he comed to the Cape on his home'ard voyage, and a'ter a tough bout on it between that and Madery, made the channel and got into Plymouth.

Well they all lay up a long time in Plymouth, for the craft wanted a devilish deal o' repair, and the skipper was willing to give his Harry Hadneys a little 'laxation. Bill Spanker—d'ye see me—got leave in his tarn to enjoy himself, and so, putting up at a house where they let berths to passengers, he lived away like any prince, treating the lasses to all the shows in the town, and gladdening the hearts o' all the publicans five mile round.

“ Well, one night Bill steered home to his lodgings. He'd got a cloth or two in the wind, though he managed to walk by short boards, but he couldn't get his craft to answer exactly his helm. 'Tall events, as he a'terwards said, he sees his beckon in the distance, and strives hard to fetch it up. So, beating through with a long and a short leg—devil of a tide ahead—puff dead in his teeth—he works stiffly to wind'ard, but at last missed stays and drops smack ashore. The night was a dirty un,

the rain comed pouring down, and the wind blow'd like the devil. Up he comes to the hatchway on his house, and he claps out his fin for a gripe on the knocker. Blow'd if there was a knocker! The fact on it, you see, was this: some tramping blackguard, taking advantage o' the bad night, had whipped it off, thinking to raise the blunt by a sale o' the iron. What was the poor devil to do? There was the rain streaming, and the wind blowing, and he wanting to get aboard. He hailed the watch half a hundred times, but every body abroad was as sound asleep as if they never intended to wake again. 'I have it,' says Bill, so he walks to the next door, seizes the knocker, and gives a devil of a rat, tat, tat. He kept at this work a long time, kicking up the devil's own dust.

"At last the port-hole above is throwd' open, and somebody in a nightgown pops his truck out.

“ ‘ Hillo ! ’ says the figure. ‘ Below there ! What are you knocking at my door for ? ’nough to wake the very dead in their graves.’ What’s the matter. Is the house a-fire ?”

“ ‘ House a-fire ! ’ shouts Bill, ‘ no not by no means. Pray don’t disturb yourself. Go to bed and get to sleep again. I’d be the last one in the world to break in upon your ‘quillity,’ says Bill, taking out his pocket-handkerchief and blowing his nose with all the coolness in the world. “ You see the fact on it is this, master. I comes home, and wants to get in, but when I comes to look at my door——”

“ ‘ Pray be quick,’ cries the figur. ‘ I’m an icicle,’

“ ‘ Well, I *will* be quick,’ cries Bill, who could hardly stand upright. ‘ Well, as I was saying, you see the fact on it is this. I comes home, and wants to get to sleep, but when I comes to look at my door.’——

“ ‘ Well, look at the door,’ says the figur’,
‘ and go on for heaven’s sake.’

“ ‘ Well, when I comes to look at the door,
blow’d if I could see a knocker, so says I to
myself, as there’s no knocker of no sort
here——’

“ ‘ Odds my life, be quick do, or I shall shut
to the window.’

“ ‘ As I said afore, I *will* be quick, master,
but if you won’t let a feller tell out his story
when he’s a trying his uttermost, and puts
him out every minute, what’s he to do? I
comes to the door, and I sees no knocker;
and, seeing no knocker, I says to myself, why
I can’t get in if I don’t let the people aboard
know that I *wants* to get in, and they can’t
know I *wants* to get in unless I knock
at the street door. So, though I don’t want
to disturb nobody, the skipper next door can’t
mind my having the use of his knocker for
a minute or two. So you see, master, I
knocked with *your* knocker to let my folks

next door know that I wanted to get indoors; and if you disturbed yourself by it, why I really can't help it; and if you got up, why I can't help that either. And now, if I've got what I wanted to get, and if my folks next door is aroused, I'll not bother you no more; but I think you'd better get out o' the cold, for, being an old gentleman, as I see you are by your bald head, the night air might do you harm, and so I'll bid you good night and get to my hammock.—So, 'tention!—helm to the starboard—steddy, ey—a!

“ ‘ And is that all,’ shouts the figgur a’ter Bill, as he was a moving off, ‘ what you knocked at my door for?’ ”

“ ‘ Yes, master, that’s all that I knocked at it for.’ ”

“ ‘ And so my house ain’t afire a’ter all.’ ”

“ ‘ No, master, it ain’t afire. Blow you, are you disappointed that it ain’t?’ ”

“ ‘ And you only wanted to borrow the use o’ my knocker—eh?’ ”

“ ‘ Yes, master, I only wanted the use on it.’

“ ‘ Then let me tell you, master Jack Tar, that you are a d---d impudent wretch. You’re an infernal, house-breaking, peace-disturbing, corner-sculking, cowardly blackguard. What business have you, you villain, to come into a quiet street, and, in the middle o’ the night, when peace’ble folks are quiet in their beds, to go knocking at people’s doors and disturbing a respectable neighbourhood? Blow me high or low, alow or aloft, now, if I haven’t a good mind to run down stairs, and give you such a trouncing as you never had in your life. You shan’t get off so easily as you think though, I take my affidavit. There’s law in the land, and there’s constables, and afore I’m two days older I’ll make you whine in prison for this. Odd’s my life, I wishes I could see a constable. *I’ll* knocker ye, depend on it. Hillo, watch!---watch!---

take this rogue into 'mediate custody. Mary, get up, my dear, and help me to call. Where's the rattle? There's a light in Mr. Jackson's winder over the way; he's a getting up.—Watch!—watch! I charge this man at my door with housebreaking and felony. Take him into custody, and walk him to the goal. I'll follow in the morning.'

"Bill was deucedly scared. The old feller made so much noise that the whole street echoed with it. Bill sees a sail or two in the offing, and, thinking 'em the enemy, determines to crowd all sail and run for it. So he takes to his heels and cuts off like a antelope.

He thinks that by going back to his lodgings he might get into trouble, so he hangs about the skirts of the town for the rest of the night, and with the first of the morn he gets aboard a row-boat, and is pulled off to the Harry Hadney. The remainder on his liberty he passes at Portsmouth; and to this day,

though it's now nigh hand twelve year ago, he remembers the roadstead at Plymouth, and the queer figgur at the port-hole, as if it was yesterday."

"So much for Master Bill and his getting drunk."

OFF THE CAPE.

SUNSET in the broad and rolling Indian Ocean, lat. 28° S. long. $62\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ E. Picture to yourself, kind reader, a boundless waste of waters;—a world of silence, awe, and soul-overpowering magnificence;—liquid plains of scopeless and ever-changing green, heaving in gigantic majesty beneath the broad, over-arching canopy of heaven.

Where is the boundary of this godlike dominion? Expanding in "never-ending, still-beginning" continuity—unmarked by the petty traces of animated nature—unbridled, untransformed by the labours of humanity, it stands apart in sullen and inhospitable dignity, and laughs at the Lilliputian arts by which man has rendered the face of the less unyielding earth subservient to his wants, his wishes, and his pride.

There is something nobly constant in the ocean. Ages fleet away, but they work no alteration upon its aspect. Thrones, empires, are overturned; races of mankind become extinguished; that seemingly calculated for eternity yields at last to the universal *fiat*; the structure of "the great globe itself" undergoes vast and total alteration; but Time, the conqueror of all, finds himself baffled when he seeks to establish an authority over the unbending waters,

"And writes no wrinkle on their azure brow."

Such as it rolled when the command of Omnipotence curbed its sullen and inimical dominion—prescribed *that* bounds which hitherto had ranged in unchallenged sovereignty, and from its briny and reluctant bosom bade a world arise for the subsistence and habitation of a race of men and superior beings ; such as it rose on the first great day of an immortal creation, still it is now and it shall be.

All have gazed upon the self-same features. The first navigator who thrust forth his adventurous skiff to tempt the greatness of dangers hitherto unknown, propelled it on the self-same surface.

To Jason and his companion Argonauts, to Agamemnon and his brother chieftains, to Æneas, to Ulysses, Xerxes, Themistocles, Lysander, Conon, and Alexander, the Roman Admirals, the Northern Sea Kings, the Genoese and Venetian traders, the discoverers of the New World, and to the eyes of our modern

navigators, it ever presented, and presents the self-same countenance.

Everything changes—but the ocean never changes. Everything is silently fulfilling the grand provision of nature, gradual dissolution and regeneration ; but the ocean is subject neither to dissolution nor regeneration.

While all is one wide theatre of decay, the ocean flows ever on unchanged, unchangeable, and everlasting, and bids successful defiance to that at which every other object of sense is made to tremble.

Prodigious dominion ! the overburthened mind seeks in vain to comprehend the greatness of its attributes.

What a perception of expanse sweeps over the soul, as we gaze upon its glittering and illimitable surface.

Sea and sky are now the only objects of sight. The one baffling, the industrious researches of imagination ; the other, presenting the most lively image of eternity with which

the mind is capable of grappling. Our vision,
no longer

“Cabin’d, cribb’d, confin’d, bound in,”

with the sight of land, though merely bearing
the dim and distant shape of the grey and long
drawn line, verging upon and almost blended
with the spirit-like mistiness of the dreamy
horizon, flits in freedom over

“The sea, the sea, the *open* sea,
The blue, the fresh, the ever free,”

and catches a portion of the grandeur which
surrounds it.

The breeze, strong, though somewhat un-
steady, fills the towering pyramid of white
above us, and bears us gaily onward. Away—
away—stretching abroad in every direction,
far as the eye can reach—sublime in the nearer
distance—dubious, yet grand, afar, sweep, one

after the other, the gigantic undulations which vary the mighty surface upon which we so securely float. Green—intensely green—darkening into the most imposing shadows as the waves wheel into depth, mounting again into the broad light of the open day, revolve majestically the piles of water around.

Look up, and glance along the breadth of distance—breaking into the thousand hues which flash from the diamond ; widening into a belt of dazzling gold ; condensing into the most starlike scintillations ; starting up spires of arrowy light, now green, now orange, and now the richest crimson, glitters that portion of the ocean beneath the point of the sun's most glorious descent. Who could paint the glories of such a sunset !—a scene at which the artist would throw down his pencils, and the poet abandon his vocabulary in despair. No ! Such revelations of the loveliness of nature, must be *witnessed* to be one quarter appreciated.

And then the sky.—Azure above ;—mist in the east ;—and in the west an assemblage of the richest lights. Colossal cloud-piles, spires of brilliancy, here shooting up in gorgeous solitude, there grouped like the *aiguilles* of the Alpine ranges, and boldly printed upon a background of gold and scarlet. Alas ! that the beauties of such a view should be transitory. Whilst we write, the sun sinks down ; the clouds become more faintly etched ; the red fades into obscurity, and successive strata of of up-creeping sea-mists, like the gauze clouds of a theatre, become denser and denser, till a scene on which a volume might have been written, becomes gradually shut from our lingering view,

“ And like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Leaves not a rack behind.”

But the increase of the wind warns us, instead of looking abroad for objects on which to ban-

quiet the eye, to pay some attention to measures become necessary through the change of weather. And how soon is the loveliness of a peaceful sunset transformed into the stern indications of an approaching squall. The ocean life is the most of all subject to uncertainty. The pleasures of the present hour may be succeeded by the perils of the next in succession, and vacant hilarity and good fellowship exchanged for the glance of anxiety, and the heaviness of an anticipating dread. Capricious as the waves on which it is spent, and of which it is a characteristic, fleets the life of a sailor. Who shall blame him, then, for snatching the bright hour as it rises, and, careless of past fatigues and future evils, drowning every uncongenial reminiscence in the enjoyment of the moment. And is not this, after all, the truest philosophy? The future is a cloud-like panorama, whether pleasing or otherwise, of something perhaps never destined to take place.

The imagination tints it with colours which harmonize when placed at a distance, and make a showy and captivating remote appearance—whilst over all, pleasing in its diffusiveness, is shed the sunshine of hope. The past is the obscurity of the road along which we have come, viewed either through the medium of regret or self-congratulation, regret in having contained that, though perhaps lightly prized at the time, now deemed as gratifying—self-congratulation in burying that, endured in the hour, though now exaggerated by the gloom of remoteness. The present is the only thing upon which we can seize, which is tangible—the future is vapour—the past is a dream—after all, what is it we are labouring after? Enjoyments looked forward to, if fated to arrive, must become *present*; evils *expected* are not yet in existence—if destined to exist, they will arrive fast enough of themselves. What is to come, therefore, whether

for good or evil, is not yet in being, and for what is not in being it were folly to concern ourselves.

The present *is* in being, therefore let that engross our whole attention. If pregnant with *good*, let us not alloy that good with the dross of unfounded anxiety : if charged with evil, let us not burthen our powers of avoidance or endurance with the extrinsic weight of additional misfortunes. Surely he must be the most foolish of governors, who, when he sees an enemy with whom he lacks the means to contend sitting down before his gates, sends the one half of his garrison to *reconnoitre* an expected body of assailants. We can only experience pleasure or pain through the medium of our senses. It is the part of a wise man to endeavour to obtain as much of the former, and as little of the latter as possible ; that is, consistent with its permanency ; for who would forego a lasting good for a short interval of evil ; or seize a fleeting hour of

enjoyment when attended by an enduring contrary.

Upon the present, alone, are our senses capable of being exercised ; therefore to extract as much real *pleasure* from the present as possible, is the most legitimate and useful employment of practical philosophy.

* * * *

The skies darken down into twilight. That delicious *chiaro, scuro*, partaking of the rich purity of Claude's atmospheres, and the majestic profundity of Rembrandt's distances, soft as the sideway gliding of the seagull's wing, steals soberly over the brilliancy of the retiring sunset, and sleeps upon the breaking and ever restless waters, like hope on the stormy surface of life. The scene borrows fresh graces from the imagination. The distance melts into vapour ; and we might fancy we were sailing in the trackless realms of

space. Deprived of arbitrary materials, the mind is thrown upon its own resources, and fills the spectral gloom around with creations of its own. How vivid—how evanescent, are the figures that the fancy starts up! Legible while in being; but overturned by the succeeding wave of thought. Like characters traced upon the sea-sand, the next tide obliterates their characteristics, and takes out every mark. Soon as formed is their existence annihilated. However, they were once in being; and having *once* been in being, they form a unit in the grand history of thought, a link in the universal chain of intelligence.

A heavy swell comes from the south-east. The noble vessel begins to feel its influence, and rolls deliberately from side to side. As the queenly fabric heaves her broadside from the advancing wave, the watery twilight falls upon it as the last smile of day, and casts her jetty ports and bulwarks into deeper shade.

The ocean grows darker and darker. The profound green gives place to an inky shade of blue, and shadow after shadow sails over the surface of the sea, till beauty rises into grandeur, and grandeur into sublimity.

Strips of amber and dusky crimson are yet to be discerned in the west ; but they attenuate with rapidity, and are rapidly descending into the sea. Faster and faster roll the mists astern ; and a ghost-like sheet of white vapour rises in the east and south.

The upper and lower edges of this cloud are jagged, and put on the appearance of a rainy fringe.

The swells heave higher and higher, undulating every minute into more gigantic sweeps.

The ship begins to roll with an increased heaviness, and balances her yards lazily lower and lower down on either side.

The skies put on a wild and extremely threatening appearance, and a mysterious

grumble, like a distant roll of thunder, comes slowly down upon the wind.

A hoarse voice, rendered deeper by the trumpet from which it emanates, echoes along the deck—

“ All hands, reduce sail ! Boatswain's mate, pipe up. Look to the halliards—out upon your topsail yards ! ”

“ What shall we take in, sir ? ”

“ Close reef topsails and courses, and in with your head stay-sails. Cheerily now, cheerily.”

“ Close reef topsails and courses—forward there ! down with the fore-top-mast stay-sail. Reef away.”

“ You at the helm there ! keep her up to the wind.”

“ Aye, aye, sir ! ”

“ That's right ; get in your canvas. Bravo ! ”

In a short time the yards are sliding down the masts, the reefs are taken in, the head stay-sails sent flapping down, and the men are de-

ascending from their duty. The veil of cloud in the meantime widens, increases in thinness, and its jagged edges pale away into regularity.

The wind, which has hitherto been almost dead, springs up again in another quarter.

The threatening clouds, which a little while ago called the attention of the officers, begin to clear away.

The mists, in wheeling troops, drive away on either side. But the sweep of the ocean increases in sublimity. One hill of water succeeds another, rolling with majestic deliberation, like so many mountains put into motion by an earthquake. Their summits, as we look up at them, however, seem to become lighter, and once more put on a purity of colouring.

The vapour around gradually sinks down or dissipates itself abroad, and reveals the back-ground of the mighty picture upon which we gaze.

At length, a long and reverberating roll of thunder rumbles heavily overhead, and the clouds and gloom begin to break grandly away in every direction.

But now for the exhibition of our grand, nautical, pen-and-ink diorama. We say to our readers what Sancho addressed to Don Quixote before he made a beginning of that of which he never made an end, namely, the tale of the Shepherdess Torralva—

“ Pray be attentive, for now we begin.”

We premise that a great call must be made upon the funds of the imagination, and beseech our readers to provide colouring to fill up the sketch which we will strike out for them.

In the first place, darken the stage ; create that advantageous twilight in which impressive objects are magnified. Take in as much

open sea and sky as the mind can contain,
and—

“ Give ample room and venge enough.”

for the scene about to be introduced. These dispositions complete, and the imagination prepared, bid the bell ring, and the curtain slowly rise.

How grand ! how solemn ! What a mixture of the sublime and beautiful ! How little does the landsman dream of the glories ever present to him, “ who goeth down to the deep in ships, and whose business lieth in the deep waters.” Superb revelation of the greatness of nature, *once* seen thou can’st never be forgotten !

From right to left sweeps a mighty mountain of water, shelving precipitously down, and apparently about to hurl the graceful vessel which careens nobly over in the midst, into

total and momentary ruin. Upon its gloomy breadth falls a melancholy light. In the middle distance, overpowering in its stern immensity, wheeling as it rolls resistlessly and majestically down into the darkness that covers the awful interval, threatening, unpitying, and colossal, heaves a corresponding hill of water.

The distance is shut out by the towering tops of these prodigious seas, and, looking upwards, we can only distinguish the darkening masses of cloud that troop across the sky, and the pale light reflected by the far summits of the waves. The heavens retain the last glimmer of twilight, and a bluish haze droops upon remoter objects.

And then the well appointed vessel in the centre of the picture ; the sole thing, being the token of man, upon a waste, in the contemplation of the dimensions of which computation is wearied.

The hermit of the ocean—companionless—

shut out from voice or signal of its kind. The exile of the deep, fraught with remembrances of home, but gone forth, perhaps, upon its never-returning journey. Separated from country, friends, kindred, love, all, save hope ;—a branch lopped from its parent stem and submitted to the mercy of the howling winds ;—a leaf loosed from its fellows and sent helpless down the stream of destiny. Chartered, however, with human affections ; how many souls are knit in that vessel's safety ! how many hearts have gone forth with it, and share its anticipated perils.

“ Mine aches to think on't.”

Under close reefed topsails and extended jib, she is grandly scudding. Deepened by the shadows of the ocean-valley down which she surges, her stern-windows and taffrail are raised aloft, while the rudder, stern-frame, and down-gliding broadside, are clearly visible. Her fairylike tracery and tapering spars climb symmetrically above, and thicken, as

they descend, into a web of jetty cordage. Her dotted line of closely-closed ports, chequers her graceful, run, and bounded by a width of chains, bolts, and bulwarks, imparts an air of warlike dignity to her noble outline. But the rolling waters reveal a still greater demanding object of interest. His form, scarcely distinguishable in the gloom, mounts at intervals into the fast-fading light. "*A man overboard*——*ahoy*——*a !*" a perilous situation ; one sufficient to quail the stoutest heart. Who can guess at the conflicting and fearful thoughts which whirl through his brain ! The danger is too great to be at once comprehended. Death—the prospect of so near and horrible a death, floats in dilated and mysterious majesty before his bewildered eyes. Safety so near, and out of reach ! His sympathising and horror-struck companions crowd the taffrail. Left behind, a prey to the howling surges, while the majestic vessel sweeps onward on her course. Fearfully grand is the

scene. Darkness falls over the expanse—the last lights of evening plunge into vapour—all becomes dim, shadowy and awful. But salvation comes when least expected, driving down with the fast-sweeping pile of sea. A hen-coop, in the expectation of creating a temporary escape, floats fast towards him. He sees it; and taxes his endeavours to the utmost to reach it. Still welters the remorseless ocean. The thing to be saved, what a speck in the expanse! The means of safety how mean and insignificant compared with the god-like panorama above, beneath, and around it! But the end is accomplished. The saving of a single life is effected; and the being rescued from an immediate death mounts above his enemy. The haze rises in the mean time thicker and thicker around, the distance is shut in from view, and cloud and billow, vapour and wave, are all that now can be distinguished.

A boat, like an ocean-spirit; is seen to

slowly advance through the smoky medium which envelopes it. A pause ensues, broken only by the washing of the waters. A faint "huzza!" breaks for an instant upon the unsubstantial solitude. The mists deepen with rapidity, and the curtain gradually falls upon a stern, melancholy, and general gloom.

PASSAGES FROM MY PERAMBU-
LATING LOG.

I had had so much of the water for so long a time ; had been so knocked about and exposed to all weathers, bad and good ; had seen so many ships, and kept so many watches, that on this occasion when I was in London I was determined to have as little to do with the cause of so many of my discomforts as possible, and so give the water a wide berth.

I was therefore glad of an opportunity of

turning my back upon the east of London, and off I set from home with the commendable intention of finding out and delivering a letter to the mother of a shipmate of mine, and a worthy good soul he is into the bargain, by your leave.

The letter had been entrusted to my particular care by William Donovan, a master's mate of my last vessel. Hearing that I was bound to London on particular business, and anxious to trust his letter to no one but an individual upon whom he could place the greatest dependance, he fixed upon me ; Neptune alone knows from what reason ! Faith ! maste William Donovan must have had more credit in me than I could ever find that I was justified in ascribing to myself, for I never professed any dependence on myself from the first time that I could remember forming a resolution.

However I determined implicitly and religiously to discharge my duty, and fulfil what I set down as a grave charge, and an honoura-

ble commission, implying as it did such flattering confidence in me, especially as I did not know what might be in the letter :——it might have been love and murder for what I knew !

Therefore it happened, one afternoon in October, finding I was in the neighbourhood of Chelsea, that I determined to indulge a seaman's usual curiosity, and extend my perambulation southwards and pay a visit to that sister establishment to the noble institution at Greenwich, the old red brick pile of buildings, Chelsea Hospital.

Unlike Greenwich Hospital, the attractions of the foundation at Chelsea are of the passive order. It seems darker even in the height of summer ;——more out of the way with all the superadded and extraneous aids to guide you, of omnibusses and stray red-coated pensioners seen straggling down the Chelsea streets towards it.

It has to me an air of dampness and

there is a dulness and depression about it which is never encountered at Greenwich Hospital. The dingy character of that part of Chelsea in which it is situated may have something to do with this impression, but from whatever cause it may arise, whether springing from itself, or an effect simply resulting from the mind of the person contemplating it, and which in my instance perhaps was strong, it is one which is almost certain to present itself in combination with the building.

The afternoon was chilly—cold, I should rather say, since the sensation was more equally diffused, and did not assail you by such fits and starts as chilliness, which quality I should decide upon as more correctly defining cold.

The sun shone brightly in the keen air, illuminating the clouds, and painting them of all sorts of pretty colours. But the river looked melancholy, and there was an air of neglect about the bank towards which I was looking, and of solemnity upon the still dark

surface of the stream, which infused a heaviness into my mind.

We are real chameleons, and take the character of the air as readily and naturally as fire burns, or number two follows number one.

I wandered listlessly about the old colonnades of Chelsea Hospital, admiring the dark stone, and sometimes amused with the ancient architraves, and eccentrically outlined pediments, and quaint resources in stone, and reverend peculiarities which are to be found in all parts of it.

An aged clock struck—the very Nestor of horologes. It sounded as if its brass heart, through ceaseless beating, had clicked itself dry and sharp. It was an old beau of a clock—Beau Nash in brass. There was pert feebleness in the very sound. I could not associate any of the respect due to age with it. The clock was an empty-headed clock—a vivacious piece of antiquity, with a shrivelled face and an inside of wire.

Red bricks, stone quoins, and rustics, greeted my eye.—Perhaps I should be nearer the truth in stating that, subdued as their appearance was, they rather seemed to *meet* my eye than put themselves forward for it. I could have thought that the features of the edifice only suffered—merely permitted themselves to be seen.

There were few pensioners about. For this I was sorry, since the red of their coats—dingy though that red be—would have relieved the monotony, and the grave tediousness, and barrenness of the colouring I encountered.

I should perhaps have left Chelsea Hospital without exchanging a word with any one, had I not seen a reverend old pensioner seated on one of the wooden benches, coughing with a slowness and weakness, and a caution, which seemed to hint that the cough was getting too much for the poor old gentleman. I had been asking myself some little time

before, where the chapel of the edifice could be: so, taking advantage of this opportunity of satisfying my doubts, I walked slowly up to the old man, and, waiting for him to recover from his cough, which he did in a deep drawn sigh, and with a hand put to his flapped pocket for a blue cotton pocket handkerchief with white spots, I spoke to him.

“Pray, where may your chapel be?”

The old man looked up, and showed me an aged face which did not quite appear to comprehend my question.

I repeated my enquiry.

“The chapel, sir?” he returned, slowly seeming to gather the sense of what was around him, and of the question which I addressed to him. “You can’t see the chapel here, because the house there at the corner hides it. But I can show you the way—I can show you the way,” added the old man more briskly, and feeling about for his stick. He appeared in his readiness, and disposition to oblige,

suddenly to remember something which struck him as obvious ; and this something, which was showing me the way, he instantly addressed himself to put in execution.

I was anxious to prevent the old man inconveniencing himself so far as to put his "best foot foremost," as the saying is, to keep ahead of the visiter, brisker from curiosity as well as difference in age, and with strength unimpaired by asthma, all which I could see must unavoidably cripple the old man's willingness to play *cicerone*. But the pensioner seemed rather huffed at the hint which I threw out as to his age disqualifying him for attending me, and appeared desirous of showing me that he had much more vigour in him than I gave him credit for. So we came to a sort of compromise as I followed him, and I, under his guidance, saw the chapel.

After hobbling about with all the talkativeness peculiar to his state of conviction of the glories to be found in his "collage," as these

Grosvenor and Chelsea Hospitals are sometimes ludicrously called, putting, I must say, my patience, fortified with my natural good nature, much to trial, he would insist upon my mounting to his ward, and inspecting his apartment, modestly however insinuating with his desire that I should do so, an intimation that he didn't think it would give his honour much additional trouble, and that he had a fine view from his window.

Therefore behold me mounting up a wide, creaking staircase, pioneered by an old Chelsea pensioner, hobbling up, and talking all the way.

"You seem to have some life here," I remarked.

"Life is it, sir?—O! we do not lack variety. Sometimes I smoke, and sometimes I talk; and when three or four of us get together, you would be surprised how much we have to say to one another, and how merry we are."

"That I really have no doubt of," returned

I, as I entered the cell and sat myself down, by officious invitation, in a crazy arm-chair with a calico cushion. The old man bustled about,

“Upon hospitable thoughts intent,”

having a high idea apparently, though I was puzzled to see the reason of it, of the honour there was in his beholding a strange gentleman seated in his chimney corner.

We had a long talk, and I found that he had served in the American war, and had received a ball in his shoulder at the battle of Whiteplains. I cannot tell how it exactly chanced, yet I nevertheless made myself excessively comfortable in his little room, which was neatness itself, for full three quarters of an hour.

“I’ve been very happy here, sir,” said he ;—
“very happy. We’re all together, and red-coats must be redcoats to the end of the

chapter. This is a healthy place to live in, if it were not for the fogs in November, which cut me up terribly, and make me cough,"——

Here the thought of it, perhaps, set him a coughing.

"But we can't always have sunshine. I've been here now fifteen years—fifteen years it will be next March, for I came in in March, and on a day I remember that the chimney of the great distillery there in Lambeth blew down. I've lived an even life here, sir, and have little else to do but to eat my dinner and ruminate and wipe my spectacles. But we can't always live such an idle life, sir; and I suppose I shall soon be called out for duty."

The notion of this asthmatic old veteran being called out, amused me: but I plainly gathered that he could not put up with the idea of being considered past service, and therefore, in his opinion, contemptible.

So we cling to the baubles of life, never having the courage to be aged.

“ Have you ever been married ? ” enquired I.

“ Married, sir ! Yes ; I was married five and twenty years, and I really believe my wife died in a pet because I would come in here and she couldn’t follow me. Rare proof of devotion in a woman, isn’t it, sir ? He ! he ! he !—”

And this curious old man chuckled at the idea.

“ And I’ve had children, too ;—children—three of them. One of ’em died, and the other two, God bless ’em ! are doing well I hope. I have been fortunate in my family, except that my eldest son Thomas had a scapegrace who called himself my nephew, and nearly troubled the old life out of me.”

Struck by a peculiarity in his accent, I enquired doubtingly—

“ You are not Irish, are you ? ”

"My mother was Irish, sir, and my son Tom married a woman of Cork, so that we somehow made an Irishman of my nephew. Talking of him, sir, O ! he was an excellent hand at the pen, and I hope by this time has made a fortune where he went."

"And where did he go ?" queried I.

"It's a long story, sir ; but the rights of it was," returned the old pensioner, "that my son Tom's son Tim, was a bit of a wild slip who wouldn't settle down decently to anything. And really the truth of it was that his notions were unsettled by his falling in love ; which he did with a young girl named Jane Darling, who lived in Dublin with her mother, and got her living, and a very pretty living she made of it, too, by working at her needle for the gentlefolks.

"At last, finding that he couldn't persuade her to marry him, and the rogue had nothing at the time to marry upon, so the young girl did right, and showed her sense in refusing

him, if she had even cared for him, which I do not know that she did.

“ Tim was in despair, and went and shut himself up in a lodging up three pair of stairs ; but he came down one sunshiny morning, and sold all his traps, and went aboard a ship at Liverpool, and sailed off for Australia. He determined, he said, to try his fortune to'ther end of the world as a shepherd, since he was told the sheep were bleating over there for somebody to come and take care of 'em ; and he took over a crook, and brought three pair of thick shoes, as he expected to have to sit a great deal in the mud.

“ But I've since heard, sir, that the weather's very fine over there ; and I'll be bound, though he's been gone six years, that he hasn't worn out his shoes yet, as he was a very careful chap.

“ Ah ! Jane Darling troubled him sorely.

Before he left England he entrusted to me a long paper of his, which he wanted sent to Jane as his leave-taking ; but I could never find her direction, and it was too long for the post, so it has ever since lain by in my drawer."

"As I suppose no secrets are contained in it," said I, "you will oblige me by letting me have a look at it."

"O! with all the pleasure in the world, sir," answered my old friend ; and with alacrity he went and brought out of a drawer some sheets of writing paper, written all over, and containing as I found, "An expostulation to Jane Darling."

I read a page or so, but finding my time grow short, I offered to go ; but I suppose in gratitude for the interest I had shown in the fortunes of his nephew, Tim, the old pensioner would hear of nothing but my taking the manuscript away with me, and I

here present the reader with a faithful transcript of it.

I found the lament quite contrary to the sort of thing I expected, and I think poor Tim would but have defeated his own purpose in sending it to Jane Darling.

TIM'S EXPOSTULATION.

AN ! Jane Darling, now ;—sure you will drive me as wild as a colt. I shall set up my mane, and away I shall fly—run, I mane, as if a whole cartload of arrows were being shot down upon me. I shall be transfixed with long shafts with feathers at the ind of them, just as I am now run through the corporation with love and jealousy.

Oh ! by all the powers of Corimacarthy, and all the Powers of Fitzbotheration besides,

who sure hadn't the patience to fish with a hook, but jumped in with a wicker basket to catch the fishes all at once and alive in the wather. Oh ! by the four shovels of Father Macgragh, who dug in his garden for chany oranges, and broke up his spectacles for rings for his fingers, I am as miserable as a sparrow with only one feather in its tail, and as twistingly uncomfortable as an eel when he's having his coat taken off for him. Sure my head spins round like a taytotum, and comes bumping down upon the table as if I was knocking at a street door with it. And I've sparks in my eyes that go whizzing and fizzing, and that are dancing away like so many jacky-lanterns, jumping up and down like gnats in a summer evening, over a morass, as they call it in England, and over a bog as we know it is in Ireland—

“ That sweet land of the west,”

the first flower of the sea, and the first jim of the earth.

Ah ! Jane Darling—you brute, you ! you've handled the men's hearts so that you let 'em tumble down, and they're broken in *paices*, and you wouldn't stoop down for the life of you to pick up the bits.

Oh ! my heart was made of glass—crown glass it was, for it was so good that you could see yourself behind in it, and it was crown glass, too, because it was just like a pretty little glass coach that had the Queen's license to carry only one inside, and that one was you, Jane Darling, sure. Though now I think about it, it ain't crown glass at all, but only half-crown glass, for sure I haven't got the crown that the wise man talks of, when I haven't got you, Jane Darling.

Oh ! you're as hard as adamint—sure you're more like a rock than a human cratur', much less a woman, or you'd come down like reasonable gravel and let all the stones rattle about me when I axed at you with my pickaxe so. But I can't make any impression on you, for

I'm striking flint, and I only strike fire instead of wather, for tears of compassion won't spring out of your eyes. Oh, you'd niver cry for me, you hard-hearted——*baste* ! God forgive me for calling you a baste ! You'd niver cry for me if I was shut up in my coffin—if I was pushed into a house that I had all to myself and the key was turned upon me. Nor if the last shovelful was being patted down upon my head, to make me snug and comfortable, would you drop a tear. No, but you'd purtind to wipe your eyes, though there would be no more tears on your face than there are dew-drops on a fireman's helmet or bees in an icepail.

Oh, the dissimilation of the cratur' ! Sure, I'm a pailful of water for you. I'm like a waterspout atop of the house, that's always aweeping—that is, when it rains ; but you—oh ! you wouldn't milt if you saw me tattooed like an Indian.

But, my dear, I was going to tell you a

story about a strange adventure of mine when I was writing a love-letter to this haste. Oh, the emotion it was, that driv the thoughts of it out of me pericrageranium, as the doctors call it when they take their compasses out and measure degrees upon your scull. Sure, I haven't been in Dublin for nothing, and looked in at the street door of Trinity College, and seen the famous crow that stands upon one leg and shuts one eye while he's asleep, and keeps the other wide open.

Oh, it was at the top story of all of the house that I live in—in the first floor—sure, the first floor down the chimney, that I was a-sitting before the window, and a mighty purty window it is, if you plase, for it has the one great convanience that you can sit at it and see round the corner.

“ Well, my dear, it was at my window that I was sitting, with my pen in my mouth, for I was just then puzzled a bit

to find a word that I couldn't get hold of the right end of.

The ink horn was beside me, and I had just poured in, for my ink was all mud, half a pint of wather to make my writing all the more flowing, thinking to add, too, to it about a gill of vinegar, to sharpen it up a bit, and give a proper acidity to some of my obsivations. - I hadn't got a choice of pens, for I'd only one pen and two stumps, for my best pen had been borrowed by my landlord for Mike O'Reilly, the taxman, when he came with his little bottle dangling at his button-hole and had forgotten the quill that he dipped into it. But I had a sheet of snow white paper, that, in my distress, I had wetted with my tears, and had been forced once to dry with the fire afore it was fit for use.

" Oh, I minded my pen, and then cut the feather into notches, leaving a fine tuft at the top to brush away the blacks that came flying

in at the window, for sure I had tin dozen of chimney-pots before me all smoking at once.

“ Well, my dear, I got as far as ‘ this place,’ and the date, the 17th of October, writing as close up as I could to leave room at the bottom of the letter for Jane Darling to send me the answer upon, as I knew that where she lived there was no paper to be had except brown paper, and sure she was too respectable to write me a love-letter upon a sheet of brown paper.

Now, my dear, as I said afore, I minded my pen ; but it was only half a mind I had of it, for my ould penknife was as blunt as a dale board, and I couldn’t get any cut out of it, and sure I might just as well have tried to mind my pen with the fire shovel. Bad luck to all of it ! and as much misfortune as there was in Grinanhowl’s blanket with the great hole in it, when it wouldn’t put the fire out.

Oh, but sure ain't I beginning at the wrong end of my story, and going up stairs downwards with it, putting on my coat afore my waistcoat, and harnessing the cart afore the horse, instead of following my nose and going the same way my feet were taking me. Ah ! then, didn't I tell you now that there was a spy in my house ? a great ugly owl with one big eye. I'd got a bee in my cap, and would he, now, be letting me have any peace with his buzzing !

Sure there was a quare old chap who lived down below, who boiled his eggs in his hat and eat his meat with a toasting fork, and this ould villain——hot pokers to the finger ends of the likes of him !——wouldn't be aisy but he'd be in everybody's dish, not putting his spoon in only, but divil take him, such a thundering big ladle, that if you turned it up and knocked off the handle it would have made a house for a man and his wife, and seven children, and the grandmother beside. Oh, he tried to dip

out all about everybody : and, sure, wouldn't he stick himself at the bottom of the stairs and watch me out of the house, and shut himself up in the coalhole and watch me in again, barring that that wasn't the best place in the world to see people go up stairs from.

Oh ! this ould wretch—this whiteheaded old vagabond, with his cotton nightcap and his big horn spectacles, was the plague of my life. Sure didn't he take the liberty to sind in one morning afore I was awake to borrow my washhand-basin, only that I wouldn't let him have it, and knocked it on the flure in my vexation, and broke it, because he shouldn't have it at all at all. O, I was bothered out of my seventeen senses with the hoary ould divil !——didn't he, now, borrow my umbrella when the rain came in at my roof, and I wanted it to hold up over my head at night to keep the wet off while I was aslape ; and didn't he beg my shoes of me, and walk out in them all one sunshiny day, while I

couldn't do anything but look out of the window after him; and then the ould fiend would walk up and down, before my door and wouldn't come in for aggrivation.

“ Well, my dear, this ould Satan would be always poking himself in my way to see how I lived, and know who I was ; and sure wasn't I myself all the time ? I wasn't him ; so even supposing that he was a Wandering Jew, and had lost himself, and was looking to find himself again, he couldn't have found himself in me. But he was always looking, and looking at me as if I was himself if I could but find it out, except that I was young and he was old—ah, and, being an old man, oughtn't he to have known better, now ?

When I first wint to lodge in the house that he lived in, sure he was so polite as to want my acquaintance very pressingly. Oh ! we bowed atop of the stairs, and we bowed on the landings, and we bowed at the street door, and, oh, we were bowing all day at one another like two

chany mandarins : and didn't he, now, when I was taking tay in my parlour atop of the house—didn't he sind me up his card in the tay-pot ? Oh, mighty p'lite, intirely, he was at first !

But, oh, the divil with his red cloak on, and his red-hot eyeglass, fly away with the likes of this quare ould ragamuffin ! for sure he was the plague of my life. O, he was the iron skewer that was stuck in the mate of my life, and I was always pricking my fingers with him. Sure he was a thistle—a nettle, a stool with two legs, for I was always letting myself down with him. He was a taysaucer with the best half out of it. And, O, through him the cup of my happiness was a cracked cup, that laked and let all iv it out !

Well, thin, I was sitting at my window, just as composed as Phil O'Flannigan when his wife's wig was afire, and I had my head a leaning on my hand, and I was looking up at the chimneypot opposite, thinking of that ongrateful woman who was laughing at my dis-

tress for her sake." O, the hussey ! Sure, I was trying to make my letter as moving as possible, and so I sat still to draw breath to give her all the stronger push of the shoulders of eloquence in it. O, I was detarmined to knock her down somehow and have it out of her, for I wasn't going to lit my heart be torn up, without speaking, as she'd tear up an ould letter and throw the pieces away.

Well, my dear, I was in this absince, looking intently at the chimneypot just as if it could have helped me with a word, when what—O ! the tin buttons of Father Macshane, that the stupid man cut off his cassock and swallowed in a handful for pills—O ! what, what should I see but the head and shoulders of this white-headed, blue-bearded, black ould divil rise up out of the chimneypot, just to follow me upstairs in his way, barring that it was up the chimney, to see what I was about !

Oh, thin, didn't he stare when he saw that I had caught him at it ; and sure, now, could

I do anything but look at him as if I was a painted man, with my mouth open as if I was going to swallow a church organ.

Sure, the ould wretch soon rekivered his self possession, and he bobbed his head down again, and I heard him rattling down the chimney and shaking down the loose mortar like hailstones. O! I was as vixed as the devil, and I overturned my inkstand, and threw my pens over the parapet, and shut up my shutters, and put on my nightcap, and wint to bed in a pet.

Arrah! Jane Darling, now, see what you've done. Sure you make me write to you, and you get me insulted. I'm hunted atop of my house like a big blackguard of a raven, that cocks its eye over the roof to see what's a coming, and jumps up when the stones come flying up at it.

Where will I go?—Och! where will I go now? Sure I must *stale* downstairs some fine moonlight night, and get out of the town, and turn hermit. Oh! I must buy the stuff,

and make me up a blue gown, and shave my head, and let my beard grow, and throw off my shoes, and let my cowl hang down behind me.

And thin when I live upon nothing but watercresses, you shall see what a condition youv'e reduced me to, Jane Darling, you pavingstone, you !

JAMES GREEN'S FIRST VOYAGE.

"Travellers see strange things."

Old Proverb.

I HAVE found it very difficult to make out the rig and build of the following tale. I have hove the lead half a dozen times, but with little success. I have bestowed on it a cast of the deep-sea lead itself, but have struck no bottom.

This may be, I grant, in some part a consequence of the opacity and muddiness of my

own comprehension. Nevertheless, I cannot help thinking that to those of the clearest wit, and most penetrating judgment, the relation must appear extraordinary, and peculiar the impressions excited upon the two actors in the scene,

“Lords of their presence, and no land beside,”

by the surprising objects which would seem to have presented themselves to them.

I have besides this certain obfuscation and difficulty about the forthcoming story, been puzzled to fix a *locale*—a *locus in quo* for it, and to decide in what part of the world the strange things described as seen could have been seen, and the odd noises testified as having been heard could have been heard. But the world is a wide place, and a great deal may be contained in it which has never come across or consisted with my experience.

There is great caution observable in the narrative, and so much self-possession evinced through the adventures, and such circumspective precision, that really I am ashamed and reluctant to express doubt concerning the story.

I do not profess to answer for its truth. My readers and myself may be looked upon as nothing more than a sort of squadron of observation upon it. I should wish them to be so. One word let me *round* in their ears as to the manner in which I became possessed of this curious fragment of personal history, and these wild adventures, and I leave James Green and his Mentor and Palinurus---the "white bearded Satan," if you please, to speak for themselves.

A very ancient gentleman, whose early life had been spent at sea, in command of a trader among the Clove and Nutmeg Islands, and who was even then noted for some strange occasional flights, and, to speak mildly, took

most extraordinary views of things, becoming aware that I was occupied in collecting my logs and arranging them for the edification, possible enlightenment, and positive delectation of all such as might thereinto be curious enough to spy, sent word that he wanted to see me.

As this queer old personage had known the family of your humble servant for a long list of years, and, if report and family belief did not do him wrong, or imply injustice to us, in some sort belonged to it; I indulged him in his fancy that he could be useful to me, and for once,

“ Let him call me by my christian name, and permitted myself to dine with him.”

The consequence was that he insisted on my accepting some reminiscences of his bygone days, and which he was pleased to describe to me, and with no small solemnity, as Notes of a Voyage undertaken by him (whether by Command or not of Her Majesty, I do not know,

nor dare I enquire,) in the summer of the year 1839.

I went to him half in a sort of complacent indolence and quiet good humour, and half in doubt. This has been the result.

I do not deny that this estimable member of the learned society of the owls saw all that he describes, but I would only respectfully hint that in my opinion he must at least have looked through the wrong end of his spy-glass.*

* I am afraid that great changes would be found in the route which our simple traveller, James Green, pursued, were any adventurous ambulator to follow in his footsteps. The establishment of the Railway, with its new erections, and alteration at Woolwich, have produced considerable innovation in the whole line since the summer of 1839, the period at which James Green's adventures were penned. Something in a similar vein appeared in a weekly publication which has since obtained high public favour ; but, in justice to myself, I must intimate that I broke ground in this particular field long before the meritorious and witty periodical alluded to was thought of. James Green's *First Voyage* is published now for the first time.

The world may know that I live in the ancient, quiet, and pleasant village of Peckham ; that my mode of life keeps

“ The even tenour of its way,”

unalloyed with few cares, and with few of the disturbances, whether agreeable or otherwise, which shock the stream of other people's existence. The stream of my life indeed flows placidly and quietly, and you could well go to sleep upon its banks. Not that I have not ambition, and a laudable desire of seeing a little of what is going on, as the reader will find out by and bye.

I believe I rise, have breakfast, dine, take tea, sup, and go to bed ; and these, the great events of my day, are the events of my year. My house is my castle, and my garden my kingdom. My foot wanders not to other lands, nor am I frequently invaded. Thrones might tumble for what I cared ; and if I see the

world from my window now that I am growing old, I am well contented.

I have a neighbour like myself, and we live like brethren in a desert. He and his family are much like your humble servant, simple as lambs, harmless as doves. The world may call us fools ; but we care not for the world. We trouble nobody, and expect nobody to trouble us. We sleep in peace, and are quite satisfied to let our neighbours do the same.

It happened that one fine, lazy, sleepy afternoon in June, I slowly strolled to my friend's house. My measured knock at the door was answered by the deliberate opening of it, and I went softly in and hung up my hat on the peg in the cupboard.

I knew that I was at home, and so it was not after much pressing that I consented to stay dinner, and further consented, if I felt disinclined to go after dinner, to wait supper, and perhaps even extend my condescension so far as taking a bed. After dinner all the party, consisting of myself, and my old friend,

and his maiden sister, and a young lady, and a young man, nephew to the old gentleman, fell somehow asleep. I felt so disinclined to stir on waking, that I gave in to remaining where I was, and took tea with the family, after giving my word that their spare bed should have me for a tenant that night at least.

During tea and after it we fell into grave and profitable conversation. It turned upon various topics, and many of the wonders were introduced that the world contains.

"Is it possible," said I to James Green, my host's nephew, in pursuance of a topic which had engaged us for some time, "that you have never ventured to Greenwich, and inspected the works of art which lie between this and the far-famed Hospital? Truly, my friend, being so young a man, you have been dozing life away, and spending it to little purpose. If my worthy host would consent, and you think you would have firmness sufficient, I think I would really undertake to guide you

as far as the ancient town of Greenwich, and perhaps we might even venture upon the noble estuary which runs before it. Though I seldom venture from my home, still in this case I confess I feel a strong inclination to make a sally. There are objects, young man, that would delight your eyes, and from which one could deduce the best of instruction. Say no more about it, but solicit of your uncle the favour of a permission to set out on this expedition, and I will undertake to bring you, fate permitting, safe back again, after having shown you some things which will astonish you, and give you an idea of what is to be picked up in travel."

Not to dilate too much upon this interesting conversation, James Green and I at last got the old gentleman—

"To seal his hard consent,"

though with many protestations that we were not aware what we were about ; that we were tempting fate ; and that if the heir of his house should fall, he would hold me accounta-

ble. James Green, with the eagerness of youth, and the stirrings of sudden enterprise, quieted his scruples as well as he could, and retired early that he might be stirring betimes.

We rose early, and after a moderate breakfast bade all adieu and put on our hats. The old gentleman, his maiden sister, and his daughter, would come out to see us safe off. The old gentleman limped down the avenue as well as his gout would allow him, and when we were just disappearing elevated his pocket-handkerchief on his crutch, and waved it till we were out of sight. James I could see was almost wavering in his determination, and nearly repenting of his wish to see the world, but I encouraged and consoled him as well as I could, and continued talking rapidly till we had got some distance from the house, that he might forget his situation in attending to me, and feel not the parting till new objects were at hand to aid me in making him lose sight of it, or at least not feel it quite so pungently.

“Observe,” said I, “how all nature smiles as if delighted at the appearance of a new day ;-- how the hedges look green in the mild morning sunshine, and the hills yonder appear as if they smiled upon us and waved us encouragingly on. Hark the quiet, and mark the rustic peace and contentment which seem to reign over these favoured spots ! Truly the sight of nature is not only sweet to the eye, but full of the milk of wisdom to the philosophic contemplation.”

“But what,” said James Green, looking up through his tears, and pointing afar, “is that singular object which seems whirled along the highway that we can just discern winding in the distance ?”

“That,” returned I, “my dear young friend, is a machine constructed for the purpose of conveying people from one place to another, where speed is requisite, and the difficulties of the way discourage pedestrianism. It is a contrivance of singular art, replete with interior

comfort, and supported by a machinery which, though complex, admirably answers its purpose. It is designed, as you would see were we close to it, to render the passage easy ; to cause the superincumbent case to swing easily but at the same time securely, and insures tranquil transit where stones and other impediments occur in the line which the machine takes. I will one day show you an elevation and section of this machine, by which means you will not only understand its purposes but comprehend its details, and be let into many mechanical principles which without such aids I should be ill able to explain to you."

" Time and patience enabled us to reach the hamlet of New Cross ; and here fresh objects of interest attracted the attention of James.

" I see," said he, " a broad highway running across the serpentine road along which we have come. There are high hedges extending as far as the eye can reach, and gigantic buildings rising to the left. But what is that small, low, white tower, with a singular machine

over the door, and a tablet on which is some inscription in black letter ? On the other side I see an upright piece of timber painted white, and another but very long inscription. Before us, extending to the right and left, is a series of long poles, with a diagonal one, and a frame into which all these are fixed. These I suppose by some hidden means are made to revolve, as hinges occur in one of the side timbers. Is the machinery concealed underground, or is it concealed in the tower to our left ?”

As he spoke, a long, low apartment, richly painted and gilded, supported by the machinery I have described above, and rolled along by mechanical powers which I have somewhere seen described as wheels, advanced to the gate. As the sound announcing its approach deepened on his ear, a personage emerged from the tower with a broad-brimmed hat on his head and a fair linen cloth tied before him, into which he now and then thrust his hands with great gravity.

Upon looking more narrowly, James Green and I perceived that small bags, technically called I believe pockets, were fixed to the fair linen cloth, and that there was a jingle of something in them, which, after some consideration I set down as coin.

The machine on wheels was drawn by a pair of those singular animals called horses, and on the roof of it, different from all the other roofs I have ever seen, seeing that it was not slanting or oblique, was seated a dignified looking individual, who handled a long stick and thick string fixed to the end of it, and who had very long strips of leather in his left hand, which were passed through brass rings and attached to the animals' heads.

This machine gradually ceased to advance, and when the personage from the tower held up his hand, it stopped.

There was a jingle of something ; a square piece of paper was handed to the guide of the moveable apartment ; and with a smart

wave of the implement in his hand it rolled on.

“That,” said I, as it passed, “is one of the conveniences that are perpetually, both day and night, passing along this road. Their guides never rest, but always keep their places. Their constant toil resembles that of evil spirits condemned for sins on earth to some everlasting labour. Their wheels are heard at midnight, and in the broad hot light of the noonday sun. Clouds of dust torment them. Dogs bark at the heels of the fierce creatures they guide. The white tower which has so strongly excited your attention is a hermitage, in which certain men, like dragons in their caves, keep watch for passing wayfarers. When these are seen or heard to approach, they rush out of their holes like spiders, and only let the unfortunate people escape by bleeding them as it is called in their horrible cant phrase. Their trade is a very horrid one, but it is one exercised on all these

roads. Beware of them as you would value your happiness."

"Execrable employment!" ejaculated James Green, with all the honest fervour of youth. "Is it not enough, ye evil ones, that the wayfarers are exposed to the common perils of the road, without being subjected in addition to your diabolical attacks? Commiseration finds no place in your bosom; ye add evil to evil, and misery to misery. But," turning to me, he continued, "are there no steps taken to rid the roads of these reptiles?"

"Truly there are not," I returned, "for they are encouraged and set on by certain men who have the government within particular districts which they call parishes. But new objects of excitement attract our attention. Raise your eyes, and tell me what you see yonder."

"I see," said James, "numberless high, square buildings, and sundry towers, also a

road that goes off to the verge of sight. Before me is an immense plain, dotted with the huts of wandering tribes. Far in the distance is a mighty succession of arches, beginning in the west and extending to the east. Its extremities are lost in the clouds, and along it there approaches a black line which seems to move along with prodigious swiftness. Tremendous spectacle ! The object, as it nears us, assumes the form of an immense flying dragon dragging a long train of things behind him. I see the white sulphury smoke puffing from its jaws, and hear the panting of the awful beast. What may be the meaning of this dreadful sight ?”

“ The wonderful succession of arches you discern, beginning in the clouds in the west, and lost in a similar manner in the clouds of east, is a stupendous structure, surpassing the aqueducts of the ancient Romans, and rivalling the great wall of the mighty empire of China, itself. It was raised by the inhabitants of an

immense city that stretches far away miles from this spot to the west. Some say that magicians were employed in its erection, but of this I won't be positive.

“The dragon you saw, from whose black jaws did the clouds of white smoke issue, is one of many kept by the wonderful beings who are kings and lords of this structure. At either end, where the fabric is lost in the clouds, are they kept chained up by wonderful iron chains. They are domesticated dragons, produced in the wilds of a certain wonderful country called Birmingham, where they are caught sometimes in considerable number, and transported for this kind of work. They are regularly fed with a certain black shining substance, the consumption of which, as you may well believe, is prodigious. They are dangerous creatures, and require the greatest carefulness in their management.

“I will one day show you a picture of one of these beasts, and I would take you near

one did I not fear the sight would be too trying. I myself have gazed once, and but once, upon one of these monstrous creatures."

"But is it imagined," enquired James Green, "that it was with one of these dragons that the renowned champion, St. George, of whom I have read, fought in the old days when time had a beginning? I had thought that they had been all exterminated."

"Truly," said I, "though it would ill become me to say I am positive, we may in all probability set it down that it was with one of these things that that singular and awful combat took place."

I must not enlarge upon the many things we saw between this spot and the ancient town of Greenwich, nor upon the admiration of James Green. Suffice it to say that we arrived safe at the stairs of the renowned Hospital, and cast our eyes back to admire its magnificence.

"Truly," said I to James Green, "what dost thou see?"

"I see," said he, "piles of shapely stone, put together as if magicians had been the architects, and giants the builders. In the centre is a green plain, and on a square stage raised in the centre thereof, is a stone man with a long stick behind him. The colonades of a mighty temple rise on either side of me, and before me. Terraces extend in front, above which are rows of columns; also rising mountains clothed with clouds of wood, and an ancient castle whose battlements, hung in mid air, frown down upon the velvet sward. Upon one of the highest towers I see the head of a black giant. Is he an African sorcerer, lord of the castle, and looking out for his victims, or a gigantic porter, peering out from his watch-tower for way-worn travellers, or perplexed pilgrims?"

"That," said I, "which you have taken

for the head of a black giant, is a monstrous globe which falls on the castle at a certain hour every day. Whether a hovering geni drops it, or whether it falls from the clouds, I have hitherto had no means of ascertaining. However, it is a symbol of Time, and has a mysterious meaning attached to it did we know it, probably a remnant of Pagan worship. But behold my young friend how the rower has plied these singular implements which are made to dip in the water and are called oars, and caused his bark to near the shelly strand. Lo ! a soft crimson cushion inviteth us, and the water rippleth musically to our feet. The soft summer gales are sighing, laden with perfume, around us, and the murmur of the glassy waters before us promiseth peace, pleasure, and tranquillity, and seemeth like the low song of mermaids, sung to curly-headed Tritons in the high halls of their coral-built, wreath-hung, spar-sparkling, sea-green palaces !”

I said no more, but handed James Green into the boat. He sat down lost in an ecstasy. For the day was one which is not often seen.

“But,” said he anxiously, “are we going to tempt the perils of the dangerous deep?”

“Hush, my friend!” said I, placing my finger on my lip, “and leave matters to fortune and the stately rower. Look round now, and observe the aspect of the land, and the water. Can we progress more majestically or smoothly? Before us is the stately metropolis of Greenwich, with its multitudinous spires piercing the clouds—”

“Where are they?” interrupted James Green, looking round with an air of simplicity and bewilderment.

I continued without noticing him—

“And the plain of palaces denominated the Hospital. Behind rises a chain of mountains clothed with luxuriant wood, and perched on one of the highest rocks is the castle which

so lately attracted your attention. In that castle resides a singular personage of awful and mysterious character, called the Astronomer Royal. Little is seen of him. He rarely deigns to look from the barred windows of his lofty fortalice. He lives in dark solitude, seldom descends into the lower country, and is accustomed much to shut himself up. His followers see little of him, and always talk of him with apprehension. When the thunder rolls around the rocking turrets of his cloud-hung castle, he may condescend to step from a trap-door and walk out upon his roof, but at other times he is invisible, as invisible as the chained skeletons in his deep and dismal dungeons."

"Awful!" ejaculated James Green. "The benighted traveller, journeying through the forest, eyes the distant gleam of his window, I suppose, and spurs his wearied courser to escape the dangerous and mysterious neighbourhood."

"Truly," said I, "I fear it is so." A shudder came over me at the moment, and I don't know how it was, but I felt anxious to escape the subject.

"Did you not observe," said I, "before our bark received us, and the rowers paused upon their silver-dipping oars, a number of singular-looking personages, moving with stateliness about, and often pausing upon their ebony staffs? Their upper garments were wide and ample, of a deep blue colour, and ornamented with gold buttons. On their heads they wore coverings of an outlandish fashion, and though they had no beards, their air inspired reverence."

"Truly I did observe them," said James, "and stepped respectfully aside to let three pass. Are they dervishes or Magi, the Elders of the Town, Hierophants, or Patriarchs?"

"These mysterious old men," returned I, "have ventured, some of them, into regions where the foot of man hath never wandered.

They have seen the great Sea Serpent, have been familiar with the Old Man of the Sea, have been loved by Mermaids, and fallen into the hands of Ocean Monsters. They are Sea Kings, who have roved the earth in the days of their youth, and now live in the mighty palace amongst the columns of which you saw them wandering. Some say they have vast treasures concealed in its vaults, and have more than mortal knowledge did they choose to reveal it. They understand all languages, and are deep in science. Moreover they are skilful physicians, and sometimes effect wonderful cures. I have heard it whispered that there are vast caverns reaching from their palace to the far distant plains of the unknown region called Blackheath, and that these old men have been sometimes known to emerge from them upon it. I myself caught a glimpse of one in the distance, once when I was wandering in that extraordinary region, but he avoided me; and my grandfather has

often asserted, that, in the dusk of twilight, he saw one step forth from some concealment, and walk to and fro there for some considerable time. Besides I believe it is a tradition in the neighbourhood that they are to be seen occasionally there, though as you may suppose it is only so whispered. The anger of these Old Men is deep and deadly."

"I suppose then that when they die," said James Green, "they are propitiated as evil deities or malific genii."

"Truly it is very probable," said I, "though I never heard so, or that altars were ever raised or sacrifices made unto them. But look to your left, and tell me what thou seest."

"I see," said James, "a wide uncultivated desert, on which I can discern neither house nor tree. Innumerable flocks graze upon it. The mighty waves break on its shore, which slopes down gradually towards the water. Here and there are bays abounding in shallows

and quicksands. Scattered about I discern the cabins of shepherds. In the distance I see a mighty dome based on the clouds, and the shapes of many thin giants looming in the sea of mist. Are these their pasture grounds? and are these giants the guardians of the numerous flocks, who have left their charge for a time to hold communion with each other, or to outwatch the bear like the Chaldeans of old?"

"The tract you behold," said I, "is an immense island called the Island of Dogs. It is inhabited by a savage race, who seldom suffer themselves to be seen, and who gain their living in a way that travellers have not found out, or at least chronicled. It abounds in waste tracts of immense extent, covered with flocks and herds, and here and there studded with huts. The giants as tall as steeples you see in the distance, belong to the City of Magicians I have described to you before as lying far away to the west. But

behold how the waters widen, and the waves of the mighty ocean begin to rise around us! Had I the proper instruments I would take an observation, and discover in what part of the world we were. Our latitude must have now considerably diminished."

"Is it not possible that before we conclude our voyage," said James Green, "we shall see a whale spout."

"I trust indeed," said I, "my young friend, that, weather permitting, I shall show you that sight. But look and tell me what you see to the left."

"I see," says James, "artificial ramparts to keep out the sea, which tower to a prodigious height. Above run buildings that seem raised by no mortal hand. I see a giant looking over them, similar to those giants I saw in the distance when we were coasting the Island of Dogs. Close to the cliffs, and with its head knocking against the clouds, is a prodigious red tower, with a horizontal beam ex-

tending from the top of it, and a number of ropes or chains that seem designed for some extraordinary, and perhaps dreadful purpose. Loopholes are in the flanks of this stupendous edifice. Black letter inscriptions are in front of some of these strange places. Enlighten me, O friend! as to the meaning of all these things!"

"The prodigious tower you see," said I, "is generally understood as belonging to a certain company of giants, who are descended from the Cyclops of old, have but one eye in the middle of their foreheads, which however they can see well enough out of, and by profession are Pirates or Sea Wanderers. The tower is used as a place of incarceration for a single giant, and it is said, on good authority, the lords of it are accustomed to hang their prisoners on the beam you saw, hanging them there by the neck till their bodies be dead. My grandfather has often asserted he has seen unfortunate giants looking through the loop-

holes which caught your eye, and lower down is a place where these unfortunate wretches are broken on the wheel. In a still summer's day, you can hear the ring of the hammers like the rattle of distant thunder. The situation of this Tartarus is in the Island of Dogs, and some distance above its port. The communication is slight between this port and the Palace of the Old Men, and so the secrets of the prison house rarely take wind."

"What wonderful things have you not shown me," said James Green. "Had we not better take notes of some of these things, that we might enlighten the world when Fate ordaineth that we should return?"

"Objects of interest so crowd on us, that we should not have time," said I. "But now behold the boatman changes his course, and steers from the land. I do not see his compass, but I suppose he is directing his course aright. Behold how the tall cliffs rise above us on the other side!"

We were now nearing a rugged coast; and some little distance ahead appeared a mighty Cape, running a considerable way into the ocean. The waves seemed to rush around, and to break upon it with awful force. Above, it was tipped with green; and here and there tall plants descended the slopes, and even in some places advanced into the water. The Island of Dogs was now out of sight; before us was the breadth of the mighty ocean, the great waves rolling in the sun. Far in the distance I could descry land, rising into mountains, which appeared to hide their heads in the clouds. There was abundance of gigantic posts fixed in the sands, and towering up to a prodigious height.

While we were running down the coast, we perceived two immense wild animals with horns and tawny hides gazing at us intently. I was for steering immediately to sea, fearing that these wild creatures might make a rush at us, and come swimming towards us through

the water, though James, with the thoughtless impetuosity of youth, and in the spirit of wild adventure, was for our taking our fowling pieces, landing, and hunting the beasts up into the higher country. I overruled him, however, and we sailed cautiously forward, discovering, like Vasco de Gama in his adventurous attempts after the passage to India, one headland after the other.

The aspect of the country was wild and solitary. We could discern no symptom of inhabitants. Plains extended an immense way; but more inland the country rose, and numberless forests we could see darkening the sides of the distant mountains. We saw some strange fowls, but did not know their names. I once thought of landing, planting a flag, burying a bottle containing some of the English coins, and taking possession of the country in the Queen's name; but we found the sea run so high, and the wind blew so strongly

off shore, that after some tacks we gave up the idea and bore up.

At this moment we perceived two black winged creatures sailing majestically through the air at a considerable distance. I looked at them steadily for a considerable time, but did not well know what to make of them. They hardly appeared like vultures, nor was I inclined to set them down as condors of the Andes. James Green suggested they might be rocs—such birds as, poised in middle air, let fall stones on Sinbad the Sailor's ship and therewith sunk it. After much deliberation in my own mind, I gave up the matter as inexplicable.

We presently, at a considerable distance, perceived something dark floating on the surface of the sea, and steered towards it. From its great size and length I immediately supposed it was a shark, and James Green, in consequence, was in a considerable taking.

However I bade him keep up his courage, and prepared myself to catch the monster.

We had some cord fortunately in the vessel, and, having no pork for bait, I was determined in the difficulty to try if the boatman's straw hat would not answer the purpose equally as well. He was at first unwilling to permit of his hat becoming a *succedaneum* in this manner, and to be made a shark's dinner, and began to argue the point coolly and candidly, and at the same time with considerable tact.

After some little talk, well weighing the force of his arguments, and mollified with the reasons he adduced, I put my hand in my pocket, and handed him a half-crown in exchange for his hat. I directed him to put his helm up, and shape his course so that we might steer straight down to the at present unsuspecting monster. Meantime I coiled the cord away in the bottom of the boat, tied the hat to it, and stood up in the bows of the boat to fling it over when the

proper moment should arrive. Having heard that there was great danger in the running of the rope so swiftly over the gunnel of the vessel, I directed James Green, for want of an axe, to get out his clasp knife and be ready at a moment to cut it. To obviate the risk of setting the vessel on fire from the above reason, I desired the boatman also to be prepared with a mug of water which fortunately was with us.

Presently we swept up, and I was preparing to throw the bait, but stayed myself when I found, considerably to my disappointment, that that which we had taken for a shark was in reality nothing but a long piece of dark wood, probably a mast of some unfortunate vessel cast away upon the coast.

Having discovered our mistake, we bore up, and shortly after perceived a cloud which I thought particularly likely to convert itself into a water-spout. I called to James, and bade him look abroad; but notwithstanding

my anticipations, the cloud moved sullenly on and disappointed us.

Some distance further down the coast we perceived two or three of the black fowls I have before described. They were preying upon dead vegetable matter, and at a noise made by us they took wing and flew away.

It was at this moment that we perceived a strange sail bearing down towards us. My glass was up to my eye in a moment, and I was endeavouring to make something out of her. As she neared us, I perceived she was of prodigious size, and set her down as a vessel of war. As we concluded she would make us bring to, I took into consideration the propriety, when she boarded us, of sending letters on board, and requesting that they might be put in a train for being forwarded when land was made. But she held on without observing, or at least taking any notice that was apparent to us. She passed by so silently and mysteriously that we got frightened, and

James Green, in a faint voice, enquired if she might not be the Flying Dutchman.

"I do not altogether think so," said I, doubtfully, "since the Flying Dutchman is never seen but with foul weather along with him, and as yet we have not had much reason to complain. If I did not think her appearance suspicious, I would hail her. She is just past. I will sing out."

"Ho, the ship, ahoy—a!"

"Hillo!" she answered.

"I thought so," I said aside to James Green; — "now we shall see."

"Where are you from, and whither bound?" shouted I.

"Why, what the devil's that to you?" answered a voice from her stern, after a pause seemingly of surprise.

She swept on, and what might have been added, I could not hear. I was about making some observation, but James was pointing to

an immense castle at the side of the bank, and enquiring what in the name of all that was strange it could be.

I was unable to answer him, as I was now out of my latitude.

The castle was high, huge, and square, with loopholes, and a drawbridge which ran on the other side of it. A moat surrounded it, which in some places was very broad, and in the rear of the edifice the water widened into a lake. Part of the fortifications hung over the water. On one side were some outworks, but barbarous in their construction. An unceasing noise, like the clacking of a mill, issued from the main pile of the building.

Whether the castle belonged to an ogre, and whether the noise which we heard arose from his occupation of chopping up little innocent children to make his sausages, I have no means of determining.

Thinking that possibly the last supposition

might be the true one, and that the country was inhabited by Anthropophagi, or man-eaters, we turned shuddering away and pursued our voyage.

A little lower down we perceived some of the natives staring at us, and saw a kind of creek, where several of their boats were hauled up. Keeping at a wary distance, and wishing to have no communication with them, though we were sadly in want of fresh water, we kept on our course, and soon lost sight both of the mysterious building and the savages.

We were now overtaken by an immense moving castle, which cut its way through the water with a prodigious noise. It was high and black, and, peeping through the battlements, we could discover several brass guns. A huge black chimney rose from its centre, from which the dark smoke issued in volumes. Poles were raised on its roofs, which were

secured with strong cables. While we with elevated hands were gazing with wonder at it, it shot by, and soon left us far behind.

"Truly this country," said I, "seems a prodigious country. There are immense castles on its waters, and cannibals in its plains. Its coasts are rugged, and against them the great waves beat. Its mountains are high and clothed with wood, and its marshes abound in wild fowl. But fortunately enough we have not as yet perceived any sharks, though to the disadvantage of the place as a colony of the British Empire, as far as I can discover its seas have no whales. On our return to England I must report what I have seen, though at the risk of being set down as a teller of untruths."

The coast still held on as far as the eye could reach. I was determined, though like Columbus at the risk of mutiny, for there was grumbling on the part of the boatman, to push my discoveries as far as possible. We did not

feel very uncomfortable except for the want of water and provisions.

I proposed that we should land and endeavour to procure some roots, but James Green was against it, urging the wild appearance of the country and the savage character of its inhabitants. Perhaps he was right.

We now doubled a promontory, which ran, though not sharply, into the sea, and found we were in a great ocean, a current of which now took our vessel and carried it swiftly forward.

Wishing to keep in with the shore as much as possible, I proposed that we should haul our wind and make a board towards it. This we were able to effect at precisely twenty minutes past three o'clock, P.M. As we neared it, we perceived a canoe passing, with two of the natives in it. I wished to speak them, if possible, and to ascertain if they understood any known language. To this end, we steered

so as to meet them ; and as they were looking, apparently with great curiosity, at our vessel, I called to them in Latin, desiring them to answer if they understood me, and tell me in what part of the country we were. All that they did was to stare at each other, and pass on, hallooing something to us which we did not catch when they had got some distance. I was perplexed, and was obliged to put up with my disappointment.

One thing was clear, that the country was inhabited, and that the inhabitants were a savage race. Probably we were the first Europeans who had ever visited them.

We were now running close along the shore. It was green and fruitful. Savannas extended as far as we could see, reaching to the higher grounds.

Flocks of wild animals of a horned kind were grazing in the plains, while fowls of different species were hovering and cawing

about the cliffs, where probably they had their nests.

As we ran along, we could here and there perceive the carcasses of some wild four-footed animal, half buried in the ooze, and giving an air of frightfulness to the aspect of the coast.

I made particular observation of one. Its colour was tawny and white ; it looked meagre and wretched ; its ears were long, and its jaws open, disclosing fangs. It appeared to me to be of the *canis* species, and I made a drawing of it on the spot, which I have preserved and brought to England. How the animal could have perished here I could not divine. Whether it had pursued fish into the water, and the fish had struggled away to sea with the creature and it was not able to extricate itself ; whether it had been brought there by eagles ; whether it was in reality a sea animal, and had been cast up by the waves, or whether

it had not been thrown there by the natives, were questions which I had no means of determining.

The sky had been overcast some time, and appearances induced me to conclude that a storm was approaching. It came up swiftly. The wind rose, and blew in strong angry gusts. The sea in a short time was running terribly high, and we were forced to scud before it. To add to our confusion, the rain came down in torrents, pouring into our vessel as if all the demons of the air were leagued against us. After an intermission the rain came down as if a floodgate had been just opened upon us, or like a pail of water, and I called to James Green, telling him with joy that we had at last met a waterspout.

He was so anxious to see it, and was so delighted with its sublimity, that he stayed on deck all the time of its continuance, and unfortunately in his enthusiasm got drenched to

the skin. In a short time, however, the rain cleared, the clouds broke away, and the sun came out, illuminating the water far and wide, and disclosing at some little distance along the coast a harbour and small town.

With joy we put ourselves before the wind, and steered towards the town under all the sail we could crowd, which was two pocket-handkerchiefs. As we neared the strand, I saw a group of natives with their hands in their pockets looking at us, and two or three boats made fast to one another to prevent them drifting away in the current. James Green and I got out of the vessel, thankful for our narrow escape, and walked up the shore, which was rough and stony. When we got to the top of the ridge, the tide being down, the natives, who had not moved a step, stood staring at us. There was one among them who seemed somewhat more civilised than the rest, and to him I addressed myself, first in

Latin, and then in Arabic. He shook his head, and then turned himself to one of his companions, and said—

“Jim, here’s some Frenchmen.”

O! at the sound of my own tongue, how my heart beat.

“What,” said I, “is this not a perplexing dream? Are you — can you be my own countrymen? Are you Englishmen?”

“To be sure we are, master,” answered he, “and as you now speaks a little reasonable, I suppose you are, too.”

“Then where in the name of all that is good are we?” said I. “What is this port called? and what sort of people are they who inhabit this country?”

“Why, sir,” returned the Englishman, “this arn’t no port at all. This house that you see here is the Marquis of Wellington, Ferry House; and there’s another on the

other side, the Prince Regent, that the boat plies to. You're at Woolwich, sir, if you don't know it already, and the country is inhabited by a very honest people, at least I hope they are, for I'm one of them. Perhaps you've never been here before."

"No, I have not indeed, friend, and never wish to be again ; though the country seems a pleasant country, and the inhabitants appear not quite so savage as I expected to find them."

To shorten my story, as James Green stood shivering and shaking in his wet clothes, I caused him to enter the house, and to borrow a suit, leaving his own clothes, and a sovereign, as a deposit for the due return of his change. I waited for him outside, and had a glass of ale brought me.

It is sufficient to state that by great exertion we contrived to reach Peckham that night, and rung the bell at my friend's house, delighted

that we had so well surmounted the perils of our journey, and of our voyage.

James had seen so much that he went not to bed that night, but sat up, relating the many wonderful things to which he had been witness.

A SKETCH IN THE LONDON DOCKS.

“WHAT o’clock is it?—now, let me see,” said I, as I slackened sail, as my freinds—mine excellent freinds, for I delight in calling sailors my friends—the mariners would say; or, as I fell off in my pace, as others of this walking world—this pedestrian paradise, would phrase it.

I was passing round the south-western side of St. Paul’s Churchyard; for I had come up

to town upon a little business of my own, and I had mine eye upon the broad faced clock in the south-western steeple, with its giant hands and its large letters, a regular first-rate of a clock, that would have served an Admiral of the Fleet.

One o'clock—or nearly one—of a fine May afternoon, and the sun a-shining, as the cockneys would call it.

I had been attracted to the clock by a peculiar magnetic sympathy, I suppose, as I passed it, and deeming as I was now upon the spot, and in the very presence of one of the great timekeepers of clock and watch-winding London, that it was an opportunity for correcting my own time which should not be let slip from idleness, I, at some trouble from unbuttoning my coat and pulling out my watch, referred to my own particular chronicle of time, and discovered, somewhat to my mortification, that I was a minute and a half too fast.

I was at a *nonplus*, (excuse the phrase, gentle and elegant reader,) in regard to the manner in which I should reduce my watch to plain-going propriety, without stopping short in the street, and in the middle of the pavement, too, and setting the hand back again.

Far from wishing to attract all that attention, and that interest in my movements, as well as the movement of my watch, which I knew would follow in the public mind from my getting out my key and applying it to the key hole with a grave face in the open street, I determined for a man of exactness to play a cowardly part, and to delay the settlement between me and Time, and the getting back the balance of the minute and a half which he owed me.

So the watch was restored to my pocket, and I buttoned up my coat with a quick, business air, as if I was duly impressed with the remembrance that I was in the city.

One o'clock;—capital time for my inspection, and I won't go back—if not till morning, at all events not until five o'clock.

I was bound on a voyage of contemplation to the neighbourhood of the Docks, and I actually designed passing into them with this purpose if I could.

The uninitiated reader shall now, if he pleases, have a pretty tolerably representation of these places, with characteristic sketches pencilled on the spot, and whole length portraits if the living productions to be found in them, *aquainted*.

I wound my devious way through narrower ways than knave ever wriggled himself through, enclosed by two walls of warehouse, and condemned to a lazy pace sometimes, as I dodged at the stern of a lumbering waggon with the carter on the pavement. Men popping about from one side to the other, the interruptions of porters, draymen, and compulsory descents into gutters, and ascents into doorways and up church steps, were the least of my miseries, until I emerged

upon that sloping esplanade of wooden posts, rumbling stones, dirty gravel, glazed hats, and soap and waterless faces, Tower Hill, with its Trinity House on the right hand, and its black Tower, and Tower buildings, with a peeping soldier in a red coat and fur cap, on the left.

Making a *reconnaissance* of this Julius's stone jug, as it may be styled, or, to be more directly uncivil, "London's lasting shame," which Gray, the poet, denounceth it as, at as safe a distance as the iron railing and the mud of the moat, the once projected flower garden, would permit, I left the Mint, with its *façade* of cold stone, on my right, and voyaged towards St. Catherine's Dock House.

St. Catherine's Dock is a very fine dock ; but you feel cramped up in it ; shut up in a box with ships and spars :—you seem caught in the web of ropes ; that is to say when the Docks are crowded.

With a reflection something like this, I left

the St. Catherine's Docks, and, passing on down Pennington Street, soon found myself at the gates of the London Dock.

There is something imposing in the very stones here ; but it is an effect of a peculiar character. A great court yard, or esplanade, whichever it may be called, certainly the reverse of smooth,—with a tall, notched flagstaff in the centre of it,—you discover after you have passed through the open space in front of the dock, which is bounded on one side by a brick wall with sundry openings in it — a wicket gate on the right reminding one of the entrances to a debtor's prison, with its display of spikes somewhat kept in the back ground, not to too sharply call misfortune to our remembrance, nor to hint the curtailment of that which is generally liked for as long as possible—your liberty. Small boards are fixed on either side of this gate, and some stand on the ground, and others are disposed about, on which you read announcements of the depar-

tures, and of the particular attractions of ships.

“ Will meet with quick despatch, the well-known, fast sailing, first class Barque, *Vanguard*, for Sidney, burthen, 600 Tons.”

“ For Bombay and China, the fine, frigate-built Ship, *Hindostan*, 800 Tons, burthen. Matthew Cormack, Commander, lying in the London Dock. This ship has great height between decks, and excellent accommodations for passengers, carries an experienced surgeon, and will sail on the 10th of May, embarking her passengers at Gravesend on the 11th; and will call at Portsmouth. For freight, or passage, apply to the commander on board, or to———”

Glancing at this outer wall, the eye catches red names, and black names : — Alerts, Arrows, Arabs, Brahmins, Apollos, James Thompsons, and Helen Marrs.

Outside this gate are a few loiterers, consisting of carmen, dirty women, and a sailor or

two. Jingling carts, and hard-working horses, stand in a row ; and looking back westward we see a Portsmouth, or a Blue-Town-Sheerness-looking street, of which the principal components are little low public houses, with the " Jolly Sailor," or the " Ship," or her blessed Majesty, Queen Victoria, herself, perhaps, as large as life, for a sign. There are slop shops, too, with round fronts, and dull glass windows—tarpaulin hats, and odds and ends ; stores for old iron ; and a crowd of squalid tenements redolent of salt herrings, tobacco, and small picture books.

Averting his eyes from this eccentric prospect, a stranger will boldly, and with an air as if it was all quite familiar, and as if he had business in the " docks," pass through this little gate, with " customs " on one side of him, the Scylla, and " police " on the other, the Charybdis, of this Plutonic, and certainly not as far as either its learning or its liking is concerned, Platonic region. Some sulky-looking

men in aprons, whom it is better not to look at, and whom, if it be not too Irish to say so, as you walk through, looking straight before you, you do not see, guard, or seem to guard, which is much about the same thing to the discoverer, this strait, like the fortresses of the Calpe and Abyla of the south and ancient world.

A constant tide of people, at least in the day-time, and in the hours of business, is going through this estuary of brick and stone ; and among others, which is the best way of going everywhere, you get through, though with some expectation, while adventuring the passage, of being suddenly caught by the elbow and asked where you are going.

But you are now in, and admiring a pond of casks which there is in the middle of this square place, with collections of other casks all lying close together in various directions.

Large, heavy-looking buildings, which have an extremely serious expression, are on your

right hand, with their doors open, and various mercantile and dock-like inscriptions written upon them in large letters.

Before you are directions to the North Quay ; to the West Quay ; first berth ; second berth ; to the new jetty ; to the new bason ; and to the old bason—and if there were a public house in the docks, we might expect to see, considering the general blackness hereabouts, a civil reference to the “Old Water Jug.” You see the warehouses stretching away dim and dirty ; you make your way over pebbly streets with no houses, and find yourself on the wharf, with a long roof above you, reaching out as far as you can discern, and an abundance of timber posts, and pillars, and beams, and woodwork, all of which look as if they had never had a coat of paint since Noah pitched his ark down, which perhaps he did in the London Dock of his day.

You are now fairly in “the Docks,” and on the quay of the great London Dock.

There is a confused mass of ships before you, close to your face. You look upon immense black hulls, with their dingy timbers, their channels, their chains and bolts, and their dead eyes pierced for the laniard, making one fancy a resemblance in them to nigger heads strung up in a row for his dinner-like onions, by some black giant of an enchanter with blood thirsty propensities.

You wonder how these great castles, as they appear, could have been brought in and packed so closely together ; and you seem to admire still more how any one of them could get out, particularly if an inside one. You appear as much puzzled with seeing them in the place you find them, as while you open your eyes with astonishment at the old trick of the reel in the bottle. All is a perspective of ships, with a forest of masts and lighter spars, and an immense net of rigging, interlaced and seemingly inextricably tangled up together. You cannot dissociate, and you

cannot individualise. You make nothing distinct, except the gigantic cranes, as they swing in and out, creaking, and shrieking, and raising with their hooks, like monstrous fish hooks, and their straining chains, weights like small hills.

I turned aside after contemplating the labyrinth of ships, and, rounding the north-western corner of the dock, I passed down the north wharf. Here was the same sort of scenery to be encountered, with such modifications as the nature of that which was being transferred from the hold of the ships to the warehouses permitted of.

There was a large proportion of solid bustle, mixed with some looseness of action, and gazing on the part of the men I saw at work, when they had not their hands full, as the saying is, and were waiting for the crane to swing forward again over the decks of the ships.

Two or three times as I progressed down the narrow pavement, with its off side, as it

may be styled, sloping upwards to give a more secure footing, and greater purchase, when any one should be leaning over with some purpose which was to occupy the hands—several times, I repeat, I was necessitated to look forward and take my bearings, in order to ascertain my way, and not be taken aback with some obstruction which would effectually stop me, not that I feared an exposure of my ignorance as to my whereabouts, and the peculiar behaviour that to make you pass without observation as a stranger, which is felt irksome, you should be prepared to practise in such emergencies. This is the sort of bearing which should prevail in these, if the word may be excused, technicated localities, as I think they may justly be denominated. I understand the necessity of caution in one's mien when one is ignorant of the whys and the wherefores of any place in which you may find yourself. I seldom take a step without that sort of con-

sideration of ours as to how a thing would look if we were out of ourselves.

Barrels in disorder, with the hoops hanging loose about them, bales lying about carelessly disposed, things put—one might almost aver intentionally in the way to stop the gangway, as we may designate the avenue in salt-water phrase ; great rusty chains, and rough-looking men in dirty aprons, and caps flattened into all manner of angles, and beaten into every conceivable shape, cruciform, ensiform, pyri-form, are the characteristics of a wharf in a dock.

A stranger is somewhat disturbed by a cloudy consciousness he has of great weights over his head, and complaining chains about him, whining wheels and straining ropes in motion everywhere, threatening continually to let fall something ominous to crumple him up, even supposing the precipitation upon him, from the holding on of the tackling, not to be complete. You feel in the way here:—

one not wanted; as if you were trespassing on forbidden, aye, and enchanted ground, where you are glanced at as an animal from another part of the world, or a specimen of another creation. You feel that none of the folks you see can have anything in common with you, and you are penetrated poignantly with the persuasion that their activity is a reproach to your lounge, and your happy condition of contemplative quiescence.

That you are simply observant—that you have no actual, no positive business in the place, you try hard to conceal! and if you can play a part, you may be able to succeed in passing yourself off as looking out for a ship for some quarter of the globe, no matter which. To this end, you must *squint* at some of the ships knowingly; taking off your hat and scratching your head is good.

Amidst these difficulties, sometimes obliged to make a *detour* round a heap of bulky things; sometimes even forced to intrude into the

dingy twilight of one of the wharf warehouses, with its large chalked boards, or slates, its cyclopean scales, its dust, and dirty paint ; not infrequently compelled to step up upon boards, and twine myself round butts with a circular sort of insinuating of my leg after my body, when I had contrived to plant one foot on the other side of the bulk interposing itself as if to forbid further passage ; combating these perplexities, I managed to reach the farther end of the dock, and to pass in comparative ease before the tobacco warehouse to the swivel bridge.

I dread tiring my reader with a detail of what I encountered in my progress round on the other side of the great sheet of water, occupied as it was with craft of all kinds, including lighters and unwieldly barges. Nevertheless, at every step I found something new.

I can have no reciprocity of feeling with that man, who would "go from Dan to Beer-

sheba and say it is all barren." Perhaps another person might have entered this extraordinary dock, and seen nothing in it but wood and dirty stones—mere wood and dirty stones.

If we restrict ourselves to the simple surface which may present itself—if we cannot see an inch into the ground, much less a yard, and sometimes through a deal board—if we must confine ourselves to mere positive bulk, to just so much as we can feel, and extend our arms to enclose and take the measure of—if we must always come to this leadlike conclusion, which sinks plump down through everything, simply to fix itself to an absolute and kindred flatness of solidity which is to have nothing beyond it; why then the great globe itself is no more than a monstrous heap of dirt, and the sooner we starve ourselves into what we are in our own naked, unaccommodated, unprovided selves, the better!

But I have no disposition, because I saw—or thought I saw—a great deal, to inflict the

whole of my experience upon the reader, who, if he pleases, has the opportunity of going and seeing just as much for himself, with the additional advantage, not a contemptible one, of being impressed in his own person, even should he have some inconvenience to complain of in his search for the new and the instructive.

I in some style compassed the circuit of the dock, for I felt as much out of my element here as I did the first day I stepped on board a man of war, and came up northwards towards the point from which I set out. I entered upon the mysteries of the jetty, a broad platform which runs out into the water as a sort of pier or mole, with a covered erection, or long shed, prolonged nearly its entire length, and many ships lying moored head and stern together on each side.

I found here some magnificent vessels, rearing their black, flanking walls, as they looked, cut into portholes on the upper deck, through

which I occasionally saw a grim cannon peeping out, with a latent malignity which might have characterised a serpent in ambush with its lithe neck and glistening scales. The open mouths of these metal-throated "dogs of war"—and a terrible bark these "dogs" have, too, sometimes——seemed to gape surly impatience at their long slumber. Before the suspected blood-thirsty disposition of one or two, I saw placed the prudently mollifying intervention afforded by a lowered port, one of the series of shutters which serve as eyelids, closed in truce, to those glaring balls, the Argus optics of the battered ship, whose glances are flames.

There seemed much less business doing here, from some reason. Most of the ships were of large size, and some among them were newly painted; the glossy black was contrasted with the bright white ribband, and the sills of the portholes and the deck carpentry were coloured green.

To every vessel was a means of entrance attached, comprised for the most part of a

broad board conducting between an entrance port with ornamental mahogany, and brass rails commodation ropes. I caught glimpses, through the openings, of deck scenery, if I may so broadly term it, with companion-heads, skylights, hencoops, binnacles, and tasty hurricane-houses abaft, washed clean down, and with the lacquerwork polished to brilliancy ; and forward I discerned ruder dispositions, and positive incommodiousness, with an accumulation or confusion of deck ladders, windlasses, cables, hills of rope, great chains, and spare spars.

Attached to the near rigging, if we may transfer a term of the road to the arrangements of a dock, I descried many white paper placards, from a perusal of a few of which I gathered that these ships were bound on Australian voyages, and that the ports for which they were destined were either Sydney, Port Philip, Launceston, or Hobart Town.

Some announced the best arrangements for emigrants, and were rather diffuse in their recommendations.

The majority of these "portly argosies"—these artificial inhabitants of the deep, were first class barques, their character marked distinctly out by the slender cutter-fashioned mizen mast, with its extending boom and long gaff, slim in its sloping extension.

Mates in caps and blue jackets were gossiping on deck with shoregoing visitants :—some with papers in hand were talking of the items and components of cargo.

The few seamen I saw handling ropes, did their work with apparent laziness and an easyminded indifference.

One or two men I perceived aloft, busied in tarring down, or in repairing the rigging, or scraping masts.

But as I stood leaning up against a bulky post, which had doubtless in its time borne

many a strain from many a cable, there came upon my ear, from a remote part of the forest of masts, as which the scene might have been most correctly characterised, the lively click of the pauls, with pauses between each succession of sounds, and the musical "yeo, heave ho!" intimating to one, in a language which is rarely mistaken, that a loaded ship, her fore-topsail loose, and her busy decks alive with people and noisy with voices, was clearing out from the crowd of ships, the intervention of whose maze of ropes prevented me seeing the new voyager, or making out the direction she was taking.

I could not help contemplating with curiosity these giants which I saw, in all their sturdy pride and reposing magnificence, before me. Powerful did they look, with their burly sides and their towering masts, as if no weight of water should tear apart their timbers, nor any force of wind bring down those pliant,

yielding spars. They are here now in dock, thought I—

“Cabin’d, crib’d, confined,”—

evidently out of their place, in comparative puddles of water, where gales never come, nor rocks lie hid. They are fenced by granite bastions from the risks which are destined them without. But this is a state of inglorious quietness, and secure parade; which is only to prepare them for the campaign on which they are set aside as soon to enter. They are now as warriors sheltered within the stone defences of a great fortress, enjoying their *otium cum dignitate* previous to their setting out to take a part in that war which is already declared, and in which it is anticipated they will cut a figure. They are arming for the combat—trumpet blasts and charges in the shape of squalls and storms, are assembling and congregating to occupy them out of the adamantine cincture in which they are

at present protected. Within all is security, though it is the security of watchfulness, and that of peace, but peace when prepared for war.

Dull, dead, and noiseless as are now these, as we shall call them, dumb children of the ocean—these monster-births, which, however, shrink into their true insignificance, and into that which we may designate their natural size, when like specks they float upon the broad surface of the open sea—deserted and forgotten as they now seem, cranes and cradles, as far as they are at present concerned, idle for them, shortly how different will it be : there will be crowds on pier heads, eyeing with interest every operation which goes to loosen the ties which bind the goodly ship to the land she is leaving.

I followed in my mind's eye, along the magically lighted road of imagination, the whole story of the ship, from the closing up of the hatches when the last of the lightest part of

the cargo was deposited in that prison in which it was to remain, until on sunny shores, and with a different sky overhead, the process of unloading was to commence. How many days would measure out the track of that noble ship in time's sea ! with the dim lights of regret sinking on that fading shore her imprisoned inmates were regarding, passing and waning gradually into the blank of distance, and the far off gleam of starry beacons, in the blue Indian skies, rising afterwards in the bright east, to remind the lonely wanderer of that long space of memory over which he must cast his backward glance, to return to that land the very quitting of which has subsided in his mind to a dream.

I seemed to possess already the experience of the coming voyage of the vessel I was looking upon. I appeared put forward in time. I saw a history of the sea, in which the image of this gallant ship, under varying circumstances, was constantly repeated:—now with all

sail, set a snowy cloud in the bright wide blue ; next, heaving on the green rolling waters, like a pasteboard ship upon a canvas sea. Anon I saw her embayed in an amphitheatre of mighty cliffs, shooting up like the eternal ramparts of the stronghold of the anarchy, Time, himself. But a gloomier picture presented itself, and amidst the hollow roll of the far-circling thunder, I saw the vessel reel, and toss, and tumble upon the giant waves, and heard her iron timbers groan, and the wild winds howl, as the storming waters essayed in fury to scale her embattled sides. There was a heart broke in every plunge !

From these reflections my attention was called off by seeing a sailor come up close to the spot on which I was standing, with a bundle which he laid down when he arrived at the foot of one of the boards I have described as introducing to the ships.

He was a young man of about eight-and-

twenty. His face was embrowned by exertion, and by the weather.

He had small, good, marine features enough, with a flattish nose, and quick, dark eyes, with little eyebrow ; his mouth and the lower part of his face, the muscles being constantly in motion, shewed quickness, and an adroit, knowing sort of consciousness of the particular place in which he found himself, and of the things round him.

He had on his head a little round-brimmed hat, with a dapper flat crown, and a narrow black ribbon fluttering. This was stuck smartly on one side.

His hair was curly ; he had besides a blue cloth jacket, cut small in the waist, blue trousers hanging down about his ankles with the true nautical freedom, shoes, striped stockings, and check shirt, with the collar turned down and displaying a sinewy neck and a pointed chin.

He gave a glance round before he looked at the ship, and then he jauntily clapped the palms of his hands together, extending the fingers.

He looked brisk, and on the alert. In a minute he called aboard.

“Ho, there ! Tom Davis !”

“Aye, aye,” replied a distant voice, seemingly buried in the depths of the ship ; and shortly Tom Davis, a brother Tar, made his way to the bulwark, and I saw his head over the ridge.

“O, is that you, Bill Docket ? Where are you off to, just now ?”

“Why,” was the answer, “I’m going aboard the Ardent to ship this bundle, and then I’m off out away into the north of town to say good bye to a cousin of mine afore I starts.— So I looked round to see if I could do anything for you as I went along.”

“Thankee, Bill ! no, you can’t. But when do you sail ?”

“ To-morrow morning, six o'clock, with the tide. I shall come,” added Bill, “ and shake hands with you to-night. We may meet again here this time next year. But I'm rather in a hurry just now.”

“ Aha ! Bill, this cousin of yours—she's a sweetheart, I know,” cried Tom.

“ You know nothing of the sort,” called out Bill, laughing as he caught up his bundle and walked away.

And this is how, thought I, the visit *pour prendre congé* is paid in the docks. It resolves itself into much about the same thing, whether it be paid to a duke or a dustman.

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THE END.