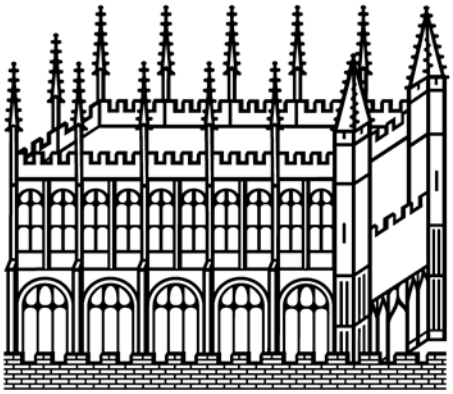

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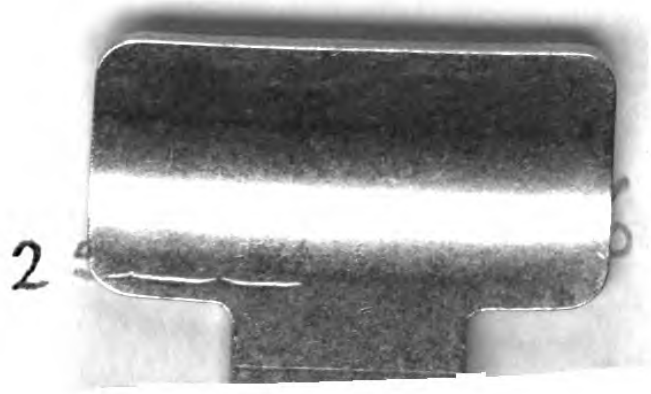

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The KINGS TREASURIES
OF LITERATURE

GENERAL EDITOR
SIR A·T· QUILLER COUCH

EDWARD JOHN TRELAWNY
From a sketch by Seymour Kirkup

NEW YORK E·P·DUTTON AND COMPANY

THE ADVENTURES OF A YOUNGER SON

BY EDWARD JOHN TRELAWNY

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. COLLINS

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INTRODUCTION

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World-wide liberty's life-long lover,
Lover no less of the strength of song,
Sea-king, swordsman, hater of wrong.

SWINBURNE.

EDWARD JOHN TRELAWNY, author and adventurer —friend of Shelley, and one of the last of the buccaneers—was born in 1792, three years after the fall of the Bastille, and died in 1881, within seven years of the Jubilee of Queen Victoria. He came of a well-to-do family. Of his mother, sisters, and elder brother he tells us little; his father, Colonel Charles Trelawny, he paints as a miserly tyrant, whose brutality he regards as having turned him while still a boy into a rebel against all authority.

At the age of eleven he was sent to a school kept by "one of those pedagogues who had implicit faith in his divining rod, which he kept in continual exercise, applying it on all doubtful occasions." He neglected his lessons, and took the lead in sports and mischief. After two years his school career was brought to a sudden end. He had become the ringleader against an unpopular master, and when sent to solitary confinement tried to set the house on fire. The headmaster dispatched him home under a guard, and his father entered him forthwith in the Royal Navy.

He was fond of the sea, and always to the fore-

front in times of peril. But discipline on a man-of-war in those days was harsh, and Trelawny's passionate and independent spirit was continually bringing him into conflict with his superior officers. His chief consolation was reading. He tells us that he seized every occasion for borrowing books, and every leisure moment for reading them, especially old plays, voyages and travels. He was strongly moved by Captain Bligh's narrative of the voyage of the *Bounty* and the mutiny of the crew: "I detested him for his tyranny, and Christian was my hero. I wished his fate had been mine, and longed to emulate him." He also studied drawing and navigation, and collected all the information he could about the East Indies.

After several cruises to different parts of the world he reached Bombay. While ashore he took revenge on one of the officers, who had ill-treated a friend of his, by giving him a severe beating; deserted his ship; and threw in his lot with a Dutch-American called De Ruyter, who was in command of a privateer under the French flag. A short acquaintance with this man had sufficed to exert an extraordinary influence on the lad's imagination, and to rouse that hero-worship which in later years showed itself in his admiration of Shelley. De Ruyter treated him as an equal, and Trelawny responded with unlimited confidence. "For the first time I was impressed with the superiority of a human being. . . . In every trifling action he evinced a manner so off-hand, free, and noble, that it looked as if it sprang new and fresh from his own

individuality; and everything else shrank into an apish imitation."

Trelawny was now only seventeen years of age, but mature in body and mind. De Ruyter, after aiding him in his escape from Bombay, put him in charge of a companion vessel; and the larger part of the *Adventures of a Younger Son* recounts Trelawny's and De Ruyter's fortunes during the years in which they sailed the eastern seas together. Raids on pirates' strongholds; the capture of East Indiamen; fights with English frigates; storm and shipwreck; tiger hunts; and marriage with an Arab girl—the lovely, affectionate, courageous, devoted Zela—make a story which in simple, vigorous and vivid language carries along the reader with breathless interest and rivals the most exciting novel.

"Rivals the most exciting novel"—for, when one has finished reading it, the question inevitably intrudes "How far is it true?"—though the answer to this question does not matter from the point of literature. To confirm all the details of the story by such evidence as would be required in a court of law is impossible. Of course Trelawny, out of a mass of experiences, had, like every artist who writes autobiography, to select and to arrange. But no errors or inconsistencies have been discovered which cannot be accounted for by the circumstances that the book was written twenty years after the events which it describes; that as far as we know Trelawny had not kept a diary; and that there would not have been

any log of the voyages of the privateer vessels in which he sailed to which he could refer. In Trelawny's correspondence with Mary Shelley and others we can trace the genesis of the book. He says, when first mentioning the project, in letters[1] which he could never have expected to become public, that his intention is "a history of my life—to be written to the extent of my ability clearly and fearlessly"; and later—"My life is not for the amusement of women; it is not a novel." But the strongest evidence of Trelawny's veracity is given by his later, and still more famous, book—*Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron*. The *Recollections* forms the Second Part of that complete history of his life up to about 1829 which he originally contemplated. It is admitted to be one of the most valuable contemporary documents we possess on the later Shelley-Byron epoch, and its truthfulness both as regards characterisation and events has never been seriously assailed. The *Adventures of a Younger Son* we are justified in regarding as also true in spirit and in fact.

The *Adventures* ends with the death of Zela and the departure of De Ruyter on a secret mission to Italy with which Napoleon had entrusted him. Trelawny returned to England—this would be about 1813, when he was still only twenty-one years of age—with the intention of rejoining De Ruyter later. But they were never to meet again. De Ruyter was

[1] *Letters of Edward John Trelawny* edited by H. Buxton Forman (Clarendon Press, 1910).

killed shortly afterwards in an engagement with an English frigate.

A gap of some seven years intervenes between the conclusion of the *Adventures* and the opening of the *Recollections*. We know very little of Trelawny's life during this period except that he married—apparently unhappily, to judge from his own passing reference—"The fatal noose was cast about my neck; my shaggy mane trimmed; my hitherto untrammelled back bent with a weight I could neither endure nor shake off; my light and springy action changed into a painful amble—in short I was married."

In 1820, at the age of twenty-nine, while travelling in Switzerland, he read Shelley's *Queen Mab*, and met Shelley's cousin, Medwin. Fired with Shelley's poetry and the account of his life, in the following year he went to Italy to seek the poet's acquaintance. Mary Shelley has left on record in a letter to a friend the impression Trelawny made on her—"A kind of half-Arab Englishman, whose life had been as changeful as that of Anastasius, and who recounts the adventures of his youth as eloquently and well as the imagined Greek. He is clever; for his moral qualities I am yet in the dark. He is a strange web which I am trying to unravel. I would fain learn if generosity is united to impetuousness, nobility of spirit to his assumption of singularity and independence. He is six feet high: raven-black hair, which curls thickly and shortly like a Moor's; dark-grey and expressive eyes; overhanging brows; upturned lips, and a smile

which expresses good-nature and kind-heartedness. His shoulders are high like an Oriental's; his voice is monotonous, yet emphatic; and his language, as he relates the events of his life, energetic and simple, whether the tale be one of blood or horror or of irresistible comedy."

Trelawny at once felt for Shelley an enthusiastic admiration, and was in intimate relations with the family during the six months that ended in Shelley's death by drowning. It was he who found the dead body; conveyed the news of the tragedy to Mary; lit the funeral pyre; carried the ashes to be buried in Rome; provided Mary with money to return to England; and throughout the fifty years more he was himself to live never wavered in whole-hearted devotion to the memory of his friend's character and genius.

In 1823 he sailed with Byron to take part in the Greek struggle for independence. After Byron's death he attached himself to the party of the insurgent chief Odysseus, whose sister he married (his previous marriage having apparently been dissolved by death or divorce). Odysseus was captured and killed, and Trelawny himself narrowly escaped assassination by two Englishmen. The instigator, who had accepted service under Trelawny, and been bribed by the government, was instantly shot by one of the guards; the life of the other—a half-witted creature—Trelawny, though desperately wounded, and in intense pain, magnanimously spared. After a

long convalescence Trelawny returned to England about 1827.

In 1829, helped by some literary friends, he set to work on the *Adventures of a Younger Son.* Further aid was given later by Mary Shelley and Horace Smith; as we know by Trelawny's letters, his grammar, spelling and punctuation were erratic. The book was published anonymously in 1831, but the authorship did not long remain a secret. It went into several editions, and was translated into German and into French (in Dumas's journal *Le Mousquetaire*).

In London literary society he became a well-known figure. Among his friends, besides Horace Smith and Mary Shelley, were Landor, Charles Armitage Brown, D'Orsay, Brougham, Bulwer, and the beautiful and witty Mrs. Norton. In 1833 he visited America, and swam across the river at Niagara between the rivers and the falls.

His marriage with the sister of Odysseus, by whom he had a daughter, was dissolved by mutual consent, and he married again, but again unhappily. Trelawny had very many fine qualities, including courage, candour, integrity, warmheartedness, generosity; he seems to have been a conscientious father; he was certainly a loyal and devoted friend; in money and affairs he was businesslike, in his tastes simple—for the larger part of his life almost a vegetarian and a teetotaller; but like many sorts and conditions of men he was not fitted for matrimony—if we except the brief and romantic episode of his free life with

Zela. As Mary Shelley said to him, when at one time he made a tentative offer of marriage to her—"You belong to all women."

About 1846 he settled in Monmouthshire, where he devoted himself to the development of an estate he had bought. In 1858 he published the *Recollections*. In 1870 he moved to Sompting near Worthing. He was regarded as the last distinguished survivor of the Shelley-Byron age. Millais painted him in "The North-West Passage"; Landor introduced him into one of his dialogues; and George Meredith portrayed him as "The Old Buccaneer" in *The Amazing Marriage*.

Up to the last he retained his outspokenness, his unconventionality, his independence in thought and action. At the age of eighty-one he wrote to Claire Clairmont—Mary Shelley's half-sister, with whom he had carried on an affectionate correspondence for half a century—"I have a very cold bath every morning, and then go out with my shirt sleeves turned up and work in the garden. I ride and drive, and in the summer bathe off the beach and can't believe in my age." During the last years he became interested, through his friend W. M. Rossetti, in the poetry of Blake.

He died in 1881, at the age of eighty-eight. In accordance with his wishes he was cremated, and his ashes were buried in the English cemetery at Rome in the grave which he had long ago prepared for himself by the side of Shelley. Swinburne, in a poem

on his death, addresses the spirit of Shelley, whom he imagines awaiting the arrival of Trelawny's ashes—

Memories of Greece and the mountain's hollow
  Guarded alone of thy loyal sword
  Hold thy name for our hearts in ward:
Yet more fain are our hearts to follow
One way now with the southward swallow
  Back to the grave of the man their lord.

Heart of hearts, art thou moved not, hearing?
  Surely, if hearts of the dead may hear,
  Whose true heart is it now draws near?
Surely the sense of it thrills thee, cheering
Darkness and death with the news now nearing—
  Shelley, Trelawny rejoins thee here.

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ADVENTURES OF A YOUNGER SON

I

SCHOOL DAYS

My brother was tractable, mild, and uncomplaining. I was in continual scrapes. I insisted on following the bent of my inclinations; and opposition only sharpened my desires. We were not allowed, among the many petty restrictions of our unkind governor, to stray off the gravelled paths in the garden. My brother submitted to this; while I sought for compensation in our neighbours' gardens, returning from them with fruits and flowers in abundance. My brother was contented with his daily walk upon the common or the road; I, with my pockets well filled with bread and apples, climbed the hills, or descended them to learn swimming in the rivers. I hated all that thwarted me—parsons, pastors, and masters. Everything I was directed cautiously to shun, as dangerous or wrong, I sought with avidity, as giving the most pleasure. Had I been treated with affection, or even with the show of it, I believe that I also should have been tractable, mild, and uncomplaining. Punishment and severity of all kinds were the only marks of

paternal love that fell to my share, from my earliest remembrance.

In compliance with my father's notions respecting the inutility of early education, I was not sent to school till I was between nine and ten years old. I was then an unusually great, bony, awkward boy.

The headmaster was one of those pedagogues of what is called the old school. He had implicit faith in his divining rod, which he kept in continual exercise, applying it on all doubtful occasions.

As my school-life was one scene of suffering, I am impelled to hasten it over as briefly as possible; more particularly as the abuses, of which I complain, are, if not altogether remedied, at least mitigated. I was flogged seldom more than once a day, or caned more than once an hour. After I had become inured to it, I was callous; and was considered by the master the most obdurate, violent, and incorrigible rascal that had ever fallen under his hands. Every variation of punishment was inflicted on me, without effect.

As my bodily strength increased, I became, out of school, the leader in all sports and mischief; but, in school, I was in the lowest class. I was determined not to apply to learning, and to defy punishment. Indeed, I do not recollect that any of the boys acquired useful knowledge there. When satisfied with the ascendancy I had gained over my schoolfellows, I turned my whole thoughts to the possibility of revenging myself on the master. I first tried my hand on his under-strapper. Having formed a party of

the most daring of my myrmidons, I planned and executed a castigation for our tutor. Once a week we were refreshed by long country walks; in the course of one of these the tutor sat down to rest himself; the boys, not acquainted with the plot, were busy gathering nuts; my chosen band loitered near, preparing rods; when I, backed by three of the strongest, fell suddenly upon our enemy. I got my hand round his dirty cravat, which I continued twisting; the others seized his arms and legs, and threw him on his back. A halloo brought six or seven more. He several times nearly succeeded in shaking us off; but I never resigned my hold, and when his struggles had driven away one boy, another took his place; till, completely overcome, he entreated us, as well as he could articulate, to have mercy, and not to strangle him. I gripped him the tighter, till the sweat dropped from his brow like rain from the eaves of a pigsty. We then gave him a sample of flogging he could never forget.

The upshot of this is told in a few words. On my return to school, our pastor and master (for he was clerical) began to have an inkling of what I and his pupils were capable. The dreadful narrative which the usher gave of my violence awakened a dread that the sacredness of his vocation and sacerdotal robes had been alone respected by our despair of successful opposition; that having once tasted of the sweets of victory, we might be presumptuous enough flatly to refuse obedience to his commands; that my

influence and example encouraged others, and that he would daily lose ground in his authority. This castigation of the usher astonished him. He opened his eyes to the necessity of using more decisive steps, and of making an example of me, before I was so hardened in my audacity as perhaps to attempt or execute some plot against him. His caution came too late. He called me to him, standing three steps above me on a raised platform. The boys, like young horses, when they learn their power, were unruly. I stood, not as I had done, drooping before his angry glances, but upright, and full of confidence, looking him in the face without quailing. He accused me—I pleaded my justification—he grew angry—my blood mounted to my forehead—he struck me—and I, with one sudden exertion, seized him by the legs, when he fell heavily on the back of his head. The usher, writing-master, and others, came to his aid; but all the boys sat silent, and exulting awaiting the result in wonder. I, unwilling to be seized by the usher, who, between fear of the boys and duty to his employer, stood irresolute, rushed out of the schoolroom into the garden, and there was I in triumph. I resolved that nothing should or could compel me to continue in the school. I had borne two years of such suffering as few could have sustained; nature could endure no more. I was now desperate, and therefore without hope or fear. I received a message, by one of the servants, to go into the house. After some hesitation I went. I was confined in a bedroom by myself, and

at supper-time bread and water was brought—spare diet certainly, but not much worse than the usual fare. I saw no one but the servant. Next day the same solitude—the same spare diet. At night a bit of candle was left to light me to bed; I know not what impelled me, I suppose the hope of release, not revenge—I set fire to the bed-curtains. The bed was in a bright flame, the smoke arose in clouds: without a thought of escape I viewed their progress with boyish delight; the wainscot and woodwork were beginning to burn, the fire crackling up the walls, while I could hardly breathe for smoke. The servant returned for the candle, and as the door opened the draught augmented the flame. I cried out, "Look here, George, I have lighted a fire myself; you said I should have none, though it was so cold." The man's shrieks gave the alarm. There was little furniture in this condemned hold, and the fire was extinguished. I was removed to another room, where a man sat up all night with me in custody; and I remember I exulted in the dread they all had of me. They called it arson, treason, and blasphemy—these accusations made some impression, because I was ignorant of their meaning. I did not see my reverend preceptor—perhaps his head ached; nor was I permitted to see any of my comrades; nay, I was not permitted to see my brother, lest I should infect him.

The next morning I was dispatched home under a guard.

II

GOES TO SEA

THERE was some talk of my going to Oxford, as one of my uncles had livings in his gift, which my father could not, without pain, contemplate as property out of the family. I was consulted; but the decided manner in which I declined priesthood left no hopes of my ever being guided by self-interest.

Soon after this I was taken to Portsmouth, and shipped on board a line-of-battleship, the *Superb*, as passenger to join one of Nelson's squadron. She was commanded by Captain Keates; and thence we sailed to Plymouth to take on board Admiral Duckworth, who hoisted his flag, and detained the ship three days to get mutton and potatoes from Cornwall. By this delay we unfortunately missed taking part in Nelson's victory at Trafalgar.

I shall never forget our falling in with the *Pickle* schooner, carrying the first dispatches of the battle and death of its hero. We had chased her many hours out of our course, and but that our ship sailed well, and the wind was fresh, we should not have brought her to. Her commander, burning with impatience to be the first to convey the news to England,

was compelled to heave to, and come on board us. Captain Keates received him on the deck, and when he heard the news, I was by his side. Silence reigned throughout the ship; some great event was anticipated; the officers stood in groups, watching, with intense anxiety, the two commanders, who walked apart: battle—Nelson—ships—were the only audible words which could be gathered from this conversation. I saw the blood rush into Keates's face; he stamped the deck, walked hurriedly, and spoke as in a passion. I marvelled, for I had never before seen him much moved; he had appeared cool, firm, and collected on all occasions, and it struck me that some awful event had taken place, or was at hand.

The admiral was still in his cabin, eager for news from the Nelson fleet. He was an irritable and violent man, and had been much incensed at the schooner's having disobeyed his signal, until she was compelled. After a few minutes, swelling with wrath, he sent an order to Keates; who possibly heard it not, but staggered along the deck, struck to the heart by the news, and, for the first time in his life, forgot his respect to his superior in rank; muttering, as it seemed, curses on his fate that, by the admiral's delay, he had not participated in the most glorious battle in naval history. Another messenger enforced him to descend in haste to the admiral, who was high in rage and impatience.

Keates, for I followed him, on entering the admiral's cabin, said, in a subdued voice, as if he were choking:

"A great battle has been fought, two days ago, off Trafalgar. The combined fleets of France and Spain are annihilated, and Nelson is no more!" He then murmured, "Had we not been detained, we should have been there. The captain of the schooner entreats you, Sir, not to detain him, and destroy his hopes, as you have destroyed ours."

Duckworth answered not, conscience-struck, but stalked on deck. He seemed ever to avoid the look of his captain, and turned to converse with the commander of the schooner, who replied, in sulky brevity, "Yes," or "No." Then dismissing him, he ordered all sail to be set, and walked the quarter-deck alone. A deathlike stillness pervaded the ship, broken at intervals by the low murmurs of the crew and officers, when "battle" and "Nelson" could alone be distinguished. Sorrow and discontent were painted on every face; and I sympathised in the feeling without a clear knowledge of the cause.

On the following morning we fell in with a portion of the victorious fleet. It was blowing a gale, and they lay wrecks on the sea.

We returned to Portsmouth. The captain wrote to my father to know what he should do with me, as his ship was about to be paid off.

At the expiration of two days I was sent for and informed that a letter from my father directed my being sent on board a frigate then fitting for sea. On the following morning I went on board. We went to sea in a few days, and cruised off Havre-de-Grace. The

captain was intimately acquainted with my family. He was a red-gilled, sycophantic Scotchman, the son of an attorney, and had bowed and smirked himself into the notice of royalty. His first lieutenant was a Guernsey man, a low-bred, mean-spirited, malicious scoundrel, who disliked all who were better than himself—and that was every one. However, there was a fine set of boys for my messmates, so that the time passed on tolerably well at first. Yet I now saw the navy was not suited to me. The captain being entrusted with unlimited power, it depended on his humours to make a heaven or hell of his ship. I was no studier of men's humours, no truckler to those in power, consequently I was hated. I was soon dissatisfied, and longed for freedom. I had looked forward to active service and fighting; here was none, nor the probability of any, while many told me they had been all their lives at sea without seeing a shot fired. In short, the battle of Trafalgar seemed the last act of naval warfare, and old Duckworth's passion for Cornish mutton and potatoes had prevented my initiation into the profession with glory, which might have urged me to persevere.

On our return to an English port, I was drafted on board a guardship at Spithead; and, without hearing a word from my father, was shortly re-drafted on board a sloop of war.

We proceeded to Cadiz, Lisbon, South America, and the coast of Africa. We were eighteen months absent, and had visited the four quarters of the world;

so that I picked up a little practical geography whilst going over thirty thousand miles. I began to study drawing and navigation, read everything I could lay my hand on, and collected from the officers and sailors every information regarding India, and her countless islands. We went in the old track: touched at St. Helena and the Cape of Good Hope, and, without anything remarkable, anchored in the harbour of Bombay.

I formed, during my passage, a lasting friendship with the junior lieutenant, Aston. I had been in his watch, and, through the tedious nights, he had dived into my real character, so as to discover that I was not what I seemed to be. His kindness had drawn me out from the shell in which I shrunk, when strangers, who appeared as enemies to me, drew near. He awakened those feelings which had become torpid, and called others forth that I never felt. He became my champion with those above me.

On our passage, a second lieutenant, a keen, sharp, cunning, and villainous Scotchman, whose sole delight was in torturing those he commanded, when questioning me one day on a point of duty, said, "When you address me, Sir, tak' off your hat!"

I replied, "I have saluted you as I do the captain, in putting my hand to my hat."

He then came up to me, with—"Tak' your hat off, Sir, whilst you address your superior!"

"I have none."

"What, Sir! am I not your superior officer?"

"Yes, Sir, you are that."

"Well, then, why don't you tak' your hat off?"

"I never do, Sir."

"Off wi' your hat, Sir!" exalting his voice.

"No, I will not."

"What! will not?"

"No—to no one but God!"—and then recollecting I had done so to the King, I added—"and the King!"

This parasite considered (at least one would think so, by the use he made of it) that the only utility of a hat was to be pointed, as an index of his base grovelling nature, to the ground, not as a covering for the head. Though he had bowed and fawned himself into the good graces of the captain, his complaint could not be comprehended, when he accused me of mutinous disobedience of orders. His rage, in this instance, being rendered impotent, he revenged himself by heaping on me a greater portion of petty spites, which I treasured in my memory, to be summed up and paid. I did so, and with interest.

Another occurrence happened while coasting between Madras and Bombay on the pirate coast of Goa. A suspicious-looking vessel, having tried all day to avoid us, got becalmed, and three boats were ordered to board her. I was sent in the one commanded by the Scotch lieutenant. She was the fastest pulling boat, and the best manned and armed. Aston was in the next-best boat, and kept in our wake. The supposed pirate craft keeping sweeping towards

the land; and, as it appeared, from the ship, we could not come up to her till she ran on shore; and a light breeze springing up—besides the general orders of the navy in India to destroy, but not to board the Malay pirates—the frigate fired a gun and hoisted the recall-pennant. We were then within two gun-shots of the craft; she had got inside the reefs, and the armed natives were crowding down to the beach. On the signal-gun's being heard by our boat, the lieutenant declared we must return, and ordered the men to lie on their oars till Aston's cutter came alongside, whom he hailed, and said: "Aston, you see the recall-signal—we maun return to the ship."

Aston answered, "What signal?—I don't see it."

"If you look, you will," said the lieutenant.

"I don't intend to look," was the next reply. "We were ordered to see what craft that is; and I shall do so. Give way, my lads!"

I requested Aston to lay on his oars a moment, and then, turning to the Scotchman, I asked, respectfully, if he were going on, as I was steering the barge. He said "No!" and ordered me to return to the ship. On this I let go the tiller and jumped overboard, and, calling to Aston to pick me up, swam to his boat. The lieutenant, with the snarl of a hyena, said, "I shall report your conduct, Sir."

Aston ordered his men to pull inshore: and in ten minutes we were on board the Malay. I was in the bow of the boat, on fire to realise my ardent love of fighting; and, the instant our boat touched the bow

of the Malay, I swung myself on board, by seizing a rope with one hand, when, before my foot was on the deck, I cut a fellow across the head; and then, followed by two or three sailors, we cut and slashed away without mercy. The Malays jumped overboard. I was so heated as not to observe whether they resisted or not; but, excited by my own violence, and furious at any of them escaping, I thought of our firearms, seized a musket, and was about to fire at a fellow in the water, when Aston laid hold of me, and exclaimed, "Don't you hear? I have been roaring at you till I'm hoarse. Why, what are you at? Are you mad? Your example has made all my men so. Put down the musket. You have no right to touch these people."

I inquired, in surprise, if she was not a Malay. "How can I tell," he replied, "what she is? You should have waited for my orders. Perhaps she is a harmless country-vessel."

I then began to imagine I had been too precipitate, too rash; and my ardour was cooled in thinking I might have compromised Aston. It was therefore with inexpressible delight that I beheld the savages on the beach open a fire from matchlocks on us, and saw them launching their canoes full of armed people. However, while they were delayed in picking up their countrymen, we scuttled the craft, leaped into our boats, and the frigate, having stood in, picked us up. Two of the wounded Malays Aston took with him.

After the skirmish I tried to appease Aston's anger

by my coolness and activity; so that, having lectured me, he represented my conduct in such favourable terms to the first lieutenant, that the Scotchman's account obtained nothing worse for me than a simple reprimand. He now detested me; but, under the protection of Aston's wing, I was safe. Besides, his pusillanimity was a source of ridicule; and the sailors, who all look on courage as the highest attribute, applauded me.

Before this, I had gained respect in the ship by a reckless daring. My indifference and neglect of all the ordinary duties were in some degree tolerated, owing to my unwearied diligence and anxiety in every case of difficulty, danger, or sudden squalls. In the Indian seas a squall is not to be trifled with; when the masts are bending like fishing-rods, the light sails fluttering in ribbons, the sailors swinging to and fro on the bow, bent yards, the ship thrown on her beam-ends, the wild roar of the sea and wind, and no other light than the red and rapid lightning. Then I used to rouse myself from dozing on the carronade-slide, springing aloft ere my eyes were half open, when the only reply to Aston's trumpet was my voice. I felt at home amidst the conflict of the elements. It was a kind of war; and harmonised with my feelings. The more furious the storm, the greater my delight. My contempt of the danger ensured my safety; while the solemn and methodical disciplinarians, who prided themselves on the exact performance of their separate duties at their respec-

tive stations, beheld with astonishment the youngster, whom they were always abusing for neglect of duty, voluntarily thrusting himself into every arduous and perilous undertaking, ere they could decide on the possibility or prudence of its being attempted. The sailors liked me for this, and prognosticated I should yet turn out a thorough sailor. Even the officers, who had hitherto looked on me as a useless idler, viewed my conduct with gaping wonder, and entertained better hopes of me.

But these hopes died away with the bustling scenes in which they were begotten; and, during the fine and calm weather, I lost the reputation I had acquired in storms and battles. Among my messmates I was decidedly a favourite. What I principally prided myself in was protecting the weak from the strong, I permitted none to tyrannise. I had grown prematurely very tall and strong; and was of so unyielding a disposition, that in my struggles with those who were not much more than my equals in strength, though above me in years, I wore them out with pertinacity. My rashness and impetuosity bore down all before them. None liked to contend with me; for I never acknowledged myself beaten, but renewed the quarrel, without respect to time or place. Yet what my messmates chiefly lauded and respected, was the fearless independence with which I treated those above me.

The utmost of their power had been wreaked against me; yet, had the rack been added, they could not have

intimidated me. Indeed, from very wantonness, I went beyond their inflictions. For instance, the common punishment was sending us to the mast-head for four or five hours. Immediately I was ordered thither, I used to lie along the cross-trees, as if perfectly at my ease, and either feign to sleep, or, if it was hot, really to go to sleep. They were alarmed at the chance of my falling from so hazardous a perch; and to prevent, as it was thought, the possibility of my sleeping, the Scotchman one day, during a heavy sea with little wind, ordered me in his anger to go to the extreme end of the top-sail yardarm, and remain there for four hours. I murmured, but, obliged to comply, up I went; and walking along the yard on the dizzy height, got hold of the top-sail lift, laid myself down between the yard and studding-sail-boom, and pretended to sleep as usual. The lieutenant frequently hailed me, bidding me to keep awake, or I should fall overboard. This repeated caution suggested to me the means of putting an end to this sort of annoyance, by antedating his fears, and falling overboard—not, however, with the idea of drowning, as few in the ship could swim so well as myself. I had seen a man jump from the lower yard in sport, and had determined to try the experiment. Besides, the roll of the ship was in my favour; so, watching my opportunity, when the officers and crew were at their quarters at sunset, I took advantage of a heavy roll of the ship, and dropped on the crest of a monstrous wave. I sunk deep into its bosom,

and the agony of suppressed respiration, after the fall, was horrible. Had I not taken the precaution to maintain my poise, by keeping my hands over my head, preserving an erect posture in my descent, and moving my limbs in the air, I should inevitably have lost my life. As it was, I was insensible to everything but a swelling sensation in my chest, to bursting; and the frightful conviction of going downwards with the rapidity of a thunderbolt, notwithstanding my convulsive struggles to rise, was torture such as it is vain to describe. A deathlike torpidness came over me; then I heard a din of voices, and a noise on the sea, and within it, like a hurricane; my head and breast seemed to be splitting. After which I thought I saw a confused crowd of faces bent over me; and I felt a loathsome sickness. A cold shivering shook my limbs, and I gnashed my teeth, imagining myself still struggling as in the last efforts of escape from drowning. This impression must have continued for a long time. The first circumstance I can distinctly remember was Aston's voice, saying, "How are you now?" I tried to speak, but in vain; my lips moved without a word. He told me I was now safe on board. I looked round; but a sensation of water rushing in my mouth, ears, and nostrils still made me think I was amidst the waves. For eight-and-forty hours I suffered inexpressible pain; a thousand times greater, in my restoration to life, than before I lost my recollection.

But what signifies what I endured?—I gained my

point. The Scotch lieutenant was severely reprimanded for his unjustifiable conduct in sending me to so dangerous a place for punishment. The captain's heart was moved to order a fowl to be killed for soup; and he sent me a bottle of wine. I had the one grilled, and the other mulled, holding an antipathy to everything insipid. I was never sent to the masthead again; nor could anyone suspect even me of such a mad freak as to run a hazard of drowning, to rid myself of a trifling annoyance, which others bore unrepiningly.

Besides Aston, there were several of my messmates I particularly liked. One of them, about my own age, whose name was Walter, was my ordinary associate; not that there was much resemblance in our tastes and characters, but his father had treated him with even a worse brutality than I had endured from mine. Poor and unprotected he led but a sorry life, and underwent a series of vexatious persecutions, which seemed perpetuated under the Scotch lieutenant. These made him gloomy; he shunned our mirth and sports; and, while we were carousing, he generally was reading. I felt much for him; and several times took on myself the punishment for his neglect of duty. This won his heart.

To turn the recreant Scotchman into ridicule, I made a caricature, representing his obedience to the recall-signal, while the two other boats were hastening to the Malay. Walter had a better talent for drawing, and I persuaded him to execute an improved

copy of it; then watching my opportunity, when all the officers were assembled at mess, I dropped it down the hatchway on the table. There was a burst of laughter, and it was some time before the person who figured as the principal character, discovered it; but when he did, his long colourless face turned to a bright lemon hue, and, festering with suppressed bile, he had an attack of jaundice. He spared no pains in finding out the author of this satire. I should have added, that we had annexed, by way of explanation, a doggerel poem, which, perhaps from the vanity of authorship, or from the example of ancient bards and a modern poet, I was particularly fond of singing, with little attention to time and place, so that very soon it became as common with the sailors as "Cease, rude Boreas," "Tom Bowling," etc.

Some time afterwards he discovered that the drawing was by Walter. "I thought that fellow" (meaning me) "had done it," said he, "and he is a cheald of the deil, capable of any atrocity; besides, he cares for no one, and is protected in his insolence by Aston and the first lieutenant. But as for that pale-faced, sickly boy, Walter, whom everybody kicks about, by God, I'll make him drown himself before he is a week older!"

Well, he strove to keep his word. By cunning, lying, and treachery, he persecuted the captain and first lieutenant with such unceasing complaints against him, that poor Walter was punished and abused till he became desperate from oppression; and then,

replying in hasty words and anger, he was degraded from the situation of an officer, turned before the mast, and stationed in the mizen-top. In spite of orders to the contrary, I was always talking to him, and cheering him. His gentle heart was bruised, he sunk into gloom, and I feared would have verified the lieutenant's prediction. He paid little attention to what I said, till I confided to him my determination of leaving the ship and navy the first port we entered, counselled him to do the same, and pointed out the exquisite treat we should have in buffeting his enemy to death. The hope of this wild justice did what no other hope could do—it made him calm. He even feigned to do his duty with alacrity.

His persecutor harassed him with unrelenting brutality. He was compelled to do duty with the mizen-top boys; his former messmates were interdicted from speaking to him; he was obliged to put on the dress of the sailors, and mess with them; and the Scotchman had exerted his utmost influence to blast his name by the abhorrent infliction of corporal punishment; but the captain, though hitherto cajoled, would not consent.

On our passage from Bombay to Madras, on a fine day, as I was sleeping in one of the quarter-boats, there was a wild halloo throughout the ship. Such a commotion I never witnessed on board a man-of-war; the men came rushing over each other on deck, up every hatchway; discipline was at an end; the lieutenant commanding the deck stood astounded

and aghast; the captain and most of the officers were struggling through the dense mass of sailors, questioning and commanding; but all control was lost, and they were huddled and wedged together without distinction. I soon observed it was despair, and not ferocity, that was painted on the rough and weather-beaten brows of the men. At last the secret burst forth in every voice at once, of "Fire! fire! Fire in the fore-magazine!"

That awful sound effected what nothing else morta could have done; it made the stout, the hardy, the valiant sailor break through the well-organised drilling of an entire life; and he was seized with an irresistible dread of the only element he could shrink from contending with — fire, and in the powder magazine! An instant, and bodies would be mangled and mingled in the air, without distinction of rank or station. Habit or instinct roused the officers, who, at the first cry, seemed to participate in the one unanimous feeling. None moved but with a flushed brow; and their eyes were glaringly bent on the fore-hatchway, awaiting a fate they could not avoid. We were out of sight of land; not a sail in view, nor a speck on the horizon; the only cloud was the black dense smoke, which burst from the hatchway; and there being no wind, it ascended in an unbroken mass aloft, we anticipating soon to follow it.

A dead silence reigned throughout the gallant frigate; then a confused murmur; and presently the men, without combination, yet simultaneously,

rushed aft to the quarter-boats; others crowded to the sides of the ship, straining their eyes in the vain hope of espying some means of escape; some tremblingly crept up the rigging; while a small band of iron-nerved veterans alone stood undauntedly—men grown grizzled from storms, battles, and hardships, not from years. During this movement I started at the loud, clear, trumpet-like voice of Aston, commanding the firemen to get their buckets, the marines to come aft with their arms, and the officers to follow his example. With that he drew a cutlass from the stand; and now the first lieutenant and other officers, as if awakened to their duty, drove the men from the boats, and out of the chains.

The moment I heard Aston's voice I went up to him, and said, "I will go down to the magazine, if you will send the gunners there and hand down water."

I rushed forward down the main hatchway, hurried along the abandoned lower deck, seized a rope, and descended through the smoke directly into the magazine. In the fore-part, which was darker than the blackest night, it was impossible to distinguish whence the fire came. I groped about, and found my hands and head burning, and a difficulty of respiration from the smoke. Then I stumbled over a man, either dead or dead drunk, I knew not which; and tore down bundles of matches, which were on fire, In doing this, the blue lights, used for signals, were ignited, upon which I heard some men, who were coming down to assist me, cry out, "She is

going!" and they hurried back to the deck, where there arose another hopeless cry of "She is going!" and then all was hushed.

One glance, as the blue-lights flamed, cleared up the mystery. The gunner's mate lay prostrate at my feet, with a broken pipe stuck in his mouth, and the only sign he gave of life was puffing. The ready-primed matches for the guns had caught fire from his carelessness. The slow smouldering fire from hundreds of these had alone caused the smoke, and the danger was in their proximity to the powder. I grasped hold of the blue lights, fire-proof in my ardour, which the probability of saving the ship gave me.

While endeavouring to hand them up, I called out for more men. At this instant Aston was jumping down. "Don't come down," I said; "but hand these damned things up, and then—a dozen buckets of water—and all is right." Aston called to one of the men who followed him bidding him go on deck, tell the captain there was no danger, and that all we wanted was water.

The first bucket which was handed down Aston threw over me, saying, "You are on fire!" My hair and shirt were burning. This and the smoke, I suppose, were the cause of my falling down insensible. Aston took my place. The fresh air soon restored me. In a few seconds the magazine was inundated by the buckets; and all was safe.

I was sent for on deck, and went there, my features begrimed with wet powder—nothing on but my

trousers—my hair and eyebrows burnt, my hands and face scorched, and my whole appearance, I imagine, exhibiting a lively picture of a fire-demon fresh from hell. All the officers smiled; but they seemed, at the same time, to highly laud my presence of mind; I say *seemed*, for it is against the general custom of the navy to express more. Thanking me would have been reprimanding themselves. However, I was content; the impression could not be erased; they could not call me a useless idler, though I took care to be a complete idler for a long time after, on the plea of my burning and bruising, and they said, "Well! poor fellow, he deserves a little indulgence!"

III

JOINS DE RUYTER

On the ship's mooring in any harbour, I watched the first opportunity of getting on shore; and till the Blue Peter was hoisted, and the fore-top-sail loose, there was little chance of seeing me on board. The instant we entered the harbour of Bombay, I was, as usual, under some plea or other, in a shore-boat, and presently had established my favourite headquarters in the town—to wit, in a tavern. Here I commenced an intimacy with a merchant. In youth we form friendships in days, which, at a more advanced age, require years. So with this man; from a game or two of billiards, eating together, and walking together, we had become boon companions. Many of the naval officers used to come in parties to the tavern to see me, when we often sallied about the town, and played a thousand mad pranks. My friend the stranger, as he was called, seemed to seek the society of naval officers, and take great interest in the different accounts of their cruises, the ships they belonged to, their rate of sailing, and the peculiarities which distinguished their respective commanders. His conversation was principally confined to questions; and as people, for the most part,

prefer talking to listening, he was liked the better. He frequently, in company with me, visited the men-of-war in the harbour; the only one I objected to introduce him to was my own frigate, but to make him amends, I gave every information he wished regarding her.

Though he then called himself De Witt, I shall speak of him at once under his real name, De Ruyter. He mentioned to me that he was waiting for a passage to Batavia; he seemed perfectly acquainted with India and its seas. He spoke most of the European languages, nor had he the slightest foreign accent in his pronunciation of the English. In walking about the bazaars, commonly at night, he sometimes met me, and took me with him. He was familiar with all the out-of-the-way corners of the most irregular of towns, and entered into many dark abodes without ceremony. He conversed, on these occasions, with the natives in their varied tongues with equal ease, whether in the guttural, brute-like grunting of the Malay, the more humanised Hindostanee, or the softer and harmonious Persian. What struck me most at the time was the great deference these people paid him; even the proud, fat, swelling, and pompous Armenian merchants stopped their palanquins, and got out to converse with him, apparently delighted at their meeting. These and other circumstances made me wonder, but nothing more; at seventeen we do not expect every man to be a rogue, as we do at thirty. There was a self-possession and decision

about De Ruyter's ordinary acts, with a general information, that made me feel what, I suppose, I should not have thanked anyone for remarking; as, at that age, we are loth to allow any to be our superior. Perhaps I might not have felt this so strongly, had he not been as much my superior in physical as in mental endowments. In stature he was majestic; the length and fine proportion of his limbs, and the shortness and roundness of his body, gave to his appearance a lightness and elasticity seldom seen but in the natives of the East. It was only on close examination you discovered that, under the slim form of the date-tree, was disguised the solid strength of the oak. His face wanted breadth to please an artist's eye; but it added to the effect of his high, clear, bold, unwrinkled forehead—as smooth, though not as white, as sculptured marble. His hair was dark and abundant, his features well defined. The greatest peculiarity was his eye; it was ever so varying that it was impossible to distinguish its colour; like the hue of the chameleon, it had no fixed tint, but showed, as in a mirror, the reflection of his mind. In a state of rest it was overcast with a hazy film, like a grey cloud; but when he was excited by the vehemence of his feelings, the mist evaporated, and it gradually brightened, till its rays, like the sun, became so intense, that your own were dazzled beholding it. His eyelashes were jet-black; he had thick, straight, and prominent eyebrows, with a habit of knitting them together, contracted from exposure to the intense heat of an

eastern sun, leaving an infinity of minuter lines, traced at the corners of the eyes, but unlike the deep furrows of age or debauchery in northern climates. The lines of his mouth were boldly and clearly cut; it was muscular, fall of expression; and the upper lip, which was prominent, had a convulsive action when he spoke, independent of its companion; his jaw was full, and gave him the air of invincible determination. Though naturally not of so dark a complexion as myself, those parts of his person exposed were not merely sunburnt, but appeared to be seared to the very bone. He was approaching his thirtieth year.

I am thus minute in describing De Ruyter, to account in part for the extraordinary influence he gained, on so short an acquaintance, over my mind and imagination. He became my model. The height of my ambition was to imitate him, even in his defects. My emulation was awakened. For the first time I was impressed with the superiority of a human being. To keep on an equality with him was unattainable. To every trifling action he evinced a manner so off-hand, free, and noble, that it looked as if it sprang new and fresh from his own individuality; and everything else shrunk into an apish imitation.

The enervating influence of a long residence in a tropical climate had not affected him; his strength and energies seemed insurmountable; the maddening fever of the jungles tainted not his blood; the sunstroke fell innocuous on his bare head; and he alone went the round of his ordinary occupations, regardless

of time or temperature. But then I observed he drank little, slept little, and ate sparingly. While we were carousing, and keeping midnight orgies, he often joined us, drank his coffee, and smoked his hookah. He exceeded the youngest of us in the enjoyment of the present hour; even with the sedative aid of the mocha-berry, he could scarcely reduce his high spirits to a level with ours, when fired by the juice of the grape, or maddened by arrack-punch. Without effort he caught the tone of mind among his associates; thus marking the tolerations of his own; as he had the power of bending the most stubborn and thoughtless to his will, of directing them, and of moulding them into any form which pleased his fancy. But he chose rather to draw out others' characters, to view them in their natural hues, and to relieve the tension of his own high-wrought imagination by resuming the thoughts and feelings of boyhood. By putting himself on a par with us, he gained that influence, which Solomon, in all his wisdom and wise sayings, could not have accomplished.

Treated as an equal by a being of such superior intelligence and years, I felt a pride, an importance, I had never before known. By this conduct he gained my unlimited confidence, and imperceptibly drew from me my most secret thoughts. I told him I was resolute to leave a profession in which I failed to realise those ardent and ambitious prospects of glory it had portrayed in my imagination. Instead of encouraging me in this, he ever urged me to do nothing

prematurely, or in passion. I spoke of the neglect and contumely I had suffered; of the despondency of my views of life, in consequence of my hopeless situation with my family; and concluded with a firm determination to shake off the fetters which galled my spirit, and bound down my aspirations; declaring that, if I could do nothing better, I would go into the jungles, and herd with wild buffaloes and tigers, where I should at least be a free agent, however short my life, rather than longer submit to the iron despotism, which held my very thoughts in bondage. "Is it not written," I exclaimed vehemently, "in the code of our naval law, that you shall not, in look or gesture, signify that you are dissatisfied with those who govern you by holding the lash of correction over your head? If gods were to rule us by brutal intimidation, who would not rebel? And if we must have a master, why not enter the service of demons and devils, on fair terms, and with fair words?"

"Nay," said De Ruyter, "you are running yourself aground now. Restrain your passion; view things in their real colours, not as disfigured by the sickly yellow of your jaundiced conceptions. We cannot all be masters; nor can the best commander content everyone beneath him. Your mind has received a warp from the neglect and folly of weak, but not evil men. You, who have endured so much from the narrow-minded views of others, should learn to reason justly and tolerantly; and distinguish between ignorance and malice in those who have sinned against

you. Now, the only case you have made out of malice amounts to little; and the object is too insignificant to waste a thought upon!—I mean the Scotch lieutenant you told me about."

"Little!" replied I; "do you call that little?—the utter ruin and degradation he has heaped on my friend Walter? And as I am the cause, so am I bound amply to revenge his injuries. May every evil in life be concentrated exclusively on my head—may the pariah scoff and spit at me, and the wild dogs hunt me through the jungles, if I forgive that malignant——"

As his hated name was trembling on my lips, the scoundrel himself, and alone, entered the billiard-room where we were talking. He looked at my flushed and heated brow, and hesitated what he should do—slink back, or advance. He chose to advance, assuming his most cajoling look, with smirks and smiles, and that little enginery by which he had wormed his way through the world, wrecking the hopes of true and honest men. I should mention that he had often visited this tavern whilst I was there; and that on shore he was affable as he was overbearing on board. As I was under his command, perhaps he considered me still in his power; so stepping towards me, he said, "Well! when are you going on board? The ship is ordered to sail to-morrow, and all the officers are to be on board by daylight."

"Is it so?" said I, in a slow and suppressed voice, to hide the fierceness of my purpose, while every fibre of my frame swelled in action, and my blood

seemed ignited, and then congealed to ice; "then the time is come to settle my accounts; and most providentially my principal creditor is here."

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"Once," I answered, "you told me never to stand in your presence with my hat on. I now, for the last time, obey you!" and, with the word, I dashed my hat in his face.

As he stood gazing in amaze, I stripped off the only remaining badge of servitude upon me, and, trampling on it, exclaimed, "Now, Mr. Lieutenant, I am free! You are no longer my superior officer! If I must acknowledge you my superior as a man, prove it with your sword!" Then placing myself between him and the door, I added, "Draw! This gentleman and the billiard-marker shall see fair play."

He attempted to pass, muttering, "What do you mean?—are you in your senses?" Seizing him by the collar, I swung him into the middle of the room, and said, "There is no escape! Defend your life!"

He then went towards De Ruyter, and appealed to him for protection, swearing he was ignorant of what I meant, or what I wanted. De Ruyter continued calmly smoking, and answered, "Why, it seems pretty clear what he wants. I have nothing to do with your quarrel. You had better draw and fight it out; he is but a boy, and you should be a man by your beard."

The lieutenant, whose fears then took entire possession of his mind, humbled himself to me; he

protested he had never intended me any wrong; that if I thought so, he was sorry, and asked my pardon; he entreated I would put up my sword, and go on board with him, promising, with an oath, that he would never take advantage of what had passed. Disgusted at his meanness, I struck him from me, and, spitting at him, vociferated, "Remember Walter! cowardly, malignant ruffian! What! you white-livered scoundrel—can no words move you?—then blows shall!" and I struck him with the hilt of my sword in his mouth, and kicked him, and trampled on him. I tore his coat off, I rent it to fragments, saying, "This is the first time such a poltroon has disgraced this true colour!" His screams and protestations, while they increased my contempt, added fuel to my anger, for I was furious that such a pitiful wretch should have lorded it over me so long. I roared out, "For the wrongs you have done me, I am satisfied. Yet nothing but your currish blood can atone for your atrocities to Walter!"

Having broken my own sword at the onset, I drew his from beneath his prostrate carcass, and should inevitably have despatched him on the spot, had not a stronger hand gripped hold of my arm. It was De Ruyter's; and he said in a low, quiet voice, "Come, no killing. Here!" (giving me a broken billiard cue) "a stick is a fitter weapon to chastise a coward with. Don't rust good steel."

It was useless to gainsay him, for he had taken the sword out of my hand. I therefore belaboured the

rascal: his yells were dreadful; he was wild with terror, and looked like a maniac. I never ceased till I had broken the butt-end of the cue over him, and till he was motionless.

De Ruyter, though I was not aware of it at the time, had stood sentinel at the door to bar intrusion. He now left it, and a shoal of blacks and whites rushed in.

"Come, be off, like the wind!" shouted De Ruyter to me. "Go" (he continued, sinking his voice into a whisper), "go to the bungalow I told you of the other day, near the village of Punee. You know the road. Walter or I will be with you as soon as the frigate has sailed, and this affair has blown over. Now, no more words. Off! I say."

My horse was brought. He was a vicious-looking brute, with an ambiguity in his eye that gave him an uncommon sinister expression. He had been brought in from the country, and having succeeded in throwing several of the naval officers, no one would mount him; so that, when first offered to me, he was enjoying a sort of sinecure. Never having met with anyone or anything as obstinate as myself, I liked him. I had a fellow-feeling for his independent spirit, took him under my especial protection, and found the excitement of contention a delight. A restive and violent horse, in the sweltering climate of the tropics, is considered anything but the means of recreation; but I loved to stem the stream, and never followed the footsteps of the prudent, who keep the

high-beaten track of the world. My horse and I became a show-lion to the sober natives; and an interest was created to see which would conquer.

Thanks to a Turkish bit and saddle, which I had substituted for the mockery of English ones, I kept my seat, and diminished, though I could not subdue, the spirit of the horse, till we began to understand each other; and, when wearied of contention in private, jogged on together in public, like decent married people. On this animal I mounted, in a white jacket of De Ruyter's, speeding towards the gate, under the excitation of drubbing the lieutenant, not at all allayed by drinking two bottles of claret with Walter. The guard of sepoys was drawn up, beneath the arch of the town gate, on some point of duty. My antipathy to the hired badge of servitude extended to all who wore it. In altitude and strength I thought myself augmented; and to show off my newly-acquired freedom, in which feeling my mischievous horse, as if instigated by the same impulse, most willingly coincided, I dashed through the guard with the rapidity of thought, and, with a wild triumphal hurrah, scampered on to the plain of sand which lies immediately on the outside of the town.

Here I gave vent to my joy, and played as many antics as a madman broke loose from his chains. I spurred my willing horse on to the centre of the sandy waste, hallooing and screaming myself hoarse with rapture. I drew the sabre De Ruyter had given me, and flourished it about, regardless of my horse's head

and ears. As I lost sight of the town gate, I pulled in my foaming steed; then looking around and seeing nothing human, I dismounted, when patting the horse's reeking neck, I exclaimed, "Here we are, thou only honest creature, free at last! The spell of my bondage is broken! Who shall command me now? I will obey no one: I will have no other guide than my instinct; no one's will shall be mine; I am for my own free impulses! Who dare attempt to replace the yoke around my neck?

After riding a considerable distance I arrived at a small village and having passed through some paddy and Indian cornfields, crossed a ford, and reached De Ruyter's bungalow, which I knew by landmarks he had given me, and by the compass. It was prettily situated on a rising ground at the foot of a mountain, in a retired nook, hid in a grove of cocoa-trees, which love a light and shingly soil, and sheltered by hills to the north, east, and west. There was a wild garden, overgrown with guava, mango, and pomegranate trees, and surrounded by a high and impervious fence of prickly pear. The inside of the house was painted in blue and white stripes to look like a tent, the roof of the centre room being supported by upright bamboos, on which were suspended arms, guns, and spears for the chase. Two sleeping apartments adjoining to this were divided by split bamboos and matting. It was furnished with a tent-table, beds, and other conveniences; a few books and drawing materials; with rough but spirited

sketches of ships, and of lion and tiger hunts, hanging on the wall. A small open space before the door, studded with banana and lemon trees, drooping with fruit, sloped down to a large tank, used as a bath, encircled with rose, jessamine, and geranium. An old peasant, in charge of the place, said, "You see, master, it is *ungregi*—English fashion." On the east side of the bungalow, canopied by a magnificent sago-palm, was a long, low shed, which served for kitchen; and under the same roof dwelt the peasant, with his wife and family, and a yâk, or little cow, which was squabbling with the children about some fruit.

I sent a coolie to bring me a hookah, bathed in the tank, and, with a book, the *Life of Paul Jones*, lay under the trees, eating my dessert after an abundant Indian lunch. A lightness, elasticity, and exuberance of joy, never felt before, thrilled through me. It was the first day I could number of entire happiness; nor did I then, as in more mature years we do, dash the present hour with thinking on the ensuing one. The only happy life appeared to be a peasant's; and his limited wants the cause of his being happy. Forthwith I essayed it, threw my torn and soiled garments from me, twisted a piece of striped cotton, as cummerbund, round my waist, and put a turban on my head. Thus, barefooted, with a cocoa-knife in my hand, and well-greased with cocoa-nut oil, I sallied into the grove, and, with the peasant's family ascended the trees, learnt how to tap them, and how to hang the toddy-pots. This and gardening made

my time pass on so smoothly, that, on the third day, when I received notice of De Ruyter's being on the road, I felt it as an interruption on my quiet and my solitude.

However, I mounted the yâk, a bamboo in one hand and my knife in the other, and went forth, preceded by two coolies, to meet him. Suddenly turning a tope of neem trees, he was before me, occupied in narrating a history of lion-hunting to Walter, and so complete was my metamorphosis, that he was passing on without recognition, until his quick eye rested on his own yâk. I hailed him with—"Holloa! De Ruyter, what cheer, ho!" They pulled up in astonishment; and, after surveying me an instant, they set up such a wild roar of laughter that I thought them out of their senses. De Ruyter rolled off his horse, and held his sides, exclaiming, "By heaven, you'll kill me, you madcap!"

Looking very serious, I observed, "I am not aware of anything sufficiently ludicrous to excite your merriment. I am rigged in the fashion of the country; and it is best adapted to the climate, is it not? If you like to have some fresh toddy, here are these fellows with my cudgeree-pots full of the freshest, and of my own tapping."

We sat on the bank, talked, and, when they were weary of their mirth, I remounted my yâk, preceding them to the bungalow.

We passed two days of unalloyed happiness. We climbed the hills, we chased the jackals, regardless

of heat or toil; we sang and danced, not as in the days of slavery from the excitement of drink, for we were drunk with joy.

There was a strangeness and mystery in the actions and pursuits of De Ruyter which fascinated and spellbound my spirit. The rapidity with which he had gained an influence over me was marvellous. His frankness, courage, and generosity—the nobleness of his nature—his liberal and enlightened sentiments, so unlike the merchants and money-traders I had seen, convinced me he was none of them. After reflecting on his words, and what I had witnessed of his conduct, I concluded he was commander of a private ship of war. But then neither the English nor the Americans had any in India; the French indeed had something of the sort; but, if under their flag, what did he in an English port, and apparently on friendly terms there? My next conclusion was that he was an agent of some of the rajahs, who still were independent sovereigns, although the Company were drawing their circles within circles around them, till they became driven from their fastnesses to the plain, to fall on any prey. These princes, whether at peace or war, were known to have secreted agents in the presidencies, to transmit to them early intelligence of the movements and policy of the Company's residents.

At this period of my life, I had attained the attributes of perfect manhood. I was six feet in stature, robust, and bony, almost to gauntness; and, with the strength

of maturity, I had the flexibility of limb which youth alone can give. Naturally of a dark hue, my complexion readily taking a darker from the sun, I was now completely bronzed. My hair was black, and my features perfectly Arab. At seventeen I looked to be seven and twenty. Then, having in extreme youth been left to jostle my way through the crowd, I had made a proportionate advance in what is called worldly knowledge, which experience alone, not years, can teach.

In the way I have related the course of my first acquaintance and subsequent friendship with De Ruyter, I am fearful that some may be impressed with an erroneous idea that he was selfishly working on the malleability of my youth. I can speak now with proof of his having been assayed on the touchstone of time, and found true gold. De Ruyter himself was in reality a friendless wanderer; a man self-exiled, from out the pale of civilisation and its ties; and with a highly wrought imagination and cultivated mind it was natural he should seek objects to lavish his affections on, and who could sympathise with him. Such were not easy to be found where he was, and in his unsettled way of life. With the semi-barbarians of the East it was out of the question; and the European adventurers were scattered about, busy in the accumulation of wealth, or exclusively engaged in their own separate views of ambition. The few renegado sailors he could pick up from time to time were either deserters, or deserted for their worthless-

ness. A few associates he had liked were removed by death, or, what is the same thing, distance. He was not formed for an Asiatic: his free and buoyant nature impelled him to seek companionship; and having perhaps no predilection at that period, as accident cast me in his way, his feelings were interested in my behalf. He had perfectly seen through me during that period, though short yet full of matter; and nothing doubted but that, with a little time and guidance, I should become what he wished me to be. He perceived that, added to the fresh and warm feelings of youth, I possessed honesty, sincerity, and courage, not yet soiled and wayworn by journeying through the sloughs of the world, which few can pass without defilement. The step he took, therefore, was not so preposterous as superficial lookers-on might conclude. From the hour in which I had consummated my revenge on the lieutenant, in a manner which cut off the possibility of my return to the navy, De Ruyter, seeing I was utterly friendless, became my friend in its true sense, and ever after treated me as such, so that if fathers followed his example, we should have less of that eternal and mawkish cant about filial disobedience, dull as it is false, spawned on society by dry and drawling priests, and incubated by the barren sect of mouldy, soddened blues. His disposition, or restlessness, caused his to be a life of adventure, and consequently of peril. I was a scion of the same stock; my inclinations homogenial; and whether I had met with him or not, I should

have run my destined course, though not on the same ground.

De Ruyter now took me on board of an Arab grab brig, remarkable for its lean, wedge-like, and elongated bow. She was rigged as a hermaphrodite; and, as is the custom with the Arabs, she had disproportionate square yards. Her crew were partly Arabs, and the remainder, by their colour and dress, showed they were of various castes. She was unloading a cargo of cotton and spices, purchased, I was told, by the Company. De Ruyter very seldom went on board of her; but her captain, called the Rais, was daily with him. They generally met on board a small and very singular craft, called a dhow. She was chiefly manned with Arabs; but to my surprise the sprinkling among them was of European seamen, Danes, and Swedes, with two or three Americans. These were secreted on board, for what purpose I did not then know; but I was especially cautioned not to mention the circumstance on shore. This dhow had a large mast forward, and gigger-mast aft. She was the clumsiest and most unsightly craft I had ever seen in India. Her head and stern, raised and raking, were of light bamboo work. She seemed crank, and to have little hold of the water. On De Ruyter's asking me if I should like to have the command of her, I answered, "Yes; when I cannot get a catamaran, or masuli boat, I may possibly hazard my carcass on board her."

"I see you are particular," said he. "Now, though

I have my choice, I shall, from preference, go to sea in her. Perhaps you, being fastidious, may prefer the grab?"

"Why," I replied, "knock the shark's head off her and ship a bowsprit in its place, with a lick of tar and paint, I should be well content to take a cruise in her. Besides, I like the look of those Arabs, and of those savage, lean, wild-eyed fellows, with their red-caps, jackets, and turbans. I never saw cleaner or lighter-made fellows to fly aloft in a squall, or board an enemy in battle."

"Yes, they are our best men, and come from Dacca; and they'll fight a bit, I can tell you."

"But then I should like to have something to fight with."

"Oh, she has guns!"

"I hate those pea-shooter-looking things on her gunnels. A few twelves, or short twenty-fours, would not be too much for her. She has a beautiful water-line, and a run aft like a schooner. Her bow is of the leanest, and her beam being so far aft, I doubt she pitches damnably in a swell. Nevertheless there is a varmint and knowing look about her which I like."

"Well, will you run her down the coast to Goa? I'll follow in the old dhow. When the sun sets, get on board, and weigh with the land wind. You see she is already removed into the roadstead, and ready for sea. At daylight I shall get under way. I have told the Rais that you are going in the grab, and to obey you. I'll give you a few notes in case of an accident

separating us, though it is not probable. Come along. Remember you are a passenger to Goa. When we get into blue water, you shall know everything. Are you satisfied?"

"I am. I should not have held on so long without questioning, had I not entire confidence in you, De Ruyter. Where you go, never doubt me but I'll follow. I have not a very squeamish stomach, and am no changeling."

"My visit to Bombay was to achieve an important object—not to dispose of the paltry cargo of the grab. Yet," laughing, he continued, "if they had grabbed me there! Why, what do you think? That very cargo they have paid for—once, at least, as I have vouchers for that—and perhaps twice, if the original vendors have not been defrauded of it. Six months ago, cruising in this garb, under French colours, I cut off a lazy Company's ship from Amboyna, lagging astern of her convoy—that was her cargo. I have intelligence of some more of them loading at Banda, and perhaps we may fall in with them. When they are swollen up like leeches, I know where to put my thumb on them, and squeeze them till they disgorge. What say you?"

"With all my heart!" I answered.

"Very well. But have one thing uppermost in your mind. Before you can govern others you must be perfect master of yourself. That you may be so, do not, like a girl, let words or gestures betray your purpose. A loose word spoken in passion, or an

embarrassed look, may mar your designs, however ably planned. Above all things do not indulge in wine; for that, they say, opens the heart, and who but a fool would betray himself, perhaps to those on the watch to entrap him?"

After our return on shore, stopping near the tavern, he said, "Give your orders to these boatmen as to the things you want. You'll find almost everything you can have occasion for on board; and that is lucky for you, as you are a most heedless person."

Just before the sun had sunk to rest, I received De Ruyter's parting instructions, shook hands with him, and leapt into the boat. The Rais, who spoke English very well, received me on board, and showed me into the cabin. I gave him a letter from De Ruyter; he put it to his forehead, read it, and asked me at what time I wished to get under way, as he was referred to me. I answered, at twelve; such were my instructions. I bade him hoist the boats in, stow them, and have everything prepared for sea.

While he executed these orders, I looked over De Ruyter's pencilled memorandums. Though I certainly understood I was to have the command of the vessel, if I wished it, I could not account for the strange way in which it was enforced upon me. The Rais would do nothing without my orders. "Well," thought I, "with all my heart! To-morrow we shall meet the dhow, and then De Ruyter will enlighten me."

Mine had been such a dog's life in those situations in which my guardians had placed me, that I could

not possibly, seeking my fortunes blindfold, stumble on anything more miserable; so that not only without hesitation, but with a joyful alacrity, my mind was instantly made up to execute anything De Ruyter, the only person who seemed interested in my fate, thought fit to employ me in. I took a hasty turn or two on the deck, with a firm step and proud glance, which command gives; and spoke with kindness to the Serang and others, as a man does in the fresh bloom of office.

Though the vessel was in a disorderly trade-like trim, she was not deficient in the essentials of defensive, if not offensive warfare. Her masts and sails, with the coir running rigging, had a slovenly look to a man-of-war man's eye; and, from the want of tar and paint, she had a bronze hue. Notwithstanding, on a close inspection, you could see she had been fitted up with great care in all essential points, and with many of the modern European improvements. In measurement she was about three hundred tons, but could stow little more than half. She had a deep waist, pierced with portholes for guns; but battened in, except the two forward and four after guns, which had six long nine-pounders. Her gunnels were armed with swivels. Her forecastle was raised; and abaft she had a low poop, or half-deck, under which was the principal cabin. As the last stroke on the gong sounded eight o'clock, the sailor's supper-time, I instinctively returned to this after-cabin; the grave, which time had dug in my stomach since mid-day,

yawning to be filled up. Swarms of men, with the same intention, hastened from below, squatted on their heels in small circles, divided by caste, and turned to with their messala (messes) of rice, ghee, dried bumbalo, curry, fresh fruit, and dried chillies.

Having filled up the aforesaid vacuum, I lay down on the couch, smoked De Ruyter's hookah, and took an inventory of the cabin. It was low, but roomy; and well lighted and cooled from the stern ports. There were two sleeping berths on the opposite sides; and in the spaces between them and the upper deck were two stars of pistols; that is, fourteen or sixteen pistols in each, with their muzzles together, their butts forming the radii. The fore bulk-head was closely ribbed with bamboo spars; the outer portion was ranged with muskets; and there was a garnish of bayonets and jagged Malayan creeses arrayed in most fanciful forms. This was the "fitting for war," as De Ruyter called it. Then the after-part was certainly dedicated to peace, its shelves being crammed with books, writing materials, and nautical instruments; and the ceiling, low as it was, had a number of rolled charts suspended between the beams; while in the middle of the centre beam swung the transversed compass. In other nooks and corners were telescopes; and, though less picturesque, yet equally indispensable, such articles as I had called in requisition for my supper.

Not being forbidden to sleep, nor having the fear of punishment over my head for neglect of duty, I

was wakeful and alert. My mind was occupied by the responsibility with which my friend had entrusted me. I walked the deck, gazing at the dog-vane, to see it wooed by the land wind; but, as De Ruyter said, it was near twelve before this took place. Then I ordered the Rais to get under way, and, if possible, without noise. The first, he said, was easy work; but the last impossible. We weighed our anchor, and went to sea.

IV

ENGAGEMENT WITH AN ENGLISH FRIGATE

[Between the events narrated in the last section and those that now follow, De Ruyter in the dhow, with Trelawny in the grab, had reached Goa, where the dhow was left with her owners, and Trelawny joined De Ruyter in the grab.]

OUR progress was slow, with frequent calms—but my time was occupied, and we practised a thousand amusements. The abstemiousness and temperance of the natives rendered it a less arduous task to govern them than a crew, however small, of Europeans. Those of the latter which we had were picked with great caution, all holding responsible situations in the ship, and were also fully occupied. De Ruyter was not only a high-spirited and excellent commander, but an admirable companion; so that I had nothing to complain of.

After leaving the Laccadive Islands we put into one called Diego Rayes, for wood and water. We then passed a long cluster called the Brothers; and, keeping more to the south, took a fresh departure from Ropuepez Island. Some days after, between the

great bank of Garagos and the St. Brandon Islands, the man at the mast-head called out, "A strange sail to the westward!"—and then—"Another!"

They were in our course; we stood on. A heavy squall of mist and rain coming on, we lost sight of them for some time. On this clearing away, the strangers were visible from the deck; and the instant I saw them, I called De Ruyter from the cabin, it being then one o'clock p.m., telling him they were certainly two frigates—perhaps French ones, from Port St. Louis, in the Isle of France.

"They may be so," said he, "but I doubt it. Give me the glass." He looked at them attentively, and muttered, "Too high out of the water;—canvas too dark;—hull too short;—and the yards not square enough for Frenchmen. No, they are not French. Haul down the studding sails, and bring her up on the larboard tack, close to the wind."

On doing this, the headmost stranger hauled his wind, and shortly after tacked too; the sternmost held the same course. The wind was light, and we all kept turning to windward. The headmost frigate sailed remarkably well, and left her companion hull-down to leeward; but yet she was no match for us. All we feared was the wind changing, or losing it altogether, which we did at sunset.

During the night we were on the alert; no light was allowed, fearing they might see us; our decks were cleared for action, the guns double-shotted, and the small arms were got up in readiness; not in the

vain hope of contending with the frigate, but as a measure of precaution against any possible attempt at boarding us with boats. After the middle watch, a light air came out of the channel of Garagos, and we made a long stretch to the eastward. The wind then varied, with intervals of calm; the night was dark; the frigates showed no lights, nor did we see anything to form a guess of how they were standing. Our object was to get among the group of islands, the Brothers; by which means we might elude their seeing us again, as we thought they would, in all probability, retain their position between us and the port, which, by the course we were steering when they first discovered us, we were evidently bound to. But the breeze had been so scanty during the night that we had made but little way. The night, too, had been cloudy, so that our night-glasses were of no use; and we began to feel anxious for the dawn of day.

At last the sombre clouds broke in the east, changing their colour to purple, which speedily became fringed with an orange hue, and the circle of the horizon was enlarged. Still the frigates were not to be seen, and every face was brightening up with the appearance of day. De Ruyter stood on a gun, watching a hazy bank of misty clouds on our lee-quarter, which were slowly evaporating, and he suddenly exclaimed, "There she is!"

I looked, and saw one of the frigates looming in the vapour, in which she was enveloped, like an island. She must soon after this have seen us, for she tacked

in our wake, and crowded on all the light canvas she had. She was not more than nine or ten miles astern and four to leeward of us. Her consort we saw at a great distance, hull-down. We turned all our attention now to trimming the grab, and we clapped every inch of canvas on her; then all the deck lumber was turned overboard. After watching the frigate for some time, De Ruyter said, "By Heaven! she is a crack sailor! I think she almost holds her way with us; and that is what no other vessel can do in these seas. She must be some new frigate, fresh from Europe. Besides, in this trim and rig, the grab is not herself. I don't like the look of the weather; when the sun gets up, the breeze will die away. Get all the sweeps in readiness."

Two hours after this, the water became of a glassy smoothness. The sun rose like a globe of fire, and looked terrible; its piercing rays hardly could be endured; they seared to the very brain; and I was obliged occasionally to close my eyes in relief from the dazzling glitter, which I thought would have deprived me of sight. Yet in this heat the frigate ventured to hoist out her boats, at about 10 a.m., and gave us chase. De Ruyter admired their hardiness.

For the last hour we had been sweeping; yet, from our size, and the disadvantage of labouring with the thermometer at a hundred and eight in the cabin window, we made little progress. We therefore made every preparation to meet the worst; but De Ruyter observed, "Those fellows toil in vain! At midday

we shall have a sea breeze; then they may hoist in their boats, by which they will lose time."

As he predicted, a little after noon, flaws of wind began lightly to ripple the glassy surface to seaward; and then a faint current of air raised the feathered dog-vane. We held up the palms of our hands towards it, as in supplication. The light cotton sails aloft first caught it; when, instead of sticking, as if glued, to the spars, they swelled out to their arched form.

On my telling De Ruyter that one would imagine he held communion with the elements, he interpreted them so truly—"And so I do," was his reply; "all my life have I studied them; but life is too short to comprehend their mystery! They are a book a sailor should ever keep his eye on; and it is ever unfolded before him. Those who do not are unfit to command and have charge of the lives and properties of others."

We saw the frigate hoist the recall-signal to her boats, and telegraph to her companion to stand off and on, to intercept us if we should attempt to bear up during the night for the Isle of France. De Ruyter had copies both of the Admiralty and private signals of ships of war, as well as their telegraphic signals, which did him good service on many occasions.

We continued beating up to the weathermost island, and then the breeze gradually freshened, till we were compelled to take in our light canvas. The headmost frigate, as she continued to carry hers, rather gained on us. De Ruyter grew impatient at finding that the grab did not distance her pursuers,

as she had been wont to do. He said she was cramped in her movements; and, to ease her, the stays and backstays were slackened; we cut away the stern-boat; got the anchors pressing on her lean-bow farther aft; and lightened her forwards. We then shifted ballast in her wings, and, to try her in different trims, he ordered all the men, with eighteen-pound shot in each hand, to come aft; then he removed them from place to place; but still we could hardly hold her on. He remarked that her copper was foul with the accursed slime of Bombay. "Ay," I added, "and the frigate is a clipper."

The sun sank to rest, cloudless, red, and fiery, as it had risen. The breeze still freshened and, having neared the land by eleven o'clock p.m., De Ruyter determined on bearing away, getting to leeward of the island, and anchoring; which we did, trusting that the frigate would stand on to windward, and so lose us. Still, however, we were on the alert during the night; or those sleeping had their arms in readiness: our carronades were loaded with bags of musket-balls.

The doctor, who had as keen a scent for blood as the carrion-kite, after having made a platform of gratings in the hold for the anticipated wounded, thrust his head up the hatchway from time to time, to ask when the slaughter was likely to commence, and to solicit two of the boys as his assistants. At night, when we had anchored, he ventured up, trailing a bandage as long as the log-line, which he was adroitly rolling up. "Now, my dear fellow," said he

to me, "it's time I should instruct you. Just sit down on this gun-slide for one moment, while I show you how to apply a tourniquet." With these words he lugged one out from his waist-band.

"Nonsense, doctor, I have other things to attend to than to do your duty."

"Oh! you are young and wilful! Every man should know how to apply that; for if not done at the critical moment, I lose my patient, and the wounded man his life."

At the first glimpse of daylight we were all astonished, as the object which caught our sight was the frigate at anchor, and not three miles from us. Her lying close under the high land, and her hull being hid from us by some high rocks, projecting into the sea, together with the shadow of the mountain, had prevented us from seeing her during the night. The quick and piercing eye of De Ruyter was aware of her, before she had espied us; and our cable was cut, and we were again under a crowd of sail, with the rapidity of thought.

She soon followed us; but she had to work round the dark coral reef, which lay like a huge alligator; so that we got a good start of her, considering there was but a very light air stirring. We again lightened her by throwing lumber and ballast overboard; but De Ruyter, fearing we should be becalmed, set himself to work in seriously preparing for battle. The sweeps were got out under the hot sun; the breeze again died away; and, at ten, the frigate, being about

four miles astern, began to prepare her boats. With what little air there was, and with sweeping, we continued to drop the frigate; which she observing, hoisted her boats out, and we counted seven which shoved off in pursuit of us.

De Ruyter saw there were no hopes of wind till the evening; and in spite of our utmost exertions at the sweeps, we could not prevent the frigate's boats coming up with us in three or four hours. His clear brow became overcast with thought, and his look anxious, but without fear.

He called me to him, and said, "You see that precipitous rock, jutting out boldly into the sea, bleached by the sun and storms to a greyish white, and sapped and undermined into caverns. There is not a symptom of vegetation on it, or in its neighbourhood. It stands like a watch-tower, overlooking the island. You observe, by the colour and stillness of the water at its base, that it is profoundly deep on this side; and you see a long dotted line, like the floats of a fishing seine, stretching round in the form of a half-crescent: that is a low ridge of white coral, with which the sea, near this island, abounds. Now I want the grab to be swept round that rock; but you must keep her well out, to clear the outermost point; therefore place men on the extremity of our bow, and on the foreyard, to look out for breakers. There we shall find a little sandy nook, sheltered from the trade wind that blows at this time of the year, which can be entered only in very smooth water, and by

no vessel with much greater beam than ours. All around is so thickly studded with reefs and rocks, eddies and currents, that no one, imperfectly acquainted with its intricacies, would venture to approach it, even in a calm like this. But with the slightest wind stirring, or from the swell left after a breeze, all about is in commotion, and hazardous even for a life-boat, for coral cuts like steel. In a moderate gale of wind, such as I once witnessed in that very place, the most foolhardy in sea-daring would not venture within leagues of the shore. The heavy swell, which gets up between this island and the great bank of Baragos, is tremendous; the mountain waves rolling in here are opposed and broken (as regular armies are sometimes by guerrillas), by those countless rocks, whose heads you just see peering above the water. Then, though impeded and broken, yet not stopped, the sea is white with rage, and covers half the island with spray and foam. On this side, there being no impediment, the roar and dash of the surge drowns the loudest thunder. In the gap leading to that—it looks no bigger than an albatross' nest—we will place the grab athwart, to give these fellows (who fight for love with more ferocity than others do in hate) a meeting. With our men I might indeed meet them on fairer ground, without dreading the result; but the days of chivalry are past; craft and cunning are now called the art of war, and a commander is stigmatised who gives a chance when he can avoid it. Besides, I now wish

to spare the effusion of blood; still I must defend, and will defend the grab against all odds, even if the frigate herself came alongside of us. The savage Malays have taught us that death is preferable to dungeons; if all men thought so, there would be none. What think you, my boy?"

"I love fighting, and hate foul air."

"But they are your——"

"I am sorry for it. But bulldogs, you know, will fight against their own kind and kin; and I am no mongrel. I'll show my breed."

He smiled, and I went to cheer the men at the sweeps, and place the look-outs, whilst he directed the helmsman.

At two p.m. we were sweeping round the reef, in accordance with De Ruyter's plan. The frigate lay becalmed under the northern extremity of the island. Her boats were gaining on us fast. When we were embayed amongst the shoals, and closed in by the shore to the south, we lost sight of them all, hidden by a massy abutment of rock, stretching out in lonely grandeur. We furled all our sails, took up our position at the inner entrance leading to the little cove, got hawsers from our bow and stern, and made them fast with some difficulty to the rocks. We mustered our men; there were only fifty-four fit to bear arms, and many untried men amongst them.

All being in readiness, an awful pause took place while awaiting the boats' weathering the point. Even I, fond of fighting and reckless as I then was, felt a

queer sensation in this sudden transition of circumstances, finding myself leagued with dusky Moors in opposition to my fair-haired countrymen. Then, when one of the boats reappeared, and we heard their cheering hurrah repeated from boat to boat, till it died away in echoes on the hollow shore, I felt my heart beating impetuously against my bosom, and the cold drops trickling down my burning brow. There was a stillness in the grab I had never witnessed before; unpleasant thoughts were gathering in my brain; but they instantly took flight at the full and clear tones, unembarrassed look, and firm step, with which De Ruyter advanced, saying to his men, "Come, return them the Arab war-cry! You were not wont to be silent. And try if that headmost boat is in range of the guns."

I fired accordingly. "That gun," said he, "is too much elevated. I'll try this; here, bring a match. Ay, that will do."

The ball went in a right line, struck the water, bounding like a cricket ball, or, as it is technically termed, ricochetting, and passed clean over the headmost boat. She lay on her oars till it passed, cheering the other boats to advance. I omitted to mention that, with the first shot, our French colours were hoisted; each of their boats had the Union Jack flying.

On their uniting, we observed them in consultation; and then separating in two divisions, they advanced along inside of the reef. We kept up a steady fire upon them; but, nothing daunted, they replied

to every gun with a cheer, and quickened their advance upon us. "Look, De Ruyter!" said I, perhaps with some degree of exultation at their heroic courage—"one of their boats was struck with that last shot, and she is sinking; and see, they have only left a boat to pick the men up, drowning every mischance with a jovial hurrah, as if they were rejoicing at a feast!"

His answer was, "Prize-money, promotion, and habit will do much. Now let's give them a volley of canister. We must cripple their leaders."

From this period I continued at my station forward; most of the Europeans were under my command; and De Ruyter, having given me his last injunctions, went and remained aft, surrounded by his Arabs, over whom he had great influence. Another boat, which took the lead, was swamped; and, whilst they were picking up the men, though they opened a cross-fire from swivels and muskets, their loss in men was obviously so appalling, that we heard them hailing each other. Rash as they certainly were, they were brought to a standstill, and paused as if hesitating in what way to advance; for as to retreat—the word had fallen into disuse among men grown presumptuous with success. The heaviest boat, their launch, with an eighteen-pound carronade, and crowded with marines, now came up with their barge. We heard the order—"Give way, my lads!"—and, under a steady quick fire, which did some small damage on board of us, they dashed on with redoubled cheers, suffer-

ing severely from our commanding fire, though they were partly sheltered by some points of rock. They had undergone immense toil; the little air stirring scorched as that from the mouth of a blast-furnace; and it was evident they had not anticipated so warm a reception and unequal a combat. Desperation and their characteristic gallantry seemed to urge them on. Five of their little squadron laid us alongside, while the groans of the dying were mingled with their comrades' loud cheers and sharp fire.

We now took to our spears and small arms. Some of the most active, however, soon got up into our chains; and, though frequently repulsed, renewed their endeavours to get on board. While we were all intent on repelling them on our exposed side, the barge got across the bow; when a breeze and slight swell swinging the grab's bow inshore, many threw themselves on our deck from the land side. This calling us off, small parties boarded us in other directions.

I saw a Lascar, whom I had before reproved for skulking behind the mast, attempting to shirk down the hatchway. All the hatches were battened down, except the main one, under which the doctor was to operate. De Ruyter, fearing some of his Bombay sailors might run below, had ordered Van Scolpvelt to allow none but the wounded and powder-boys to go down or up; adding, with a smile, "Clip the limbs off, doctor, from any cravens who desert their quarters!" to which Van Scolpvelt grinned a pleased assent, and answered, "Never fear, Captain!" Aware

of the evil example of cowardice, and how rapidly a panic takes place, I instantly shot the Lascar, who fell down the hatchway on the doctor, who was lugging at his leg.

At this moment I received a wound from a cutlass, and a pistol was thrust into my mouth with such force as to cut my lips, though, perhaps from the lock being wet, it did not take fire. De Ruyter swept the deck with his Arabs, and called out to me to look out on the starboard bow. Our opponents never had a shadow of chance in their favour, though they fought with the most foolhardy valour. Many of them, severely wounded, still held on by the rigging, and fought manfully; and when we had driven them headlong into the boats or the sea, they struggled to climb up again. Our loss was great in wounded; my veins seemed to run with burning lava; I felt a thrilling excitement that almost made me mad; though slashed and maimed in several parts of my body, I was totally insensible to pain; and my men fought, generally, if not with the same impetuosity, with equal courage.

Two more of the boats were lost by being stove and swamped alongside. Those of the enemy, who yet remained on board, were sullenly submitting or rather had discontinued their hopeless resistance; one of them observing, "Hang me, if I strike to a Negur, howsomever they sarve us!"

To quiet these fellows' scrupulous delicacy on that score, I addressed them with, "Come, my lads, give

up your arms; and you shall have what is more use to you now—a piece of salt junk and a glass of stiff grog."

"Why," said one to the other, "it's all over, Tom! and though he ben't rigged, yet he speaks like a Christian."

Those who remained forward, many of them wounded, came to me and gave up their arms.

De Ruyter told me, after the action, that as soon as Van Scolpvelt had learnt it was I who had inflicted summary justice on the Lascar, he came on deck, in the thick of the fight, to complain of my having, in disregard of orders, unjustifiably robbed him of an excellent patient, on whom he ardently wished to try some new instrument he had himself invented, which he held in his hand, and called a hexagonal, transverse, treble-toothed saw, rapidly revolving on its own axis, and cutting without pain or splinters. In vain he was reminded of the necessity of continuing at his station; he went on complaining, that, either in contempt of science, or from a plot, there seemed to be a general combination on board, a malevolent and wicked design to blast, destroy, and render abortive all the fondly cherished hopes of his philanthropic life. De Ruyter insisting on not being further interrupted, he stood in mournful and abstracted contemplation of his horrid instrument, when a sailor, struck by a ball in the heart, was spinning his death-round near him. Van Scolpvelt whipt hold of him, ere he fell, by the arms, doubled

up his body in the form of a Z, and with miraculous strength trotted off with him, saying, "If I cannot have a living patient, I will essay my saw on a dead subject, and that forthwith!"

We had ordered parties to take possession of their boat and barge alongside, while a cutter and gig were shoving off with some of the officers and men, whom we had driven overboard. At the same time a handful of men, led on by an officer, seeing his boat seized, cut his way aft to get at De Ruyter, with whom he seemed determined to try his hand, or, if compelled, to surrender himself only to the commander, not to his dusky crew. De Ruyter saw his purpose, and called out to his men, who were struggling to oppose him, but who could hardly use their weapons on account of the dense crowd, "Stand back, Arabs! Let him pass; but alone!"

My attention thus arrested, I looked aft, but instead, as I expected, of seeing him surrender his sword, he attacked De Ruyter with great impetuosity. In bulk and stature I thought him the most powerful man I had ever seen. De Ruyter seemed to think he had found his match, and to be glad of it; for his form dilated, and his piercing and full eye became fixed and contracted. He had a pistol in his left hand, and a short, slightly curved sword in his right. He several times ordered his men, who were pressing on, to hold back, or advance at their peril. The stranger's common ship's cutlass, made of the worst of metal, bent like a hoop as it struck the sword-

guard of De Ruyter, who stood alone on the defensive. At this critical juncture, the cook, a Madagascar black, was in the act of plunging his long knife into the stranger's side. De Ruyter shifted his position, and pistolled the fellow, and said to the stranger, "Come, lieutenant, you have done everything the bravest could, and it is too hot to be thrusting carte and tierce. You forget you are amongst old friends here. The game of fighting has been long up; chance has decided for us. Come, cast away that worthless weapon."

I then went aft, and said, "What! Aston!"

He threw his sword on the deck, and gazed on me with wonder. As soon as he could recognise me through my coating of blood, powder, and sweat, "Ha!" said he, "I see it all! The well-known De Ruyter, that was De Witt, the plodding merchant at Bombay—and"—looking at me—"and—you!"

He looked half-reproachfully as he continued, "Well, it is strange! And with two such fellows, and a crew composed of the same stuff, what chance had we? Then, to attempt to take you in such a position as this, to sacrifice the finest fellows in our ship in such a wild-goose venture, it was folly or madness, I know not which to call it!"

Some of the frigate's men were still endeavouring to escape; and two of the boats which had, in the confusion, shoved off, were now attempting to retake a third boat from some of our men, who had possession of her, when a desultory fire was kept up. De

Ruyter was waxing wrathful, and came up to Aston with a hurried step, saying, "Sir, I entreat you—speak to your men! If they are to expect the usages of war, let them desist from useless efforts at further opposition. It is mere wantonness, and I can no longer control my people, if yours are permitted, after they have struck their flag, to attempt to regain their boats. My only wish is to spare a greater effusion of blood."

Aston sprung forward, commanded the men, struggling in the barge, to desist and come on board, and those on board to go below. "As for those boats already shoved off," he said, "they must take their chance."

"Let them!" replied De Ruyter. "I shall not impede their flight. I do not want boats or prisoners. Nevertheless I must do my duty in keeping those I have got, though I am sorry to have them. It is the most unprofitable victory I ever gained. I have lost some of my best men and the services of others that are wounded. But" (turning to me) "show your friend below and make him welcome. There is much to be done. Yet what? holla! what is the matter? Why, you denied being wounded!"

From toil, exhaustion, and loss of blood, I dropped so suddenly on the deck, as if shot, that De Ruyter could not catch me, though he contrived to break my fall.

They carried me into the cabin, where Scolpvelt loosened my shawl-sash, and, on taking off my stained shirt, found two other wounds, one from a ball through the small part of my arm, the other a contusion on

my side, from the butt end of a musket. "A judgment," he continued, "for the most atrocious of crimes—deceiving his surgeon! He would not learn how to put on a tourniquet either; what foolish and irrational people the English are! I don't doubt but that he would rather lose his life than his obstinacy. To cheat and rob his doctor of a pa-ti-e-n-t!" (here he was scooping about, and shoving tow into the wound). "Oh, ho! he don't like that! I thought he had no feeling."

Aston told me I was roused into motion by his applications; then, being called on by a dozen different messengers, he hastily dressed and bound up my wounds, and went to attend on his numerous patients.

On recovering my senses, I found Aston stooping over me, sponging my face and breast with vinegar and water. It was some time before I understood where I was; for Aston's face reminded me of my drowning frolic. "I have been dreaming," I said; "is that Aston? Where am I?"

"Where I am sorry to find you. Under any flag but this, I could have forgiven you!"

This recalled my flitting remembrances together, and I said, "You will allow I had cause to be disgusted with the former. Now I fight under De Ruyter. Show me a braver man, and I'll leave him; but there is none braver or nobler."

"Ay, he is well known for a gallant fellow, and I have found him so; but that is not to the purpose."

"Well, Aston, you know how I was situated; what

better could I do? What, in my case, would you have done?"

He thought a moment and, taking my hand, said kindly, "By heaven, I believe the same!"—but then added, "when I was at your age."

"Ah! if you knew him as well as I do, you might go further, and say at any age. I know I would; so let's say no more about it. I want to know how things are going on upon deck. It seems a dark night, and we're in a devilish queer place. What! is that the surf breaking against us?"

"No, against the rocks. Who would have ventured in such an anchorage as this but De Ruyter? I see his object—to prevent our ship's getting alongside of him. It is wonderful! I should as soon have thought of anchoring on the sand-heads in a typhoon."

"Rest satisfied; he knows what he is at. 'Tis not the first time he has lain here; he told me so. But come, boy, hand out the grub and grog. I must supply the loss of this red liquor; I am dry as a sponge. What the deuce has old Scolpvelt been at with my side? I feel the print of his cursed talons festering in my flesh. That fellow is ready-made for chief torturer in hell. I wish, Aston, you would let your doctor overhaul me, for Van has spoiled my appetite."

Aston sent for him, and said, "That doctor of yours has certainly an extraordinary look. I can't say I like the cut of his jib."

"Not half so bad as the feel of his paws; they burn like blue stone."

Aston's surgeon now came down. As doctors never openly censure individuals of their tribe, except by direct implication—that is, by always undoing what another has done—so did he. Some soothing liniment was applied, and the cursed tow plugs were removed; which gave me as much relief as drawing a splinter out of a wound, in which it had been long rankling. Thus eased, I resumed my talk with Aston, shook hands with him, asked him about our old ship, and why he had quitted her; for I knew she was not the one which had chased us.

He told me a friend of his had just come out in command of the present frigate, and had got him appointed as first lieutenant. Having received intelligence of two French frigates, they had gone in all haste to report the same to the admiral at Madras; and he had ordered them, and another frigate, to go and look after, and by no means lose sight of, the Frenchmen. They had discovered them lying in Port Louis, which they had been some days blockading. "Besides that," said he, "we had intelligence that De Ruyter was out in his corvette; with orders to endeavour to cut him off in his return to port. Not the smallest idea had we of finding him here in the grab. We all mistook him for an Arab. I thought I had seen her somewhere, forgetting it was at Bombay. But then, I had not the slightest reason to suppose De Ruyter had any concern with her, or even De Witt; much less that they were one and the same person. He has done more harm to the Company's trade

than all the French men-of-war together; and his head is worth a frigate's ransom. It is wonderful how long he has kept clear of the traps set for him, clever as he is."

De Ruyter, having made his arrangements on deck, came down, shook Aston by the hand, and said, "This mischance of your falling into our hands will be no great evil. To put you as much at ease as circumstances will allow, I have only to say that I leave the disposition of your men to your judgment, satisfied with your word of honour. Your ship will be off here in the morning, and you may send the doctor on board with the badly wounded; they will be better attended to there, for we are lumbered up here."

De Ruyter returned on deck, and I slept till morning. I was then well enough, with a stick, to scramble on deck. A look-out, whom we had placed on a point of rock on shore, gave us notice of the frigate's motions. Soon after daybreak she stood in as far as she could with safety, to where we lay, with a top-gallant breeze. We sent our long-boat on board her with a flag of truce; the wounded, under the care of the surgeon; and letters from Aston.

The captain of the frigate returned his thanks, but promised, notwithstanding De Ruyter's gentlemanly and humane conduct, to rout him out of his lurking-place. To this effect every expedient was used. But De Ruyter knew by the signal made to the other frigate, that she was on no account to quit the blockade

of Port Louis. She having lost her boats, could do nothing, it being impossible for her to get within gunshot of the grab. Her only chance was in blockading him; but on account of the frequent storms prevalent at that time of year, she could not do that effectually; so that De Ruyter felt little uneasiness.

To avoid tediousness, I shall borrow an extract from De Ruyter's abrupt and succinct journal—

> Ten p.m. dark and cloudy; lightning; heavy showers of rain; got under way; warped out from our anchorage; wind fresh from the land; aided by the lightning, kept clear of the breakers; at one a.m. made sail; turned to windward of the island, which had been our refuge.

This was on the third day after our action with the boats. We stretched over to Diego Garcia, and got out of the track of the frigates, having my friend Aston and twenty-six of his men on board.

V

ATTACK ON PIRATES

ONE day we descried a strange sail to the westward. She bore down on us, and we, finding we outran her, shortened sail, till she came near enough for us to make her out. De Ruyter then knew her to be a French corvette. We hoisted a private signal, which they answered. We hove to. At sunset she came under our quarters; and after some conversation with the captain, De Ruyter went on board, where he had a long conference. On his return we altered our course for the island of Madagascar.

We then understood from De Ruyter that the corvette had been sent to examine into an act of piracy, committed, it was supposed, by the Maratti, a formidable nest of brigands, on the north point of the island of Madagascar.

We continued in company. The weather being particularly fine, with little wind stirring, we passed our time very pleasantly, in giving parties alternately on board the corvette and the grab. Aston, who had been a prisoner in France when a midshipman, spoke French as perfectly as De Ruyter. At daylight we used to separate, and keep a look out to windward;

and towards sunset we bore down, and remained together during the night.

Soon after we fell in with and boarded some Arab trading-vessels. They had been plundered; the greater part of their cargoes and crews were taken out, leaving merely a few old men to work the vessels, with a little water and rice. This was committed by a fleet of eighteen Maratti proas, each having from eighteen to forty men on board. It appeared that this fleet was bound to some of the islands in the Mozambique Channel.

De Ruyter now conferred with the French commander; and his advice was that we should, in the absence of the greatest part of the pirates, effect a landing at St. Sebastian, surprise them during the night, plunder and destroy their fortifications, burn their town, and rescue their prisoners; for doubtless they were loaded there, as they had kept possession of two of the largest of the Arab traders. This was agreed to; and the corvette supplied us with two of her brass guns, and lent us fifteen of her soldiers.

Without anything particular happening, we got into 15° 20′ South latitude, ran on till we saw the high land of Madagascar, and kept to the north-east side of the island till we had run well inshore, when we sent a boat, and brought off some fishermen, who gave us information. We then crept round the land, to the north, at night, De Ruyter piloting, being in sight of the north point of Cape St. Sebastian, which stretches far out to sea, in the form of an estuary.

Taking advantage of the twilight, De Ruyter piloted us through a narrow channel in the recess; and, before midnight, we brought to as close to the rocks as we could on the east side, having the cape between us and the town, by which means we were unobserved.

It was a cloudy night, with frequent showers of rain. We got out our boats, and landed a hundred and twenty officers and men well armed: eighty from the corvette, and forty from the grab. To do the Frenchman justice, he felt no envy of De Ruyter's superior knowledge; on the contrary, he insisted on his taking the command, and gave his officers orders to implicitly obey De Ruyter in every particular, he himself staying on board the corvette.

On landing, De Ruyter divided the men into three parties, retaining to himself and the first officer the strongest, consisting of fifty men, armed with muskets and bayonets; a French lieutenant commanded thirty-five, and I thirty. I had a part of De Ruyter's favourite band of Arabs, armed with their lances and short carbines. We kept on together, till we got round the cape; then De Ruyter ordered me to ascend the rocks, and keep round the hill, nearly at the foot of which the pirates' town was situated, till I arrived immediately above it. The lieutenant was directed to keep along the beach, till he was in line with me; while De Ruyter, with the main body, went directly forward. We were all to march as near as possible, and by every precaution to avoid discovery. When we had taken up our respective positions, we were to

conceal ourselves till just before the dawn of day, when the main body would fire a rocket, which, on being answered by us, was to be the signal for a simultaneous advance and attack. We were to make what observations we could, under cover of the night, as to the readiest means of getting into the town, which was defended by low mud walls, having three entrance-ports. On taking possession of these entrances, we were each to leave a party to keep them, who were to kill or make prisoners all who attempted to escape, whilst the remainder attacked those within. If any of us should be previously discovered, or if we should be attacked, we were to retreat to the main body. After some other instructions, De Ruyter commanded us to kill none, at our peril, but those with arms in their hands; and particularly to avoid doing injury to the women, children and prisoners.

My party had some distance to go, and up a rugged and precipitous path, where we were suddenly stopped by a black and deep ravine, or chasm, at the bottom of which we heard the dashing of water. It would have been folly to attempt to cross here; for a couple of men, on the other side, might have perhaps opposed us with success. We therefore went lower down the mountain; and it was with great toil, and loss of time, that we crossed to the opposite side. My impetuosity spurred me on; and, when it wanted little more than half an hour to dawn, our scouts in advance gave us the welcome intelligence of being near our destination.

I now halted our party, and advanced with two men. We descended a narrow sheep-path, amidst broken and stony ground, overgrown with prickly peas, low shrubs, and clumps of the palm cocoa. We heard distinctly the surf breaking on the beach with the monotonous regularity of the ticking of a clock at night. The ground became smoother, and we discerned, close under us, the low huts of the town, huddled together, and looking like a multitude of large white ant-hills, or bee-hives. We then came to some ruins, on a conical hill, up which one of the Arabs climbed on all fours, like a jackal, and found it was deserted. I sent the other man back, to bring up our party, as this was a capital post to occupy, in case of surprise. With great caution I then descended to the wall of the town; it was low, and in a crumbling state, till I came to two or three palm trees, where a mud hut was built on the wall, like a swallow's nest. Below there was an entrance, or rather a hole, which evidently led to the interior. Having examined the place well, we hastily returned. The clouds gave indications of breaking in the east. The rain was still falling. I crept down with ten men, and advanced under the shadow of the wall, till within pistol-shot of the entrance. There taking our position, we impatiently awaited the concerted signal from De Ruyter.

The night was tardily withdrawing her dusky canopy, and the morning advanced gloomily. The hushed stillness was ominously broken by the whiz-

zing noise of the rocket-signal, flying like a meteor over the devoted Maratti town. It evidently came, not as it should have done, from De Ruyter, but from the lieutenant, being exactly opposite to my position, which showed that the lieutenant's party was discovered, or anticipated discovery. I replied to it; and nearly at the same moment another rocket ascended from De Ruyter. This commanded an immediate attack; and scarcely had it risen to the height of the lance I held in my hand, ere I had forced the trifling impediments at the entrance; and, in my haste, stumbled over something on the ground. The man, for such it was, essayed to rise. I dropped my lance, and grappled him by the throat. The greater part of my Arabs rushed in. I called out to force open the inner entrance; which done, the faint light showed us four or five of the Maratti rising from the ground, commencing their war-cry. These were despatched quickly. The man I held scarcely needed the aid of the creese, which I forced through his breast into the sandy floor.

A commotion was now raised within. We got through the rude outworks into the interior. The remainder of my men were dropping down inside the wall, which, with the aid of their lances, they had scaled. A noise of the assault on the other side was growing high; and presently we heard the sharp report of firearms. I left a portion of my men to guard the entrance, and advanced, as previously arranged, to the centre of the habitations; the inmates of which

—for the surprise was complete—came out in twos and threes, in great confusion and terror. Those who crossed our path we speared; and those seeking to save themselves by flight we fired at. We gave them not an instant to rally, till we arrived at the ruins of a considerable building in the centre, which had been erected as a magazine and court of guard by the Portuguese or Dutch. Here having taken possession, we halted. Presently the lieutenant, and then De Ruyter, came up; he said, "Well done, my lad! always first in danger." Then leaving an officer and twenty men to keep this place, we advanced in three parties, dividing the men equally, with strict injunctions to make all the prisoners we could, and send them in to this post.

De Ruyter told me to go round to the port I had entered, as there would be an attempt to escape that way to the mountains; and while he was speaking, a sharp fire was opened from that quarter. I hastened thither, amidst a scattering fire of muskets and matchlocks, and the yells and shrieks of men, women and children, running about in all directions. The war-cry of the Arabs, and the *Allons!* and *Vive!* of the French were so loud, that I could not hear either my own voice, or distinguish the report of my own carbine. On nearing the place at which we had entered, we saw a mingled heap of naked savages, of all ages, men and women, armed with creeses, guns, knives, and bamboo spears; others with their children, and many loaded with their goods, all rushing on. I

stopped my men, and gave them a volley; and as they were facing about, we charged them with our lances. They stood on their defence with the fierceness of desperation, and a few of our men dropped; but they resisted without method, impeded by their own numbers, and a panic seizing on them, they separated to escape. A great many were butchered, and no prisoners made; for blood is like wine, the more we have the more we crave, till, excited to madness, one excess leads to another; and it is easier to persuade a drunken man to desist from drinking whilst he can hold his glass, than a man, whose hands are reeking with blood, to desist from shedding more.

My fellows rushed about in ungovernable disorder, destroying all whom they met; and I was obliged to remain myself at the outlet, until I had enforced ten or twelve of them to keep that post. As the light grew clearer, objects became distinct, and I beheld the confusion and slaughter going on within. My senses were dizzy with the blood I had shed, and seen shed. The Maratti, environed in their own walls, essayed every outlet, sought every means to provide for the escape of their women and their children, and, finding none, they fought with the fearlessness or heedlessness of ensnared tigers. They ran from gate to gate with blind fury, and threw themselves headlong on the bayonets and lances. They had never heard of mercy, yielding, or asking for quarter. There were no such words in their language. They had been accus-

tomed to shed blood from their childhood, whether of men or monkeys, with equal indifference; and they believed all the world to be of the self-same nature. As for Europeans, they were always treated by them, if they fell into their hands, like fish—hanged up in the sun to dry. Old men, women, and children, therefore, preferred to die fighting; and, thus far, we had not a single prisoner. They would have succeeded in forcing my position had not De Ruyter come to my aid. I feel extreme pain and shame at remembering the horrible ferocity with which I slaughtered these besotted barbarians, and more at the savage and inhuman delight with which I did so. It would have ended in their total extermination, had they not effected several outlets in their mouldering walls.

The only wound I received was in the leg, from a woman, who attempted to hamstring me as, in hurrying along, I stepped on her body; and the first symptom of my returning reason was, on discovering her sex, instead of crushing her with my uplifted foot, to have her carried to the main guard; this was the first prisoner we had taken. It was then De Ruyter came to me, and said, "We have had blood enough. Call our people off, and let the poor devils go. Seize what prisoners you can, but take no more lives: and lead your men to the huts on that sandhill; there you will find their Arab and other prisoners; take care they are not sacrificed in the fray; and send them to the guard. Bandage your leg—you are bleeding fast."

I did so, and went, as directed, to the sandhill. It was well I did, or we should not have had a prisoner to release; for the women were killing them, as they lay bound hand and foot on the ground in heaps. These dark hags were despatched. Then entering a small matted tent, affixed to a larger one, the first object which struck me was a naked, gaunt Arab, bound and fastened to a short stake driven into the earth. He was covered with stabs, weltering in his own blood; yet though bound, helpless, and dying, his unsubdued spirit still shone like a chieftain's. An aged, a decrepit she-devil was lying on his prostrate body, she having slipped in the gore, and with a cocoa-nut knife in her hand, was hacking at him with feeble blows. Her fallen victim held fast her left hand in his teeth; and at his feet, huddled up in a corner, was a young girl, almost naked, screaming in affright, "Oh, father, father, let me get up"—with her bound hands stretched out, struggling to rise, but pressed down by the strong limbs of the man, who thus sheltered her from the fiendish old woman. I seized on the cloth band round the Hecate's loins, and, lifting her withered carcass up in the air, I dashed her down with such force, that she never stirred more, but lay sprawling like a crushed toad, the faint sparks of life being extinguished without even a groan escaping her.

This scene exhibited to my view the worst of cruelty, in its most diabolical shape, and filled me with horror and pity. I bade an Arab unbind the

father, who lay motionless watching me, as I proceeded to liberate his daughter. He seemed perfectly reckless of himself, and hesitating how to act, doubting my designs. In vain he endeavoured to sit up, for the ground was slippery with his blood. I saw his fears, and, to dispel them, instantly placed him in a sitting posture, and drew my creese from my belt. His eyes glared ferociously. I put the weapon into his hand, and said, "We are friends, father—fear not!" He tried to speak, but the blood oozed from his mouth, and the words died on his lips.

His child, now unbound, over whom I threw a mantle, crawled to her father's side, and kissing his encrimsoned hands and eyes, bent over him in speechless and indescribable anguish. The old man's desperate look relaxed; his eye lost its fierceness, then became clouded and dim. I knelt, subdued by the scene, on the side opposite his child, supporting him. He, with an effort, took my hand in his; I felt its clammy moisture; he put it to his lips, then, with great difficulty, he removed a ring from his finger, and placed it on mine; and, laying my hand on his child's he alternately looked at us both, and convulsively squeezed our hands together, muttering some words. My eyes were wet with tears, which dropped on his bosom. His head and frame shook as with an ague-fit; his fingers grew cold as ice, his eye stony, fixed, and glazed, and his limbs rigid. I could no longer uphold his increasing weight. His spirit fled its earthly tenement. Yet still our hands were bound

together so fixedly in his, that I could not release them; and he still seemed to gaze on us both with intense anxiety.

Motionless as a form of marble, his child bent over him. She neither wept, nor even appeared to breathe. This recalled me to my senses. I thought she was dead too; and unclenching his death-grip, I freed myself, arose, and went to her. She appeared to awaken, when I tried gently to remove her, as from a trance, threw her arms round her father's neck, and clung to him with convulsive strength. I cleared the tent of the gazers-on, who were not unmoved, for they gave vent to their feelings in vows of vengeance; then placing two Arabs, in whom I could confide, at the entrance, to let no one pass, I went into the open air, to recover from the faintness that was creeping over me.

I slung my carbine over my shoulder, and now used all my efforts to stop the slaughter. A general pillage was going on. The grab's and the corvette's long-boats were attending on the beach, the vessels themselves not being able to get round the reef, as it was perfectly calm. These boats, therefore, and some canoes lying on the beach we commenced loading with the booty, which was considerable; gold, spices, bales of Chinese silk, the muslins of India, cloths and shawls from the Persian Gulf, bags of armlets and anklets, silver and gold ornaments, maize, corn, rice, salt fish, turtle, rackee, and an infinity of arms and apparel, besides slaves, male and female, of all ages

and countries. Every eye glistened, and every back was bent with a costly burden.

Yet so greedy and insatiable were our men, who were at first fastidious in their selection, that at last they regarded everything with a jealous eye, and became so gross in their avaricious desires, that they would fain have borne off garbage which the wild dog would have passed heedless by; rotten fish, mouldy rice, rancid ghee, broken pots and pans, cast-off apparel, mats and tents, nothing so villainously worthless or nauseous but had some value in their inordinate avidity for plunder. What they could not carry on their backs they did in their bellies; they gorged themselves, like the ostrich, till they could scarcely move.

Van Scolpvelt and the steward now appeared in the field, and took their ground, intent on very different objects. Van seemed distracted with the rich variety of patients before him. As he hurried about the encampment, with his shirt sleeves tucked up, his skinny arms, bare, bony, and hairy, a case of glittering and appalling instruments in one hand, and in the other a monstrous pair of scissors, rounded into the form of a crescent; he realised, in his appearance, the most damnable picture of an avenging demon that was ever conceived by saintly painter or poet. Some, not quite dead, feebly shook their creeses at him, others screamed with horror as he stopped to examine their wounds, and a few actually gave up the ghost as he approached.

The steward, on the other hand, grinned from ear to ear as he contemplated the huge mass of plunder, and the destruction of the pirates, whom he hated, because they had repeatedly intercepted the cattle trade to the Mauritius. But his joy was presently checked, and he said to me in sadness, and in worse English than I give him, "Oh, Captain, can you let these improvident savages waste so much? Look, the earth is covered with grain and flour as if it had snowed! And do you see these lively turtles? They are of the most delicious kind, and the most beautiful kind, and the most beautiful creatures I ever saw; what beastly savages to leave them here! Make the men throw away the lumber they are carrying on board; we don't want it; do you? and load the boats with these. Of what use are those black savages you are sending in the boats? One of these"—(pointing to a turtle) "is worth an island of them. Nobody can eat them; can you? Bah! I hate savages, and dote on turtle; don't you? We have enough of the one sort on board; but where have you ever seen such lovely creatures as these? I have not for years; have you?"

Intent on this, which now solely occupied him, by threats and entreaties he endeavoured to induce the men to assist him in bearing off the turtle. At last growing desperate at the Arabs, who loathe them (which Louis said proved they were without human palates); he set about loading the slaves and women with them, the latter of whom he declared he never saw usefully employed before; then turning to me,

asked, in his peculiar voice, which began in the deep hollow tones of a muffled drum and ended with the tinkling jingle of a matin bell, "Have you?"

De Ruyter now came up, accompanied by Aston, who had just come on shore to see the place. I told them of the scene I had witnessed in the slave tent, when Aston's gentle heart was moved, and he reproved me for having left the girl. My reply was, that I had done so, thinking it was better she should be left alone, to give vent to the first burst of sorrow.

"But," said De Ruyter, "there is not now an instant to lose. We must hasten aboard; for these fellows outside will assuredly rally, and, aided by the Madagascarenes, assault us in our turn. So call the stragglers together. The prisoners are embarked, and we must embark forthwith."

"Come, Aston," I said, "assist me in getting this poor orphan girl on board."

We proceeded together to the tent, where we found her making loud wailings. Then she would break off and cry, "Father, arise—we are free! The strangers are good; and see! they have come to free us. The old woman has not killed me; I am well, and she herself is dead. Oh, father, get up!—look, I have bound up your wounds—you don't bleed now!" And indeed she had carefully bandaged him with the only remaining rag on her person.

Taking her hand, I said, "Come, dear sister; you are free. We must leave these cruel Maratti."

Without looking at me, she went on, "See, how

my father sleeps! They would not let him sleep or eat, and he is weary and hungry."

"Come, dear," I said, "we must go."

"Go!" she replied, "how can we?—our father sleeps!—and I cannot awake him! Oh, awake him, that I may feed him! See, I have got some beautiful fruit, and his lips are dry. Oh these cruel Maratti will come again when you are gone, and kill him! Awake, my father! His eyes are open, but he can't move. He is old, and feeble from hunger; he wants food; his lips are cold with hunger!" At this she kissed him, and rubbed his head, and squeezed pomegranate juice in his mouth.

"Come!" said Aston, "they are calling you. We must be off. I cannot bear this sight. I'll take her to the boat."

I entreated him to do so; then gently loosed her hands, covered her with my abbah, and told her I would take care of her father. Aston snatched her up, and bore her off. Her screams were appalling. She called on the name of her father to save her; and Aston shook, but not with his light burden. I was in little better trim. Sending some Arabs down to the beach with Aston, I returned to De Ruyter, who was drawing-off the men with great difficulty.

Louis, whose bad English I must continue to make better, as Aston passed him, exclaimed to me, "What is he carrying away? What! a girl! What use is she? Why, he could carry this great turtle, which else must be abandoned, for no one here can lift him—

can you? And she might carry that little one—it will make very good soup; and is very pretty—much more so than a little girl!"

I passed on, ordering him instantly to come on board, or the Maratti would soupify him. "What!" he ejaculated, "leave that turtle, worth all the rest we have taken!" and he wrung his hands in anguish.

Armed men were now appearing on the hills; and De Ruyter grew furious at the tardy movements of his men. Many of the Frenchmen were drunk, and could not be got out of the tents. The shouts on the hills augmented, and we were obliged to move. De Ruyter went out of the gate, and I stayed some time longer with the Arabs, to collect stragglers, and then followed him. I omitted to mention that we had fired the town in many places and burnt two Arab vessels which were grounded, with seven or eight canoes on the beach.

The natives were hurrying towards the town; and soon after we saw bodies of them armed, skirting along the side of the river we had to cross, and descending as if to attack us there. We hastened on, preparing our arms. When we arrived there, keeping as near the sea as possible, we heard a firing, and saw De Ruyter crossing the river. He left a party to keep the opposite bank, went on to the boats, fearing they might be attacked, and sent a messenger to me, to hasten me on. But before I could arrive there, being detained by the difficulty in getting on the drunken Frenchmen, the natives had increased till their

numbers were formidable. They grew bold, and attacked the party on the opposite bank; then wading down the stream, and closing on our rear, they became troublesome. We kept our ground firmly, and I continued on the bank till our party had crossed. Just as I was following with my Arabs, I heard some shots in our rear, and now appeared, emerging from behind a sandbank, a monstrous figure, a Patagonian, in (what I thought, as the sun shone on him) bright scaled armour. It was the steward, with the turtle on his shoulders, accompanied by a Dutch soldier. I roared out to them to come on quickly, for every moment became more perilous. As they staggered towards us, I could hardly refrain from laughing. Louis, whom I could with difficulty make out to be a human figure, looked like a hippopotamus, as, reeling like a drunken man, he bent under the weight of the huge fish, which I thought he had left behind. The other fellow, the Dutchman, who came staggering on in his wake, was bulged out into preposterous proportions; his red guernsey frock and ample Dutch trousers, secured at the wrists and knees, were crammed with stowage of gold and jewels, which he had discovered after one of the houses had been pulled down. He looked like a wool-sack, and moved like a Dutch dogger, which his broad beam resembled, labouring in a head sea. I told them to cast their slough, if they valued their lives, and commenced crossing the river by a sand-bank thrown up by the tide, the only passable ford.

The natives pressed more closely on our rear; the difficulty in using our arms in the water made them bold; and but for our men stationed on the opposite bank, we should have had little chance of escape; for they, in a great degree, checked their advance, and kept the space clear before us. Still we were compelled to hurry on. At this moment I heard something flounder in the water, and a savage yell, as of triumph, from the natives. I looked round, and the Dutch soldier, who was in my rear, was missing. Overballasted by his treasure, he lost his footing on the ford and sank in the stream, borne down by the weight about his body, which it was impossible for him to shake off. I only got a glimpse of his person, when my attention was called off by the steward, who, either from fear, or from having been caught hold of by his fallen countryman, who was close to him, had also fallen. I ran back, and holding the shaft of a spear to him, he grasped it tight, while the huge monster he had been carrying tumbled into the water, and flapped his heavy fins in triumph as he regained his native element.

When Louis had recovered himself on the bank, he exclaimed, with a rueful look. "But where is my turtle? Oh, don't mind me, Captain!—save the turtle!"

"Hang the turtle! I wish he was down your throat!"

"Oh, so do I, Captain!—that's all I want! Oh, where's my turtle?" As he vociferated this demand, up it rose to the surface, in mockery of its enemy;

and the instant its bright shell glistened in the sun, Louis seemed inclined to rush down the stream after it, bawling out, "There he is! Oh, save him!"

Thinking he meant the soldier, I looked, and inquired, "Where?"

"Why, there!" he replied, pointing to the turtle. "Oh, Captain, I told you how lively he was! I cut his throat two hours ago; but he won't die till sunset; they never do; and then he will be lost—won't he?"

I had ordered two of my men to drag him along; and so loath was he to leave the turtle, that with his eyes strained down the stream, he came reluctantly in a sidelong motion, like a crab.

Once or twice I was compelled to turn round on our pursuers, and drive them off, before we reached the other side. We hastened to regain our boats. Four of our men were slightly wounded in this retreat; besides the loss of the Dutch soldier, and the deeply lamented turtle. Wherever the ground was broken, or where there was a cover of rocks or shrubs, the Madagascarenes closed in on our flank and rear. I therefore retired close to the sea and skirted its margin. There was one very dangerous pass; it was the rough abutment of ragged rocks jutting out into the sea, half a mile on the other side of which were our boats. The natives were ranged along the ridges in files, and there was already a sharp firing going on there. While wondering that De Ruyter should have deserted me under such circumstances, and hesitating as to the best mode of proceeding, I espied on the

extreme point his swallow-tailed flag. We now ran on, and were hailed by our shipmates; who seeing this post was possessed by the enemy, had driven them up, and opened a passage for us. Yet every inch was obstinately disputed, and here three of our men were left dead; for the natives, under cover of the rocks and lying down with their long matchlocks, had a great advantage, while we could not get a shot at them. The boats approached; and the French soldiers were drawn up on the beach, which being open, the natives dared not advance, though they kept up a scattering fire. We embarked amidst the wild yells of the savages, who, the moment we shoved off, came down like a countless flock of crows; and with as much noise and din they even followed us into the water, and their arrows, stones, and balls fell about us like a hailstorm.

All of us, I believe, were glad to regain our ships. We then towed them out, it being a dead calm; awaited the land breeze at night; and ran directly from the land, shaping our course for the island of Bourbon.

On computing our loss on board the two ships, the killed and missing amounted to only fourteen, but we had twenty-eight wounded, most of them, however, slightly. I observed to De Ruyter, as I was entering these particulars in the log-book, "It appears to me, considering the service we were on, and the numbers against us, this is a very small loss."

"No, it was a very large one!" cried out Louis,

who had just come down the ladder, "you'll never see so fine a one again. I'd rather have lost every man and thing than that—would not you?"

"What do you mean, Louis?"

"Mean!—why, the turtle, to be sure. You saw it, sir, and might have saved it—could you not? But you think of nothing but little girls—my turtle was worth all the girls in the world—was it not?"—turning, as he always did, at his repeated interrogations, sharp round, and shoving his expanded nostrils right in one's face.

"This fellow," said De Ruyter, "is a Hindoo, and believes the whole world is supported on the back of an enormous turtle."

"And I should not wonder," I added, "if he makes a voyage to the Pole, not for the benefit of navigation, but to extract its calliopash and calliopee. What luxury, Louis, to let your entire carcass wallow in such a sea of green fat!—would it not?"—mimicking him.

"Yes;" he replied; "but there is no turtle there; nothing but walruses, white bears, and whales."

Soon after, under the superintendence of Louis, a feast, that might well be termed a turtle one, was served up. A huge tub of soup, where a fleet of canoes might have almost fought a battle, the steward himself put on the table; and mopping his reeky brows, said, "Taste that, and you'll live for ever! Why, the odour itself is a feast for a burgomaster, or a king! I never smelt anything so beautiful—did you?"

Then came calipash and calipee, and stewed, and steaked, and minced, and balled, and grilled; and when all these were cleared away, leaving us well-nigh surfeited, quoth Louis le Grand, "Now here are two dishes which I have invented, and no one has the secret of them; though burgomasters and foreign ambassadors have been sent to me with great offers to discover it. But I never would; because this secret makes me greater than all the kings in the world, for they cannot purchase them with a kingdom, nor would I give them in exchange for a kingdom—would you? All I shall tell you is this—and it is more than I ever told anyone before—the soft eggs, and head, and heart, and entrails, are all there!—but there are many other things, which I shall not, must not, speak of."

Casting his eye on my plate, and seeing the green fat left, he enquired in astonishment why I did not eat it. I answered him, "I can't; I don't like it." "Can't!" he exclaimed—"why, if I were dying, and had but strength enough to open my mouth, I would devour that divine food! And not like it!—then you are no Christian!—is he? But it is impossible—I don't believe him—do you?"

The evening was singularly beautiful, the sea calm and clear as a mirror, and our crew sinking into rest, outworn by the unwonted toil of this busy day. De Ruyter was in the cabin; I was keeping the watch, and Aston bore me company. He lay along the raised stern, and I leant over the taffrail, gazing on the land.

The forms in the distant range of mountains were growing dark and indistinct. The transparent, glassy, and deep blue of the sea faded into a dusky olive, sub-divided by an infinity of mazy, glimmering bars, as if embroidered with diamond heads, traced by the varied, wandering airs, and sporting like a lion's whelps on their mother's quiet bosom; while he, their mighty parent, lay hushed within his cavernous lair, torpid from toil and devastation. Over the land the glowing sun hastened to his cool sea-couch; his expiring rays stained the lucid sky with bright, faded colours—deep ruby tints changing to purple; then emerald green, barred and streaked with azure, white, and yellow; and as the sun was dipping, the whole firmament was dyed in crimson, and blazed; then left the western sky brighter than molten gold, till the sun's last rays were extinguished. When the moon came forth with her silvery, gleaming light, all the gay colours faded, leaving a few fleecy and dappled specks, like lambs grazing on the hills in heaven. The change was like life in youth and beauty suddenly extinguished; white and misty death, with his pallid winding-sheet, enveloped all around. As the grab's stern swung round, and as my eye caught our companion, the corvette, her black hull and white wings alone broke the line of the moonlit horizon, like a sea-sprite reposing on the boundless waters. Enwrapped in our contemplation of the wonderful beauty of an eastern night, we remained hours in silence; and after the turmoil of the day, this stillness

had a preternatural, or magic effect on the mind, more soothing than sleep. The helmsman, in his sleep, from habit, called out— "Steady! steady!" and even the customary forms of changing the watches had been neglected; while the sentinels, unconscious that their time of duty was expired, dozed on their posts of guard over the prisoners; and the balm of sleep medicined the wounded, and made free the captive, who, perhaps, dreaming of hunting on his native mountains, or fondling with his young barbarians, or their mother, was destined to awake, fettered and bound with festering manacles, chained, like a wild beast, in the worst of dungeons, under the sea, in a ship's hold, doomed to death or slavery.

VI

ZELA

HAVING been now some days at sea, I thought of visiting my little female captive; not that I had neglected her hitherto, having given her my own, comparatively, comfortable cabin, and ordered the good old Rais to find out those of her father's tribe, or followers, on board. Besides, I sent him, privileged by his age and rank, to see her, talk to her, and assure her she should want nothing, and that all her wishes should be granted. He told me that three women, who had been with her in her father's ship, were already with her; that he had collected and given them what articles they wanted, and that in a few days she would be better. Indeed the old Rais, in respect of her father's having been, not only an Arab, but a sheikh, of a tribe in the Persian Gulf, near his own country, had anticipated all my wishes. He said, "I must do the same for her as for my own child; for we are all brothers."

De Ruyter, who heard our conversation, as he stood by, began to talk with the Rais, addressing him by the name of "Father"; for so he called him, the commander of his Arabs, and one who had been long with him.

"I have been telling this youngster of mine, Father," said he "that the Arab girl is now lawfully his wife, in the most sacred manner, according to the customs of your country. Is it not so? Inform him."

The old Rais had heard all the particulars from the men present at the father's death, and said, "Most assuredly, malik; who can doubt it? Yet strange it sounded in my ears when I was told it. It is the first time, old as I am, that I ever heard of an Arab sheikh, whose generations are countless as the grains of sand on the great desert, giving his daughter, and mingling the blood of the ancestors of the human race with one of the infidels of a country, so newly discovered, that our fathers knew not of it, nor could her father have heard of its existence; a Yaoor!"

"Bah!" replied De Ruyter. "Why, the father knew him for an Arab, to be sure. What else? Does he look like a Christian? Has he not the *Koran* in his cabin? Come" (addressing me), "say your *Namaz.*"

"Wise are you, malik," said the Rais; "that is the truth. It is not strange her father should have so thought; and I am an ignorant man if his father was not an Arab born, or Arab descended; for I never saw any of your Western people sun-dyed and featured like this boy. He is honest and brave, loves our people, fights with our weapons, and uses our customs. You see nature will break out. Now that he has, by the blessing of Mahomet, our Holy Prophet, an Arab wife, I hope he will find out the tribe of his ancestors;

and not, like unto his foolish father, go from his own country to dwell on white rocks in the sea."

This was spoken so seriously, and De Ruyter, checking his ready laugh, conversed so learnedly on the subject, that I began to entertain doubts of my own identity.

Moreover the Rais argued that the father had joined our hands, when under the shadow of death; at which period, though distant things become indistinct, things near are miraculously unfolded, when connected with the secrets of the other world, which, to us living, are visionary as spectres in a dream, but, when flitting between life and death, are made distinct and clear. "Therefore," said he, "her father could not have been deceived in that moment. He knew into whose hands he was giving his daughter, and the hopes of his house."

De Ruyter assured me, on his honour, casting jesting aside, that, strictly speaking, everything the old Rais had said was true as the *Koran*. "But then," he added, "the *Koran* is nothing to you, and the Arab law is not yours."

"True; but how will it affect her?" I inquired.

"Only that, as her father has affianced her to you, she can marry no one else. From duty, therefore, as well as humanity, you must provide for her, and convey her, with her Arabs, to her own country."

Aston afterwards inquired of me what I intended doing in this affair. "Doing!" I replied; "why, did you not hear?—it is all ready done, man."

"What done?"

"Why, I am married—without banns, or babbling about the business. It is but like the first shock in bathing; the timid suffer most by creeping in by degrees; the bold, by plunging in head foremost, hardly feel it. I am no stickler. If I must go in, give me deep water, and a height to leap from; then I shall neither cut my foot, nor feel the shock."

"But consider, my lad, she is but a baby; and you have scarcely seen her."

"Well, what Arab does till after he is married?"

"How can you take her home? You don't intend passing all your life with Arabs?"

"Why not? I have no home. Old father Rais says this is my country; and I like it very well—I like the sun better than snow. Aston! don't be puckering up your face, like a parson in the pulpit. Come, shake those wrinkles out with claret. Have you not heard this is my wedding-day? Let us spend it in rejoicings! I hate preaching, and like wine."

Here was I transformed, as by magic, from a friendless, outcast, reckless boy of the West, without tie or home, into sea shiekh, Arab, Mussulman—married! To give some idea of how much these transitions (at least the last, which governed the rest) weighed on my mind, I should not have known my wife from any other girl or woman. I had been so occupied with the father, and her head and face having been, for the most part, veiled, that I had not seen, or observed her features.

I ascertained that her name was Zela. I was schooled into the proper guttural pronunciation of her name; no easy task, for I was compelled to repeat the Z a hundred times, ere the old duenna who tutored me was satisfied with its hissing aspiration. Then she proceeded to impress on my memory ten thousand ceremonies and cautions to be used. For the lady Zela's thoughts were communing with her father's spirit; all her love was dead with him; her eyes, which outshone the stars, when she was happy, were now lustreless as her dead father's; her face, fairer than the moon, was now darkened by the clouds of grief; her lips, redder than henna, were pale with sorrow; all her loveliness was under eclipse, for tears had been her only food, and peace and sleep had fled her pillow, since her father's spirit had gone away, and left her alone in the world. She then added, "Oh, stranger, be good to her, and all good will be yours in possessing her!"

The cabin door was opened by a little Malayan slave girl, from the coast of Malabar, whom I had sent as my first gift, and I entered. The lady-mine was seated cross-legged on a low couch, shrouded and enveloped in yellow drapery, the mourning of her country.

On my entrance I thought her one of those marble figures I had heard of in Egyptian temples; but I found she was alive. Her feet were bare; she rose and placed them in embroidered slippers, which lay on the deck of the cabin; she took my hand, put it to her

forehead, then to her lips: I entreated her to be seated. She resumed her position, and remained motionless, her arms drooping listlessly down; her little rosy feet nestled under her, like tiny birds under the mother's wing. Her hair covered her like a jet-black cloud.

I seemed entranced. We both sat silent; and I felt it a relief when the old Arab woman returned with coffee, and mangosteen and guava jelly. She again rose, which I would have prevented, but the old woman signed me to sit still. She took a minute cup in a filigree silver stand, and presented it to me. She then presented the conserves, and, returning the stand to the woman, resumed her seat.

Taking from my hand a ring of gold, with an Arabic inscription, and hooped with two circles of camel's hair, the same her expiring father had placed on my finger, I held it towards her. The low and suppressed moans she made on my entrance broke out into sobs, so violent that I could see her loose vest agitated by the beating of her heart. I was about to remove this object, which awakened such painful remembrances, when she grasped it, pressed it to her lips, and wept over it some time. The woman then said something to her; and, without the guidance of her eyes, she again put forth her tapering little fingers, and replaced the ring. It was indeed the antique signet of her father's tribe; and, like the seal of princes, it made right wrong, or wrong right, and gave and took away, and made and unmade laws, obeying the will of its wearer. She put it on the fore-

finger of my right hand; and again pressed my hand to her head and lips.

Upon this I took a ring I had selected from De Ruyter's store of baubles; it was a deep ruby, of the shape and size of a wild grape, hooped and massy with virgin gold, and, by its size, seemed to have been worn by a fairy. Gently disengaging her hand from the drapery as it lay motionless by her side, I placed this ring on the forefinger of her right hand; the old woman smiled.

This interchange of rings was a definite acknowledgment of our union.

I had never felt, or seen, or dreamt of the strange power of love. Indeed I know not when, or why, or where, or how he found entrance even in my thoughts. It appeared to me I was only fulfilling a duty, sacred from its having been laid on me by the impressive energy of a dying parent, consigning to me, with his last breath, his friendless child. In the crystal purity of youth, this was the first impressive scene, in which I had been the principal actor, in which the emphatic appeal was made to the good feelings of my heart, a sealed fountain, then broken; and pity, and sorrow, and now love were flowing from it like a swollen torrent, which bears down all before it. All my senses seemed exquisitely refined, and a world of new thoughts and delicate fancies to have birth within me. As I at last caught the full radiant brightness of her large dark eye, my limbs shook, my voice trembled and my heart beat convulsively, and fast. Holding her

hand, I gazed in speechless ecstasy. Whether she observed, I know not; but she removed her hand, and veiled the brightness of her eyes. It was enough; they had thrilled through me, and the fire was inextinguishable. She had murmured some words in a broken voice, which buzzed in my ears like a honied bee's, or like the warbling of the humming-bird, that lives in the cinnamon groves, and her breath was sweeter than the trees on which it lives.

And love was thus ignited in my breast, pure, ardent, deep, and imperishable. Zela, from that day, was the star I was destined to worship; the deity at whose altar I was to offer up all the fragrant incense of my first virgin affections, feelings, and passions.

[Between the events narrated in the last section and those that now follow, De Ruyter had purchased, and placed Trelawny in command of, an American schooner which had been captured by an English frigate and recaptured by Dr. Ruyter; and the two vessels had crossed the Indian Ocean, and reached Borneo.]

VII

A TIGER HUNT

We were now anchored in a port on the south of the island of Borneo, in a bay formed by three very small islands, which were not inhabited, nor indeed habitable, the largest being less than a mile in circumference, and having a scanty supply of water. The channel between us and the main was scarcely a mile broad, and the passage blocked by an extensive shoal, on which the sea was always in an agitated state, and generally breaking. The grab lay completely landlocked; I had been beating about some days ere I could discover the place, although De Ruyter had been most particular in laying it down, with written and minute directions.

While we were lying here, De Ruyter occasionally got the grab under way, and went out to see if he could pick up anything, or gain intelligence of anything at sea. Meantime our repairs on board the schooner proceeded rapidly, as I had found spars. We sometimes made hunting-parties on shore, to kill deer, wild hogs, goats, and, at times, buffaloes, in order to supply our vessels with fresh meat, and not to infringe on our sea-stock. Besides which, there was an abundance of fine fish on the coast;

so that we lived well and free of expense. Rice, coffee, tobacco, Indian corn, and other grains, we procured, by barter, from the natives. De Ruyter's intention was to await the sailing of the China fleet homeward bound, and, if possible, to attack them.

Having time on our hands, we were anxious to see the interior of the island. We had heard the natives frequently talk of the ruins of an ancient city, skirting the great morass, and that it was the abode of tigers and other wild beasts. An excursion to that place was quickly planned. We always kept our vessels in the best order, and omitted no precaution against surprise, by sea or land. In general, either he or I remained in charge of the vessels. On the island where we landed our sick, we had mounted two guns and built a battery, which commanded the schooner. All our men were kept constantly employed. Discontent, drunken brawls, and, sometimes, quarrels with the natives, gave us considerable vexation. But De Ruyter was better qualified than any man in the world for the service in which he was engaged; for, either by lenity, or by severe and summary punishment, he overawed the refractory, and tranquillised the discontented. He had a quick eye to see into the characters of men, and he employed great art in controlling them; a portion of which I acquired.

We now made preparations for our tiger-hunt. The Malay chieftain was to accompany us with a party of his followers; and he engaged to supply us with elephants. De Ruyter took twenty of the most

untractable of his crew, well armed, and a few picked men out of the schooner. Our leader, though fiery and liable to gusts of passion, was kind-hearted, courteous, affable, and exceedingly attentive to us, his guests. He had great natural sagacity in overcoming every difficulty which impeded us, held his followers in complete subjection, and took every precaution not to be surprised by the people through whose districts we were passing. His instincts were exquisitely acute from constant exercise, as the civilised are dull from want of use. He could distinguish objects correctly ere our eyes could reach them; and his hearing was quicker than a dog's. Our progress, however, was slow; the elephants were often compelled to clear us a path through the jungle, and we lost entire days in searching for passes round or through the swamps, and pathless forests. There were few signs of the abodes of man, and there was neither corn nor culture; but we had an ever-varying succession of beasts and birds.

During the heat of the day, and in the evening, while lying by, we practised with single ball on deer, wild hogs, and wild peacocks, which last flew over our heads in thousands, to seek their roosting-places in the woods. On the fifth day we drew near our sporting-ground, on the south-east side of the island. We avoided sleeping under trees, or near jungle. The Malays always cut down the jungle and set it on fire, which both cleared the ground and purified the atmosphere.

We left the woods and came to a large extent of plain, with nothing on it but enormous reeds, grass, and nauseously smelling weeds, that grew as high as young fir trees, mingled thickly with rattans. Paths had been cleared by wild elephants, which enabled us to pass this otherwise impenetrable wilderness. It was bound by mountains, forests of the most stupendous trees I had ever beheld, and, on our right, by a low ridge of rocks, in which direction we bent our course. From the centre of this ridge there arose a mound of earth, like a green island; and the ridge of rocks, branching out on each side, looked like piers built to connect it with the mountains. On this spacious mound were said to be the ruins of an immense Moorish city, once called the City of Kings, but now the city of the tigers. The plain was called the plain of the elephants.

As we approached the hill, there was an undulating ground, the soil red, with low jungle, bearing red and yellow berries in profusion. Bustards, large flocks of cranes, herons, and sea-birds were in the air. Jackals, foxes, and several animals I had not seen before, crossed our path. We had glimpses of herds of wild elephants and buffaloes, grazing on the plain we had passed. At noon we were stopped by a river, broad, muddy, and shallow, which doubtless floods the upper plain during the rainy season; that is, for seven or eight months during the year; it then must force a passage into the morass below. After being a long time detained, the elephants forded it, when we

rested for the night; or rather we did not rest, for we were so tormented with stinging vermin that none of us could sleep. The next day we ascended (as it is called) the Haunted Hill; which the natives hold in such superstitious awe, that, in all probability, we were, for centuries, the first who had disturbed the hallowed precincts of ogres and spirits, confidently reported to reside there. Remnants indeed there were of a city of some sort. De Ruyter said they were Moorish. There were large masses of stone, choked-up tanks, and indications of where wells had once been, but almost entirely concealed by thick bushes, dank weeds, creepers, and other vegetation, flourishing in profusion. Wherever it was penetrable, it bore the footprints of so many wild animals, that there was enough to check the hitherto insatiable thirst of dry and musty antiquaries.

We pitched our tent on a rocky part of the hill free from jungle, lighted fires, roasted a young stag, commenced arrangements for the morrow's sport, and slept. Before the dawn, the restless Malay chieftain was calling up his followers, and preparing the elephants, of which we had six. Soon after it was light, everything was in readiness, and we set forward. Zela, who insisted on accompanying us, was mounted on her small elephant, and encaged in the only covered howdah, ours being all open. We beat about in vain; for though we met with tigers' footmarks in many of the open places, near pools of standing water, the high grass and thick bushes prevented our tracing

them to cover. We found, however, abundance of smaller game; deer, wild hogs, and a variety of birds. De Ruyter, having carefully surveyed the neighbourhood, came in at night, and told us he had tracked three tigers to a thick jungle, near which he had found the bones of an elk-deer, recently killed by them.

With this promise of sport, we started in the morning in great glee; and, as we thought, well prepared for the attack. After riding about two miles, we descended to the plain, and came to an exceedingly thick jungle, with thorny bushes and canes. Around us was the plain covered with very high jungle-grass, and dank weeds, with bushes scattered here and there, but few timber trees. De Ruyter conducted us to the spot where he had discovered the stag's bones, surrounded by moist and torn-up earth and trampled grass; thence we had no difficulty in tracing the tiger's huge paws into the patch of jungle. Here De Ruyter divided our party, so as to block up the only apparently accessible outlets, made by wild beasts; and by these openings we were to enter. The greater proportion of our party was on foot, and seemingly as unconcerned as if going in to hunt weasels. I left Zela, seated in her howdah, at the opening of the wood, guarded by four of her own Arabs.

De Ruyter and myself dismounted to clear a passage; the Malays were divided into two parties; and we were backed by our sailors, whom we cautioned to be careful in the use of their firearms, as more was

to be feared from accidents with them, than from the tigers. De Ruyter expressed great doubts of our elephants' facing the tiger, but it was necessary to try them. In our progress towards the bushes we turned out many deer, hares, and wild cats. We saw also ruins, said to be those of a Moorish palace. Nothing but the sagacity of the elephants could have steered us clear of broken masses of buildings, chasms, and wells overgrown with dank verdure. It was a wild and haunted-looking place, which awed even the sailors in their boisterous mirth, and silenced the ribaldry and obscene threatening of the Malays. The low, trumpeting sound and foot-stamping of our elephants gave notice that the tiger's den was near. A vaulted ruin was before us; there was a rustling amongst the bushes; De Ruyter said, "Be steady, my lads!" and a tiger, the first I had ever faced, finding his passage blocked up, charged us. We fired together, I know not with what effect; for both our elephants slewed round, and ran away wild with fear. My mahout threw himself off, and a branch of a tree struck me off. I heard a tremendous war-whoop, and fire kept up on all sides. De Ruyter's elephant fell into a half-choked well; but, with his wonted self-possession, he extricated himself.

Leaving the elephants to their fate, we determined not to lose the sport. De Ruyter thought there were more tigers in the den, and he went on foot to drive them out. We got some of the men together, and proceeded to the spot, to which we were directed by the

abominable stench, and the dried bones scattered about. The bushes were cleared away, and we heard, as we drew near, back to back, forcing our way onwards, low, muttering growls and sharp snarls. "Stand close!" exclaimed De Ruyter; "there is a tigress with her whelps; have a care; don't fire, my lads, till she breaks cover, and fire low."

A whelp, three parts grown, first came forth to charge us. De Ruyter, expecting the old one would follow, reserved his fire, and cautioned me to do the same. The whelp looked frightened, and slunk away, crouching under a thick bush, where it remained snarling, and thither the other whelps followed. The mother's growl became terrific; a shot at one of the whelps brought her out, lashing her sides, and foaming with rage. She rushed right on us; I fired both barrels; we then retreated a few paces. The wounded brute staggered after us, and when rising to spring, De Ruyter, who had still reserved his fire, shot her right through the heart. While I was charging my gun, one of the whelps, already wounded, drove against me, and knocked me down; when De Ruyter, with as much coolness as if he had been pigeon-shooting, put his rifle to its ear, and almost blew its head off. Meantime the sailors kept up a fire, till the balls were flying about our heads, on the remaining whelps, which were stealing away wounded. "Let us stand behind this rock," said De Ruyter; "a sailor uses a musket as he does a horse—he bears down all before him."

A Malay came from the chieftain to tell us the

other part of the jungle was alive with tigers—that they had already killed two, and that one of their men was dead. There was now as much noise and confusion as in a naval battle, or at the sacking of a city. I observed, however, that tigers were not such formidable opponents as I had imagined. They lay close and crouching in the long grass, or under the bushes, and were as difficult to get up as cats or quail. It generally required a shot to move them; then they always essayed every means of escape through the thickest cover; and it was only when finding every passage blocked up, and smarting from wounds, that they rushed blindly and madly on their pursuers, forced by despair, like a cat or a rat. With nerve and self-possession, two men with double-barrelled guns would have little to fear, and might boldly go up to the mouth of the den of a tiger. This piece of thick jungle, interspersed with caverns, rocks, and ruins, plenty of water near, a great plain covered with high jungle-grass, and well supplied with a diversity of smaller animals to prey upon, was a favoured abode for tigers; and had they been endowed with reason, they could not have selected a spot on the island so admirably adapted for their residence; while their number and size indicated how well they thrived there. A great many escaped on the plain, where it was impossible to follow them. Several of our men were badly mauled by them, and more by falls: one of the Malays had his spine so injured, that he died in great agony.

Uneasy at my long absence from Zela, I went alone (for all our people were scattered) to the entrance of the wood, where I had left her guarded. As I approached the place, I was alarmed at a mingled noise of tigers, elephants, and screaming voices. I hastened on as fast as the thick cover and broken ground would permit. The fierce snarlings of tigers became louder. I passed the spot where I had left Zela, burst through the cover wildly with terror, and, on getting to the open space, beheld a monstrous tiger on the back of her elephant, clinging with his huge claws on the howdah, gnashing his teeth, roaring and foaming with rage. Zela not visible, methought he had devoured her! I struck my head with my clenched hand, exclaiming, "Fool! fool!" and for a moment staggered unnerved, while a deathlike sickness came over me! It was but a moment: my blood renewed its course through my veins like flame! My carbine not being charged, I cast it from me; and, armed with nothing but a long Malayan creese, fierce and fearless, I rushed by a half-grown limping tiger-whelp, whining and gnawing at something, which I passed unheedingly. The elephant was stamping, squealing, and struggling desperately to shake off his enemy. The grizzly tiger fell; but within his grip he held a human victim, bent up, and enveloped in a white cotton garment, such as Zela wore.

As I came within a few paces of the tiger, holding his victim down with a paw upon his breast, he glared ferociously on me. While I was rushing in on him, a

voice above me, faint and tremulous, said, "Oh, Prophet, guard him!" I heard no more—I was madly striking out my arm, to plunge the weapon in the tiger's throat, while he was in the act of springing on me. The elephant, as if Zela's prayer had been heard, struck the tiger, while his eye was fixed on me, with his hind foot, sent him reeling many paces, and, ere he could recover, I had plunged my creese up to the hilt in his body. A loud shout, drowning the cries of tiger, elephant, and all others, now burst on my ear, and the Malay chieftain came up, in good time; for so tenacious of life is the tiger, that he was still enabled to strike me down with his paw, and as the whelp had come on me, I should have been torn to pieces but for the chieftain's timely aid. He thrust his spear through the whelp, and buried his dagger twenty times in the body of the tiger; then, dragging the lifeless brute from above me, he helped me up, and said, "Yes, this is very good amusement—I like it! Let's go into the jungle again—there are plenty more of them, and we'll kill them all!" upon which, roaring like a lion, and reeking with sweat and blood, he shook his spear, and darted into the wood again.

My wild and vacant eye fortunately fell on the form of Zela, who was clinging speechless at my feet, or I should have died or gone mad. I endeavoured to raise her, but my strength had left me. I staggered and fell, clasping her, when for a time I was almost insensible. Recovering, I beheld her safe, saw the

dead bodies of the tigers, and found all was quiet near us.

"What is that?" I asked, pointing to the bundle of white rags which lay close at my feet.

"That, dearest, is the poor mahout—I fear he is dead!"

"Oh, is it only he! I thought it had been you, and that you were now but a spirit, my elected good one; for you know, by my new Arab creed, I am allowed two, a good one and a bad one."

My rage was presently directed against Zela's Arabs, who made their appearance from the bushes, whither they had been lured by the cubs of a leopard, one of which they had secured, De Ruyter having shot the dam. I was infuriated at these fellows for having put Zela's life in jeopardy, and gave chase to one, with the determination of shooting him. My pistol was pointed at his breast, and I was in the act of pulling the trigger, when a hand struck up my arm, and the pistol was discharged in the air. I turned round, prepared to fell the intruder with the heavy-capped butt-end of the weapon, when the eye of Zela met mine with a glance that penetrated my breast, and would have restored my reason, had I been mad. In her low piercing accents, she said:

"He is our foster-brother; our milk was the same, so must be our blood. Let us not destroy each other. Has not the Prophet, this day, saved the remnant of our father's house? It is the evil spirit, which pursued my father to his death, that hath now descended on

you! His hand is on your heart: beware lest it should be turned to stone. His shadow is hanging over you, like a cloud over the sun, and makes you appear as black, and fierce, and unforgiving as himself!"

"You are our Malay's hawk, I suppose; but the black shadow of the raven's wing is vanished—the sun is unobscured—the ill-omened bird has left me! I must to the jungle again. What can have become of De Ruyter? Come, mount your elephant: I would rather entrust you to him, than leave you girt round by a thousand Arabs. He is a noble beast."

Going up to him, I gave Zela some bread and fruit that she might feed him. He seemed abstracted in gloomy contemplation, and gazed with more than human sympathy on the prostrate body of the dying mahout. He noticed us not; and as his eye fell on the dead tiger, he stamped, looked fierce, and made a trumpeting noise, as if in triumph at having avenged his friend's death! Then, as if remembering he had avenged, but not saved, his ears and trunk drooped; and though he himself was torn and bleeding, his moist and thoughtful eye gave token that all his feelings were absorbed in grief for him he had lost. He stood over and watched the Arabs, who were making a sort of hurdle for the purpose of carrying away the dying man; for his breast was torn open, and one of his groins dreadfully mangled. The affectionate beast refused to eat, even after the man was conveyed out of sight. I placed the bamboo ladder against him, and Zela mounted to the howdah:

he curled his trunk round, and on recognising who it was, resumed his former position, and continued to make low moans, as of anguish.

I must remark that the man for whom the elephant was mourning had long been his provider; and since the death of the mahout who was killed by the chieftain, had himself become mahout. The elephant did not seem at all concerned at the death of the Tiroon, doubtless owing to his having been a bad and cruel master; for certainly these animals not only have reason, but are more rational than those they serve. In gratitude to his having saved Zela's and my life, I would, had it been possible, have kept, loved, and cherished him. When we parted from him, Zela kissed him, wept, and cut off some of the strong bristly hair near his ears, which I have ever worn, hooped round a ring, engraven with his name.

VIII

THE SHIPWRECKED CREW

A LONG-CONTINUED gale of wind drove us towards the coast of New Holland. When it had broken, and while we were labouring in the heavy swell which followed, we discerned a small boat, evidently in distress, and we wore down to her aid. Owing to the swell, and the wind having moderated, it was some time ere the grab succeeded in getting alongside of her, to take her crew on board, which consisted of four sailors and a master's mate. They belonged to an English frigate, which, having captured a small brigantine, had put them on board to take charge of her. The prize had been separated from the frigate by a white squall in the Straits of Sunda, damaged in her masts and rigging. A north-wester, against which they could make no head, had driven them a long way to the south-east. In this hapless state their frail and crazy bark had been struck abaft by a heavy sea, which had loosened her stern-post, and shattered the framework of her stern. The water poured in so fast, that it was only by the greatest promptitude and dexterity they had succeeded in getting a clumsy boat, which lay amidship, afloat, just as their vessel

foundered. They had no time to secure anything but themselves; a boy and two men were drowned, probably in attempting to save something. The boat was as old and worthless as the vessel to which she belonged; and, till she was somewhat seasoned in the water, they were all occupied in baling with their caps, and in stuffing, with rags and coir-oakum, the crevices and rents which the sun had made. Fortunately, the boat, as she lay on board, had been used as a receptable for old spare canvas, oars, light sails, the fag-ends of ropes, and, what was now of far greater importance, a coop of six ducks, an old, grizzly he-goat, and a hen, that had demurely laid its egg, as an offering, for its undisturbed sanctuary in the sheltered part of the bow, where it had probably roosted for years in solitary security. The seamen thanked Providence as they beheld their live stock. Being up to their knees in water, dripping with water, water having destroyed their vessel, and now threatening to overwhelm them in its foaming billows, and with an ocean of water all around them, some time elapsed ere the awful words were uttered, "There is no fresh water in the boat!" Every voice echoed, in preternatural sounds, "There is no fresh water!" Every eye wildly glanced at the boat, and around the sea, and again was despondingly muttered, "There is no water! O God! we must perish!"

Anticipated thirst soon parched their lips, and their stout hearts quailed. Other dangers, past and present, were forgotten. A leaky, rent, misshapen boat, hardly

big enough to contain their diminished crew, as it lay foundering in the trough of the sea, like a harpooned porpoise, was nothing—if they had but water. Fortunately their officer, though the youngest among them, was the ablest and manliest, at least in mind; by which boon nature had amply compensated him for a somewhat slender and delicate form. He had a spirit greater than was contained in the broad breasts of the brawniest and the bulkiest. Evil fortune had persecuted him in many shapes; she kept him at the bottom of her wheel, but could not crush him. He rallied the sunken spirits of his men; he told them they were near land; they had sails; there was wind enough to fill them; the boat, though broken, was buoyant; they were few in number; thirst could be borne for days; besides, they had live stock, and their blood was nearly as refreshing as water; and the clouds gave promise of rain. The men knew their officer, and had confidence in him. His calmness and fearless bearing did more than his words. The hopes he had so confidently expressed seemed realised. They grew calm, and their reason and obedience were restored.

The mate having succeeded, if not in rendering his boat water-tight, yet in diminishing the leaks, so that it required but occasional baling, next set about putting sail on the boat. For this purpose he selected an old flying jib, and, with a broken studding-sail-boom for a mast, contrived the best and safest form of carrying canvas that could possibly be contrived, representing what sailors call a shoulder-of-mutton rig,

the larger part (or the body of the sail) being in the body of the boat. To be driven into the South Indian Ocean, a desert world of waters, was certain and inevitable destruction. In order to avoid this, it was necessary, at all risks, to haul his wind as much as possible to the eastward, with an oar for a rudder.

With consummate skill he, in some degree, effected this; but it required an unerring eye and steady hand to keep his rickety and rudderless boat from being buried beneath the threatening waves, or capsized by the furious blasts which swept over it. They had neither compass, chart, nor instruments to guide them on their lonely way; nothing but the stars and sun—the latter, glaring and fiery, they hardly dared to look at. Their only hope was to make one of the Sunda Islands, or, failing in that, the coast of New Holland, or to be met by some wandering bark.

Thus day and night they toiled on, laving, at long intervals, their white and parched lips with the blood of the panting goat, which was itself expiring for want of moisture. Every glazed eye scrutinised, with horrible precision, the accuracy of the measured allowance, apparently numbering the red drops, as doled out by the officer in scanty portions. The animal was then cut up, and its interior, which still contained jellied blood and some moisture, was balanced and divided with the care and exactitude with which a miser weighs his gold. The mate said he merely extracted the fluid, chewing, but not swallowing the substance, and endeavoured to impress on his com-

rades the advantage of following his example. A few did, but the greater part could not control the fierceness of famine raging in their vitals. "At this," the mate added, "from the torture I experienced, I did not wonder; but the event proved I was in the right. For, by not eating, I endured thirst better; and, after a few days, I had no inclination to eat, feeling a relief by keeping some substance in my mouth, no matter what, to chew; tobacco, of which there was a little, was the best. We all watched with painful and intense anxiety the formation and changes of the clouds. Every speck in the heavens was commented on and scrutinised, its form, density, and altitude. At last, after successive hopes and disappointments, our eyes dim and our hearts sick, we beheld a dark and heavy cloud, evidently surcharged with rain, coming towards us. Those who have seen, or can conceive, the exhausted pilgrim, parched and perishing on a desert, wading through shifting mounds of scorching sands, with feeble gait, and maddening brain, when his wistful and eager eyes catch a first glimpse of the distant well, may faintly imagine what were our sensations. When the first drops touched our shrivelled lips, and fell on our throbbing temples, every gasping mouth was distended wide to heaven for the falling manna; our parched throats heaved and swelled like the waves. Fervent prayers were muttered by men, who would have died in battle blaspheming; but they availed not; the watery cloud, on which their lives were suspended, mockingly displayed its riches,

niggardly sprinkled them with a few scanty drops, as a sample of the inestimable treasure it contained, and fleeted onwards, till they beheld it mingle its waters in waste—in the briny ocean! They covered, in despair, their inflamed eyes with their cracked and spongy hands, and groaned in agony!"

But who can go on describing tortures such as these men endured, every instant augmenting, comprising an eternity of immitigable suffering, though marked in the calendar but as seven days and seven hours? —a space so fleeting, to the free and happy, that it passes by and is scarcely noted, while on these forlorn seamen seven days did the work of seventy years. With rheumed, glassy, bloodshot eyes, haggard, wrinkled, and hollow cheeks, sunken mouth, swollen, slaty, and cracked lips, contracted nostrils, thinned and whitened hair, collapsed muscles, feeble and tottering gait, sepulchral and inarticulate voices, gabbling more like brutes than men; can the extremest age to which human existence has yet been stretched, with all its withering palsy and impotency, do more? In seven days and a few hours, youth, intellect, strength, were thus blasted! Let me be scorched to death in a volcano, blown into the air from a cannon, buried alive in the earth, drowned in water, but let me not die by wanting it!

Two, in their frenzy, threw themselves in the sea, slaked their thirst in its briny waters, and died under its cool canopy. One, after lying in idiotic insensibility, burst into fierce, yelling madness, tore the

living flesh from his limbs, sucked his own blood, lay down, slept, and awoke no more. Four, besides the officer, remained on the seventh day. The sky, the ocean, the boat, everything looked burning red and fiery. They had no hope when, on the morning of the eighth day, we rescued them from their shattered boat. What a crazed, wild, and ghastly band were they!—more like corpses uncharnelled than living men. The weakest of the party, the mate, seemed alone to have retained his senses. After he was hoisted on the deck, and had collectedly looked around, he said, "We are dying the death of the damned!—Give my men water!" Then, as if his last duty was performed, he pointed to his frothy lip, but could not speak; and the spirit, which had borne him up whilst contending with danger, now released from its post of duty, seemed to flee away, and his body sunk down lifeless. Certainly he would have died, calm and unshaken as he had lived, but for the skill of De Ruyter and Van Scolpvelt, who arrested the flight of life while hovering on his lips. After long struggles, lying convulsed with pain, his strength slowly returned, when the first intelligible and connected words he uttered were, "Who are you? the devil?" (this was to Van, the doctor)—"where am I?" Another long interval elapsed, during which his intellect was besieging its abandoned citadel, when consciousness was restored, and he said, "Where are my men? Have they got water? Let me see them—poor fellows!" On reiterated assurances that all their

wants were supplied, he asked for water for himself. A small portion was put to his lips. Like all the fluids which had been administered to him and his men, a very small quantity was swallowed; the larger portion came up again tinctured with blood, the swollen and inflamed glands having nearly stopped up the windpipe. His breast and temples were kept continually moistened with vinegar and water, which diminished his pain. He constantly repeated, "This is not hell, for in hell there is no water." Bleeding and bathing proved to be the most efficacious remedies; but for these De Ruyter thought they could not have been saved. Yet, after all, and with the whole skill of Van, we were only successful in preserving the mate and two of the men. One died raving mad; and it may be observed that he had drunk of sea-water, and partaken of the blood of the man who had died mad in the boat. The other had secretly and voraciously seized on the old hen, which he had appropriated to himself. The inflammation in his throat completely closed up the passage, and, bursting a blood-vessel, he too died. The remaining three were long subject to violent retchings and convulsive fits, to which, it is believed, they would be always subject.

The mate's recovery was the most decisive and rapid. This young man, whose name was Darvell, remained on board with us, and I commenced a friendship with him in the off-hand way of sailors. We liked each other, and, without saying a word on the subject,

became friends for life. His was a short one, as it has been with all those to whom I have linked myself, and they are many—or rather, they were many. At the age of thirty not one was left me. Friendship is dead to me; nothing is left but its memory. Never more will friendship's balm refresh my withered heart. Meaner things have had their mausoleums, their columns, and their pyramids; on me devolves the task to write the epitaphs of my departed friends, and it shall be done by narrating their deeds. I have said Darvell's life was short; his restless and daring spirit forced him on from danger to danger, ever the leader of that devoted band called the forlorn hope, but no longer of the pretorian phalanxes of kings. His riper judgment shook off, with disdain, the fetters which had manacled him in boyhood. Darvell, on his return to Europe, became a leader of the forlorn hope of the heroic few, who are to be found in the van of those fighting for liberty. No sooner was the flag of freedom unfurled in the New World by spirits like his own, than he hastened to join their ranks. His bleached bones may still glitter on the yellow sands of Peru, where the small vessel he commanded was driven on shore and wrecked, in a chivalrous action he fought with a Spanish force ten times his superior.

IX

CUTTING OFF AN EAST INDIAMAN

THE rendezvous for meeting with the grab was in the vicinity of the Philippine Islands. The weather was remarkably clear and fine, with nights so shining and delightfully cool, that I generally passed them on deck, reading with Zela, or listening to Arab tales. We had been some days becalmed off an island called Andradas, to the westward of which we were slowly drifting, from an undercurrent, when we observed indications of an approaching change of weather. There was a breathless stillness in the atmosphere, which was thick with heavy dew. The island became veiled, its outline shadowy and indistinct. The sun seemed bloodshot, and its dimensions considerably augmented; it had lost its wonted fire, and the eye might gaze on it undazzled. The stars were visible long before their hour; they appeared nearer to the sea, and resembled moons, but lustreless. This dismal and melancholy prelude was frightfully reflected in the water, and on the dark faces of my native crew. It was with difficulty that I aroused them from their torpor, to prepare for the battle which it was evident we should soon be compelled to fight with the wild winds and waves.

I watched eagerly all around the horizon: its grey, misty hues were every instant denser and darker. Casting my eyes upwards, a ball of fire, which I thought was a shooting-star, descended perpendicularly from above us, as we lay becalmed and motionless, into the sea, close to our quarter, making the same sort of noise in the water as a red-hot cannon-ball. At the same moment the skies were rent asunder with an appalling crash; our vessel shook as if she had struck upon a rock; rain, wind, lightning, and thunder burst over our heads all together, and the sea was lashed up into huge dark billows. The storm, happily, took us right aft; and, under bare poles, with wild and resistless force, rapid as lightning, it drove us before it. Having weathered the first shock, and there being sea-room, we soon recovered from our consternation, and the gale settled in the north-east. We got the storm-sails up, that we might be enabled to bring her to the wind, when the first fury of the gale was spent. Ours was a matchless sea-boat; and having secured everything snugly on board, we carefully luffed her up to the wind, and lay to, with a close-reefed fore-storm-staysail. The sky was of a pitchy darkness, the sea white with foam.

I went down in the cabin to see by the chart, as well as, under such circumstances, it was possible, where we were, when I heard a general shout on deck. Wondering what it could mean, I jumped up the hatchway, and, speechless with astonishment,

beheld a large ship coming up slap on our weather quarter. She was scudding under bare poles. It was evident she had seen us; and I distinguished the face of a man holding a lantern over her bow, when we were asked, through a speaking-trumpet, what we were, and then we heard, "Schooner, ahoy!—strike or we will sink you!" Instantly all was in commotion on the deck of the frigate, for such I made her out to be, getting her guns out, and preparing to use them. My surprise prevented me replying, and it was not till her long tier of heavy cannon swept by us, so near that she actually with her main-shrouds grazed our jib-boom, and till a voice again bellowed out, "Do you strike?"—that I gained my presence of mind, and, calling out, "Put the helm up!"—we bore away, till I got the wind on my quarter. Several guns were fired at us. Our only hope was in more canvas on the schooner; and as soon as she felt it, and found herself released from the restraint under which she had laboured, with her head to the sea, groaning and staggering from the tremendous blows of the waves, she flew like a greyhound when let slip at its prey. She dashed madly through the crests of the foaming billows, which hissed and fumed as if boiling, and left in her wake a line of sparkling light like a meteor in the heavens, brighter from being contrasted with the blackness of the night.

While congratulating myself on our escape, the man, looking out on our fore-rigging (for the fore-part of the deck was swept clean by every sea),

called out, "The frigate ahead!" We had just time to put the helm up again, when we swept by a ship, which I saw, by a dim lantern on her poop, was not the frigate, but a larger vessel. We had scarcely cleared her before we crossed the bow of another, and then another. I was bewildered. The mate said wildly and fearfully, "These be no real ships, Sir—but the *Flying Dutchman*!" To which the quartermaster answered, "I'll be damned if it be—it be a China fleet." The truth of this instantly flashed across my mind—it was the homeward-bound Canton fleet.

When well to leeward of them, we again hauled our wind, and lay to, till daylight should appear. After a dreadful night of anxiety, perplexity, and peril, the darkness, which I thought had lasted an eternity, slowly disappeared; and lurid streaks of light, betokening a tempestuous day, barely enabled me to take a survey of the dim and narrow circle of the horizon. What a change a single day had made! On the previous morning a child's paper boat might have swum securely, and now these English ships of colossal size, compared to which we must have appeared a nutshell, were madly tossed about. Every wave, like a mountain, threatened to overwhelm them. Lashed up by the wind, the sea seemed boiling; and the frothy scum, formed on its surface, filled the air like a snowstorm. The old weather-beaten quartermaster, who had hold of the helm, as with his horny hand he wiped off the spray which was flying over

him, and mingled with the tobacco juice down his grizzly beard, said, "Mayhap old Neptune's Mis'ess wants a cup of tea this morning, and has boiled the water, and belike will sarve herself out of those three tea-chests. Three!—ay—my wife always turned in three spoonsful—one for I, one for her, and t'other for the pot."

The three East Indiamen, which were from twelve to fifteen hundred tons, seemed to have suffered considerable damage. They were lying to, awaiting, as I conjectured, the coming up of their consorts; for it was evident that they were part of the convoy I had encountered in the night; consequently concluding I was now both ahead and to leeward of them all, it was necessary I should get the weather-gage before the men-of-war came up, in order to be safe from their pursuit when the violence of the storm should abate. Accordingly, taking advantage of the lull, which generally occurs at break of day, under our storm sails, we hauled our wind. I have said a better sea-boat never floated than ours: all our light spars were secured on deck, the hatchways and ports were battened down, and, being free from lumber, and in the best trim, we floated on the wild seas in comparative ease as well as security; whilst the huge and unwieldy Indiamen, high out of the water, and lumbered up within and without, looked like anything but swans on a lake. As the light became stronger, the horizon was enlarged; the sun, though at times obscured by dark masses of rapidly-passing clouds,

pierced with its wandering beams the vapours hanging over the sea, and I was enabled, with a powerful telescope, to count seven other vessels, among which the most prominent was a line-of-battle ship, distinguished by her broad pennant as the commodore. She was making signals, as I apprehended, to the frigate from which I had so miraculously escaped—thanks to the gale. Sweeping my glass round the horizon to windward, I observed the frigate bearing down to the leeward ships, seemingly to assist those which had suffered most, the weather ships having borne up and congregated to leeward, except one solitary bark whose white and reduced main-topsail could alone be distinguished, in the very eye of the wind, or, as sailors say, dead to windward. She, too, altered her course, but not in the track of the others, her object appearing to be to keep near them, but not to go amongst them. I watched her intently; the cut of her sails, her taunt masts, and celerity of her manœuvres, and the velocity with which she moved, proved her a ship of war, yet everything denoted she was not English.

"Take the glass," I said to the old quartermaster, "I can't make out what the devil craft that is. She is altering her course, and coming down on us: we must wear round, and show her our stern. Well, what do you make her out to be, quartermaster?"

"Why, sir," replied the old seaman, "did you never see in the Indies three fore-and-aft sails such as she carries? I larnt that cut when I sarved in a

New York pilot-boat, and I cut that there canvas, as sartain as my name be Bill Thompson!" [1]

"What!" I exclaimed, "is it the grab?"

"Sartainly it be," says Bill.

The welcome news spread through the schooner, and joy beamed from every eye. In an hour she came up alongside of us, when we gave a simultaneous cheer that arose above the noise of the still undiminished gale. My pleasure was indescribable, heightened at its being unexpected and opportune. As no boat could live in the sea, we could only communicate by our private code of signals, by which I was directed to keep close to the grab and follow her motions.

The gale continued steadily blowing out of the Gulf of Siam, drifting the convoy down towards Borneo. We followed De Ruyter as he edged down on them. I observed that most of the merchant-ships had suffered more or less damage; one of them had lost her foremast, which, as we afterwards were informed, had been struck by lightning, when twelve or fourteen men were killed—the commodore had her in tow. Another had lost her topmast and jib-boom: being a heavy sailer, she was a long way to leeward, and the frigate, under much canvas, considering the weather, was towing her. The other ships were uniting their efforts to keep together, and assist each other; while De Ruyter practised successively every nautical expedient to harass and divide them, in which, with

[1] The native rig of the grab had been altered to that of a French corvette.

reckless effrontery, I aided and abetted. Day and night we hung on them, like wolves on a sheepfold, kept at bay by the watch-dogs. Our superiority in sailing gave us the power of annoyance; but, besides the men-of-war, the greater portion of the merchant-company's ships overmatched us in number of men and weight of metal, carrying from thirty to forty guns, and from a hundred and fifty to three hundred men. Nevertheless, we impeded their progress so much by day with both feigned and real attacks, and deceived them so much at night by false signals with guns and lights, that they made every effort to destroy or get rid of us. The frigate gave chase to us alternately; but though she was a strong ship, and was handled in the most masterly and seamanlike manner, all her attempts were vain. My temerity frequently put the schooner in jeopardy; once, as she pursued me, out-carrying me with sail, I should inevitably have fallen into her hands, if her jib-boom and fore-top-mast had not gone by the board, as she had opened a fire on me from her bow-chasers. Thus we succeeded in embarrassing and impeding the convoy, in despite of their strenuous and unwearied exertions to keep together, we being favoured by the islands, banks, and rocks scattered on their lee, towards which the continuance of the gale, aided by the swell and current, combined to drive them. The ship which the frigate had occasionally in tow, when deprived of that aid, by our keeping her incessantly on the alert, had drifted far astern and to leeward. As the

sun set, De Ruyter was alongside of us, considerably ahead of the fleet. He said:—

"In twenty-four hours this gale will have expended its strength, not the less violent, in the meantime, on that account. To-night we will make our last effort, which shall be to cut off that sternmost ship. I will prevent the frigate from succouring her till sunset: then she can be of no avail. I will come to windward of you. At nightfall, do you get in her wake, and you shall find me near you."

With words to this effect De Ruyter left me; and, with even more than his wonted audacity, ran in among the convoy, undauntedly exchanging shots with several of the largest. By the rapidity of his movements he kept the frigate continually on the alert. The Indiamen looked like Chinese junks; and, for the most part, were manned with those outcast, miserable wretches, Lascars. Such an one was the dismasted ship, that De Ruyter and myself, having successfully detached her from the convoy, doubted not would be our prize.

A change in the weather was apparent. The small curled clouds, which hitherto had all scudded one way, congregating to windward, where they remained stationary, arranged in horizontal lines, till incorporated in the dark and rugged bank, as if to supply the laboratory of the tempest with fuel, now no longer hurried on to a particular point, while their hues and forms were changed, being grey and evanescent. Night came on, with occasional showers of rain; and

the obscurity was such that I could only at times catch a glimpse of the Indiaman, directed to where she lay by the signals of distress she made to those who could not possibly hear or see her, and, if seen, could not assist her. The gale, though broken, blew fiercely in squalls; and in the intervening lulls, when relieved from the pressure of the gale on the little canvas it was safe to carry, the sullen and tumultuous waves hurled us about, and the water fell on our deck with the noise and shock of an avalanche, every wave threatening to annihilate us. To add to our peril there were shoals and an extensive range of sunken rocks immediately under our lee.

We saw nothing of the grab till towards morning. The weather was then moderated; and De Ruyter informed me that he feared the Indiaman was wrecked; that when he had last seen her she was bound in by sunken rocks; that he had approached to warn her of her danger, and advised her to wear round, and haul her wind, but she had borne away before it, not knowing where she was. "Now," said he, "they must all inevitably perish. Ay, they are firing guns for aid, but it is too late."

De Ruyter's conjectures, as to her loss, were verified with the earliest break of day. The first object my eye rested on was the huge wreck of the ship, lying along a bed of rocks, fixed within its jagged points as in a Cyclopean vice; while the immense waves, lashed into fury by the opposition of the low reef of scattered rocks, assumed their wildest

and most destructive forms. Some arose like pyramids, others came sweeping along in continued columns, till, checked by the shoals, their crests flew upwards clear and transparent as glass; then, curling inwards, they hissed and rolled on, till, encountered by the reaction of the eddying swell from other quarters, they successively disappeared in spray and foam. In the very midst of this horrific whirlpool, with the surf thundering on her, as if ejected by the force of a volcano, the doomed wreck lay, like a stranded leviathan.

Not a vestige of the convoy could be descried through the dim veil of misty clouds which hung on the verge of the horizon. The gale, after drawing round to the east, expended its last efforts, and died away at the first ray of the sun. We lay pitching and rolling so heavily that our masts bent like rattans, the knees and timbers of the vessel groaned and shrieked as if torn asunder, and the bulkheads and deck opened and closed with the violence of the motion. We were already so near the rocks as to fill us with dread. To think of succouring the crew of the wrecked vessel (should indeed any of them still exist) was at that period out of the question. With a telescope I could make out that the main-mast with the main-yard, and the stump of the mizen-mast, were the only parts of the wreck over which the sea did not continually break. The forepart of the vessel was bilged, and occasionally under water; so that I knew the decks must have blown up, and her cargo been

washed out. Her poop was high out of the water, but the surf played over it like a fountain. It was evident, if any of the crew had escaped, they must be on the weather main-yard-arm, which was topped considerably up, the lee side drooping, and the swell striking against it. Had any sought refuge on the weather side of the yard, it was barely possible they could maintain their hold against the continued shocks to which they were liable.

At 9 a.m. the swell had so far abated that, seeing De Ruyter prepare to get a boat out, I followed his example, and succeeded with a light and particularly buoyant whale-boat, with the second mate and four of my best seamen—an injury confining me on board. De Ruyter having spoken my boat, they proceeded together, making a long sweep round the shoals to leeward, as I readily conjectured, to make the desperate attempt at approaching the wreck—the gallant De Ruyter, the first of seamen, and the first in danger, whether to save or slay!

It was past noon ere I observed the two boats returning round the reef towards the grab. I had been able to distinguish men moving on the main-yard of the wreck, and that the boats had succeeded in getting near enough to induce them to lower themselves by ropes into the sea. Some, I concluded, were saved. The schooner being the lighter vessel, I got her nearer to the boats; and, the swell continuing to go down, they reached us in safety. De Ruyter swung himself on board with a rope; and, as he wrung my

hand, his face beamed with joy brighter than I had ever beheld it. "Had that lubberly ship," said he, "kept clear of the rocks, she would have been ours, and I should have cleared forty thousand dollars; yet, I know not why, the rescuing four of her people gives me greater pleasure than if I had made a prize of her, or of tea-chests piled high as the Himalayan Mountains. Poor fellows! they must be endued with the hardiness of otters to have lived through such a night, on such a perch. Hoist them on board, my lads!—but first the father and his son."

The words were scarcely uttered when a man, with a rent jacket of red camlet, and yellow facings, embroidered with silver cord, and the other parts of his dress stained and dripping, came feebly staggering towards me, evidently unable to support himself. A dark stripling, naked to the waist, of a light and muscular form, held him up by the arm. The former was between forty and fifty years of age, a captain in a Bengal regiment, returning to Europe, on leave, after five-and-twenty years' service in India; by which he had acquired a right to full pay for the remainder of his life, amounting to a hundred and eighty pounds per annum. This beggarly stipend, had his habits or the climate been more temperate, he might have lived many years to claim; but incarcerated in the oven-like atmosphere of Calcutta, his liver had enlarged to the same unnatural proportions as that of a Strasburg goose, and by the same means—heat and stuffing. Bile, not blood, seemed to circulate,

or rather to be stagnated throughout his body, dyeing his skin with the slimy green and yellow hue of encrusting standing water. His annuity was not worth half a year's purchase. The boy was from sixteen to seventeen, his son by a native woman. Grafted on an indigenous stock he had grown well, and gave promise of goodly fruit. These and other particulars I learnt afterwards, for instantly on their arrival on board I gave them a separate cabin, and had all their wants supplied. Of the other two men saved, one was the third mate, a square athletic north-countryman, inured to wreck and storm, having been brought up in a collier on his own dangerous coast. The other was the serang, or native boatswain; he was the finest-looking fellow I ever saw, as good a seaman as he was a brave man—the more remarkable from his caste being stigmatised for dastardly conduct. The gallant youth, who had preserved his father through all the dangers I have described, these men spoke of with wonder and admiration.

When refreshed by sleep and food, the third mate told his story of the wreck. His ship, one of the largest, had lost her topmasts, and was otherwise greatly damaged by being taken aback, when first struck by the gale. The frigate had occasionally taken her in tow. She was a very heavy sailer, hardly seaworthy. Her cargo consisted of tea, silk, and sundries. With women, children, black servants, and others, there were above three hundred souls in her. In the early part of the night she laboured so much from the

heavy swell as to become generally leaky; many of the chain-bolts were drawn, and the chain-plates gave way. In bearing up to ease her, two of the guns of the main-deck had broken loose; one of them had stove in a porthole, which let in the water; upon this the pumps became choked from the tea getting into the well. When the grab had hailed her and told her of the rocks, she had attempted to wear round, but, for want of head-sail, became ungovernable. Ultimately the wind, swell, and indraught drifted her bodily towards, and then by force through, a narrow channel of the reefs. There, brought up stern-foremost on a sunken ledge of rocks, in the very midst of the breakers, all the Lascars instantly betook themselves to the rigging and masts. The wailing and screaming were so loud as to drown the uproar of the winds and waves. The spray, sometimes the waves, covered the ship; all thought they were already under water; most of those on the decks were so bewildered that they were washed overboard, before they could take any measures to save themselves. Nothing was visible but the white foam bubbling all around. They were entirely ignorant of where they were, or what they were to do. "At that moment," continued the third mate, "I knew not a single person on board. I swung myself into the main-rigging by a rope; many Lascars and some of the officers were there. I went on the main-top; that also was crowded; none could be heard to speak, from the spray which even reached them there. Soon after I saw the fore-mast go by the

board—from the noise on it I thought it was covered with men—they were all lost! Hardly did I know the deck of my own ship; her forecastle seemed entirely under water. I heard a crash; I thought it was the sea working its way between decks, having entered by the hatchways. By a loud report, like thunder, I knew the decks were blown up, and the ship water-logged. Some time afterwards, towards morning, she made a sudden lurch, and fell on her beam-ends to port; the shock was so sudden and violent that it carried away the mizen-mast, on which was the greater part of the Europeans; and it threw most of the men out of the main-top, and the lee main-yard-arm; being in the water, all were swept from it! I and the serang, who had held fast, seeing the top was going to pieces, no longer tenable, crawled out on the weather main-yard, which we found almost abandoned; for the braces, which steadied it, being carried away, and the main-sail, having got loose, had shaken off those which were on it; yet, though the sail was blown away, the yard was swinging about see-saw fashion. I then first came athwart the old captain, clinging like a lobster to a rock, with the young half-caste sticking fast as a barnacle alongside him, both of them lashed on the yard by the gaskins, which the lubbers had cast loose for that purpose, not knowing the sail would get adrift, which had caused so much mischief. Daylight appeared, when I could only count six alive. We were almost exhausted, and without hope, till we saw your boats:

but when we looked round, we thought it impossible that anyone could near us; for we were shut in by breakers, on which the sea burst so violently that we could scarcely hear each other's voices. Besides, we knew you were French privateers; and when we did observe the boats shove off, pulling towards us, we thought they came to see what plunder they could pick up, not to save us." Here the mate's hard north-country visage brightened, and his small blue-eye glistened from under his high cheek-bones. "I have seen many brave and good boatmen come off in life-boats, and other shore-boats on our coast, in gales when no ship could show a rag of canvas, but no man ever saw such a devil's bay as we lay in. The eddying swell whirling round and round, flying up like water-spouts, dead men, tea-chests, casks, bales of silk and cotton, ship-sails, spare boats and oars, men's ham-mocks, chests, were all tossed topsy-turvy about together. It made me, sir, very queer to look at it; for they all seemed alive, and the men moved their arms and legs about as if they were drunk. There was in particular an old black nurse holding a white child in her arms, which she seemed trying to re-ship on board us, and then she spun round and round the rocks; and I thought I heard the body squealing, every time they were dashed against the rocks. A man near me on the yard never took his eyes off her; and, all at once, he called out, as if he were stark mad, 'Ay, ay, old devil, I am coming! I am coming!'—and dashed head-foremost amongst 'em; he didn't strike

out a stroke, but went down like lead. The old captain told me not to look below; and I did feel my head going round, as if I were top-heavy. A fish or a cork could not float steadily for an instant in that roaring whirlpool, and yet the American captain got near enough, after a number of trials, to throw a lead-line on board, when the first man who tried to get hold of it was washed off and drowned. Then it was again thrown, and that young lad, the officer's son, who was as active as a monkey, got hold of it, and I secured the end of a rope to it, which the captain hauled on board. One by one we lowered ourselves down, and were hauled into the boat; and, thank God! though you don't carry English colours, there are some of my countrymen on board—and that's all I care for. And I must say, though this be a Yankee, I never saw better craft, or better seamen, or kinder to brother tars in distress."

In the English accounts of this loss it was stated, and never contradicted, that, in a dismasted and leaky state, she had been seen in the dusk of the evening, bearing away, and firing guns of distress. That the men-of-war, convoying the fleet, could not assist her, as the commodore had already a ship in tow, which, but for his aid, must have been wrecked, being completely dismasted; and the frigate was engaged in keeping off two fast-sailing French privateers, which had been hanging on the convoy during the heaviest gale the oldest seaman had ever witnessed in the China seas; and that the ship missing

was supposed to have foundered, or been wrecked on the sunken rocks and sand-banks, which bind the north-east coast of the island of Borneo.

National pride, like the pride of individuals, requires to be well oiled in order to work smoothly; and John Bull, with all his vaunted plainness and honesty, is, in reality, as vain and gullible as the strutting gander after it is stuffed with oil-cake. His dignity would have been compromised at any allusion to the East Indiaman's having been cut off from her convoy, guarded by his omnipotent and invincible ships of war, by a couple of French *Lettres de marque*, and during a tremendous gale, when British tars flatter themselves that they alone have the hardihood at once to contend against its fury, and to act offensively against an enemy.

X

AFFAIR WITH JAVANESE

We ran along the eastern coast for a bay, in which, according to my chart, there was anchorage, with the intention of procuring a supply of wood and water. We kept as close inshore as possible, to be within reach of the land-winds; but, for many days, we lay stationary under the high land, within whose dark shadows I thought we were enchanted; for not a breath of air reached us, either from the land at night, or from the sea in the day. The buoyant rubbish of chips, feathers, and rope-yarn, thrown overboard, remained as stationary as the rubbish cast out of a cottage door. The waters seemed petrified into polished blue marble, tempting one to walk on their treacherous surface. Among the few moving things around were those little azure-tinctured children of the sea, called Portuguese men-of-war, with sails like a gossamer, and tiny paddles; they manœuvred about us, like a fairy fleet, the largest as big as a crystal stopper of a decanter, which, except in colour, they resembled. Here and there were scattered the jellied-looking sea-stars; and a singular phenomenon, called the puree, which comes from the bottom to the surface by inflating itself with air, till, from a shrunken, withered,

empty thing, it becomes round and plumped out like a blown bladder; after this, it cannot sink for a length of time. We amused ourselves by practising with our carbines at them; and also by lowering the square sail overboard to bathe in, using that method to avoid the ground-sharks, which, in those seas, near the shore, lie like silent watch-dogs in their submerged kennels. The heat was so piercing, that the Rajputs, who worship the sun, fought on the deck for a square foot of the awning's shade. I experienced the greatest relief from anointing my body with oil, and continually, like a duck, plunging my head in water; yet my lips and skin were cracked like a plum tree. No vessel is so ill-adapted for a hot climate as a schooner; she requires a great many men to work her, and has less space than any other vessel wherein to stow them. On coming on deck from below, the men appeared as if they had emerged from a steam-bath.

Calms at sea, like the calms of life, are transitory and far between; a breeze, a squall, a gale, or a tempest must follow, as certain as the night the day. With us the winds came gentle as a lover's voice to woo the sleeping canvas, not like the simoom of wedlock, and we glided peacefully along the rich and varied scenery of the shore to our anchorage near Balamhua, withinside the island of Abaran. Here we found an extensive range of sandy beach, a small river, and the wood so abundant, that the trees seemed enamoured of salt water and sea breezes, drooping their heads over its surface, as if they courted the

spray, and were nurtured by the briny waves laving their roots. There was a small village of Javanese at the mouth of the river, the chief of which, in consideration of a small supply of powder and brandy, readily gave us permission to procure what we wanted on shore. We landed our empty water-casks, and began to cut wood.

Preparing for sea, I was amazed to hear that a fray had happened between some of our men and the villagers. Two of the natives had been wounded by our men firing at them. These disputes were ever recurring in our dealings; nor could our tars comprehend that they were amenable to any law while on shore. They acknowledged themselves, when shipped, bound to the articles of their duty, and answerable for any neglect or breach of contract while on board. They belonged to the sea; but "it is hard if we can't take our full swing on shore. We are ready to pay for what we want—when we have money; or we are ready to fight for it. For when we haven't money, it ain't natural that savages should keep all the shore to themselves; when it is quite sartain the land was made for the Christians as well as the sea." This, or some such reasoning, was all the reply I could get, from my most orthodox Christian crew, to my frequent remonstrances on the brutality with which they assailed, robbed, and slaughtered the natives. Nor could I find a remedy for this evil; I restrained them as much as possible, and did what justice was in my power, in the way of recompense, to the

wronged. In this instance the Javanese were accused of being the aggressors; yet, though I could not arrive at the facts, I knew some indignity must have been offered to them; and they are neither patient nor forgiving. Dreading, therefore, some bloody retaliation, and observing they no longer came alongside of us, while a suspension of barter and communication was highly detrimental, I took a few presents for the chief, and went on shore in two armed boats. This method did not succeed; but, by going accompanied by none but my interpreter, after much difficulty and explanation, I succeeded, at least in appearance, in having accommodated the affair, when a renewal of our friendly intercourse took place.

When ready for sea, the chief came on board, and pressed me to accompany him to a hunting-station, abounding with deer and wild hogs. He had often heard me express a wish to go thither, but had put it off from time to time, saying it was better to wait till the rains fell, when the animals would be driven down from the mountains. As there had been a violent storm on the previous night, followed by floods of rain, his invitation seemed to be the consequence of his former promise. I readily gave my assent. He cautioned me, with great apparent sincerity, against creating any jealous fears among his people by a train of many armed followers. Then, with other friendly advice on his part, we parted; it being settled that I was to meet him on the ensuing morning before daylight.

Although without fear, I did not neglect to use all proper precautions. I went on shore the next morning with fourteen of my trustiest men, well armed. After landing, I ordered the boat, with a smaller one which accompanied us, having a part of their crews, to push off from the shore, lie at their grapnels, and, on no account, to land, or parley with the natives.

The chief was waiting for me, attended by only four or five men, armed with merely their creeses and boar-spears. We penetrated into the interior by following the windings of the little river, now swollen, muddy, and rapid from the late heavy rain. We crossed the stream several times by fords, not without some difficulty, and I failed not to caution our party to preserve their ammunition and arms from getting wet. I had learnt to be watchful and suspicious, and took note of several apparently trivial circumstances, which might have escaped a less wary person. The Javanese chief frequently held conferences with his men; he sometimes wished us to cross parts of the river which were not fordable, the bottom being muddy, interspersed with deep holes; and, changing the order of our progress, he kept in the rear of the party. Upon this I also fell back, and watched him narrowly. There was awakened a cunning and treacherous expression in the glistening of his small deep-set eye, which startled me. Not to let him imagine he was mistrusted, I determined, as we had already advanced two or three miles, to proceed without pause, keeping near him, and carefully

watching his motions. At the same time I accurately noted our road, the localities which marked our progress, and the fords of the river.

I cannot remember to have ever benefited by the advice or example of others. Nothing but a blow from the Cyclopean hammer of experience on my head could teach or convince me; and nothing less than the imminent jeopardy in which I had placed Zela, by taking her to the tiger-hunt, contrary to everyone's advice and all prudent consideration, could have induced me to leave her on board the schooner, against her own urgent entreaty to accompany me. That I now knew her to be safe in that safe asylum, by removing every care and fear from my mind, seemed to leave my own body invulnerable. I had yielded, however, to Zela's importunities to take her little intelligent Malayan girl, Adoo, in whom her mistress placed implicit confidence. Adoo neither cared nor thought about anything in the world but Zela. Her attachment to me was grounded on being beloved by Zela. Adoo was nearly of the same age as her mistress, but no two creatures could be more dissimilar. The Malayan girl was stunted in growth, broad and bony, low-browed, with hair coarse, straight and black, hanging over her flat tawny face, like a wild horse's foretop. Her small and deep-set eyes, by their unusual distance, seemed totally independent of each other, and to have power to keep a look-out to the starboard and larboard, the north and the south, at the same instant. They were

bright, watchful, and eager as a serpent's—but there ended the resemblance; for poor little Adoo, far from wile and guile, was the truest and most faithful handmaiden that ever dedicated herself to a mistress, hand and heart. I was so partial to this little savage, that to keep her about my person, I installed her in the high and important office of Tchibookdgee; and she was matchless in compounding a chilan for a hookah, preparing a callian, or filling a Turkish pipe —accomplishments not to be despised.

To return to my story. We continued our route by the side of the river for about four miles, when, after ascending an abrupt and rocky eminence, our Javanese leader proposed to stop at two or three small cane huts, and refresh ourselves with coffee and mangosteens, till some of the people he had sent forward should return to inform us where the game lay. To this I gladly acceded. My suspicions were in a great measure dissipated, seeing no further symptoms to corroborate those which had been lurking in my mind. Milk, fruit, and coffee, which last is of excellent quality in this island, were brought, Adoo, for I was a great epicure in coffee, superintended the making of mine. We were seated in one of the empty huts, to screen us from the sun; and whilst I was smoking my callian, the men were eating and drinking. The chief was sitting on a mat close by me, between me and the door, which was blocked up by Javanese. I was on the point of putting the coffee-cup to my lips with my left hand, as I

leaned on my right, and lolled at the full stretch of my limbs, with my head resting against one of the bamboo-supporters of the hut, when my attention was directed to something touching my hand. Turning to see what it was, a low voice on the outside, but close to my ear, said, "Hush! hush! do not move!" in such accents as evidently indicated terror. Without moving, I glanced my eye in the direction of the voice, and it fell on the keen glance of Adoo, through the matting. I leaned my head close to the spot, when she whispered in my ear, "Do not drink the coffee;—come out;—bad people!"

Some of our men had complained of sickness immediately after they had drunk the coffee; and I recollected the officiousness of the chief in serving me with it. Instantly it struck me it was poisoned. Happily I had been detained from drinking it, awaiting the somewhat tedious process of preparing, filling and lighting my Persian water-pipe. The chief, now at the door, was significantly exchanging glances with his men, for every eye was fixed on me; their savage and malign aspects plainly intimated their intentions. There was neither time nor opportunity to form plans or communicate with my men. Suspecting, which was the case, that the chief was waiting for a reinforcement to attack us, and fearing, from the rising commotion withoutside, they had already arrived, and would, whilst my men were under the paralysing effect of the poison, rush in and butcher us, or fire the huts, and slaughter us as we

attempted to escape, I drew a pistol, sprang up, and attempted to gain the entrance. The chief drew his creese, and essayed to detain me. I shot him through the body and yelled the Arab war-cry, calling out to the men, "We are betrayed!—follow me!"

So sudden had been my movement that the panic-struck natives rushed down the bank into the jungle. Restraining my men from pursuing them, my orders were to examine if their arms were ready for service, and to fix their bayonets. Adoo told me, from what she had overheard, some fatal or stupefying drug had been administered to the men in their coffee; and that the chief was waiting for a reinforcement. Many of the men were affected, complaining of sickness.

The first danger was over, yet was our situation most perilous. We set off, in double-quick time, to regain the boats, or to get in sight of the schooner, and give signals of our distress. We regained the river and crossed it. Naturally, concluding the natives would lurk in ambush to cut us off, I carefully avoided the route by which we had advanced in the morning, and kept on the highest and the clearest ground. By these precautions we succeeded in retreating three parts of the distance unimpeded, but not unobserved; as, from time to time, we heard the wild war-whoops of the enemy, hanging on our rear. As long as they remained there we had little to fear. Adoo, who ran close at my heels, kept a look-out on both sides, continually pointing at the direction the natives were

taking, with extraordinary precision. As we proceeded, in addition to the danger of becoming embogged, was the probability of being attacked at such a disadvantage. At length arriving at an angle of the river, with a swampy morass before us, we were compelled to cross. Whether the strong stimulant of fear or uncommon physical exertion had neutralised or retarded the effect of the poison, or the inefficacy of the drug itself was the cause of its effect having disappeared, I know not; but, after the first half-hour, I heard no more about it.

Bent on the one momentous object of regaining our vessel, I led the party across the river, feeling my way and supporting myself with a boar-spear. We secured our cartridges in our caps. The water was shallow, but varying in depth, and the passage difficult from its treacherous coatings of soft, black, and slippery mud. Happily, myself and five others achieved a firmer footing and shallower water, after having with difficulty toiled along up to the hips, when Adoo said, "Malik, they are coming!" I lowered my carbine to my shoulder, and called to the remainder of the men to hasten on. The natives, emerging from their ambush, gave a loud yell, fired their matchlocks, and ran tumultuously down to the river's brink. In all savage warfare, the first shout and the first volley are to give themselves courage to advance, and to intimidate and panic-strike their opponents, like yelping dogs, which pursue what flies, but sneak from the sturdy; therefore, if the first aimless dis-

charge and war-cry are unshrinkingly replied to and defied, the attack is rendered weak and wavering. The Javanese, seeing we stood firm, and prepared to fire on them, paused on the river's brink. Observing their hesitation we, that were in front, gave them a volley; and, the other men coming up, we shouted, and advanced rapidly to the shore to charge them. They retreated into the jungle, and we succeeded in crossing the ford without the loss of a man.

We hurried down the margin of the stream, the natives following close in our rear, or flanking us, occasionally throwing spears, firing their matchlocks, and yelling obscure curses and threats; to which we replied by a prompt shot the instant any of them became visible. The number of our pursuers was increasing, and, as we approached the sea, the jungle became thinner, when Adoo told me she saw horsemen advancing in our front. At that moment the odour of the sea-beach, impregnated as it was with dead weeds, rotten fish, and briny air, was inhaled by me with far greater rapture than ever fell to the lot of tobacco, or my favourite wines, hock, Bordeaux, and Tokay. I called out to my men, "Freshen your way, my boys—the sea ahead!" and they sped along to the bank on which I stood, with more alacrity than I ever saw them fly up the rigging to catch a view of land after a tedious voyage. When we espied the silken, swallow-tailed vanes, glittering on the trucks of our dark-hulled schooner, although the hull was not visible, we gave a loud hurrah, with a volley of musketry to

our pursuers, and considered, somewhat prematurely, our difficulties over.

On the long line of sandy plain, bordering the sea, a dingy and confused mass stained its surface. A loud shout from the natives, dogging our heels, confirmed what Adoo's hawk's eyes had first descried, and which soon became distinct to us all. A body of native, and nearly naked, horsemen approached us at speed, armed with spears, and mounted on small, but swift and active horses. Their number was not great; but, backed by those who were already nearly surrounding us, they were enough to annihilate the hopes of the wisest, and to turn the thoughts of the best towards Heaven. But I was neither of the wise nor good; all my thoughts were occupied in how best to meet the coming danger.

A bank or bar was formed across the river of mud and sand, where the salt and fresh water met, and where, in storms, torrents from the mountains and the wild waves joined in conflict depositing their spoils. Old trunks of trees, and pieces of wrecked canoes were firmly embedded in this bank, through which the current ebbed and flowed in narrow channels, the bottoms of which were deep on both sides of the river. There was a sandy level, a desert waste on our left; close to the sea was a village, interspersed with clumps of the sea-loving cocoa-nut tree; and two or three clumps of these were dotted on our right, intercepting our view of the schooner. We had not time to occupy one of these groves, as the horse-

men took possession of the before-mentioned bar in the river. We accordingly retreated into the water, and, with some difficulty, succeeded in establishing ourselves on the sandy ridges, having a good footing, and the water not deeper than the knees. The bank itself, with the rubbish on it, made a breast-work. I would have also occupied the opposite side, but our party was too small to be divided. I had still my fourteen men, two or three indeed slightly wounded, but not incapacitated from using their firearms. Besides other arms, each man had a musket and bayonet, and our cartouch-boxes were nearly full; for I had economised our ammunition, on which, I knew, everything depended.

Shrieking and yelling, our foes advanced. We crouched down in silence. These wild and savage-looking horsemen were led on by their prince, mounted on a little fiery courser of a bright red colour, with a mane and tail flying in the air like streamers in a gale. The rider was the only one of the band turbaned, clothed, and armed from head to heel. His tattooed and stained features seemed on fire with impatience to begin the slaughter. The energetic ferocity with which he glanced at our small numbers reminded me of our tiger-hunting chief in Borneo. The horse, inspired by the fiend on his back, kept in perpetual and rapid motion. The prince dashed in the water, fired a pistol at one, threw a lance at another, sprang to the shore, led on the horsemen, wheeled round, yelled at those skulking on shore, drove those on

foot with his sword into the river, crossed it himself, re-crossed, headed the natives on foot, and then resumed his place, leading, urging, and forcing the horsemen on us, while his horse, foaming and panting, did not for an instant slacken his rapid, springy, and mazy motions. Following him with my eye, and with my carbine resting on the bulk of a tree, behind which I was screened, I fired several shots at him; but in vain—a swallow in the air, or a seagull riding on a wave, tempest-rocked, would have been as difficult a mark. Yet so favourable was the position we held for defence, and so cool and well-directed the fire we kept up, that all the efforts of the natives, impelled on by their meteor-like prince, were unable to dislodge us. But our ammunition was nearly expended, two men were killed, and others of our little band incapacitated by wounds. On the other hand, we had made great havoc amongst the natives, whose exposed situation gave us great advantage. The cavalry, who acted with the highest intrepidity, dashing into the river both above and below us, suffered severely from our fire, but more from the heavy mud on one side, and the deep holes, sunken trees, and spars on the other. Besides, except their prince, they had no firearms; but his devil's spirit seemed to be infused in them, and their screams were terrific. However, they could not reach us with their spears, and we slaughtered them in security. It was only by destroying them, or thinning their number, that we could hope to escape.

The time at which it was indispensable to make a desperate effort to land and endeavour to regain the beach was at hand. Luckily for us, the only passable ford at this point was where the horsemen could not, from the nature of the ground, oppose us, though a host of villagers withstood our passage. In this predicament, worn with toil, and almost exhausted, I cautiously, one by one, drew my men to the opposite bank, which, when perceived by the natives, they gathered down, and closed on us. The horsemen, whose number was greatly diminished, galloped off towards the sea, as I concluded, to cross and cut off our retreat. We were under the painful necessity of leaving two of the wounded. The first man who landed was killed by a stone from a sling, which was driven into his skull; so that our party was now reduced to nine, including myself. To quench their burning thirst, the men had drank freely of the brackish water of the stream, which had made them sick; and their standing in the water, under the piercing rays of the sun, had so affected them, that, on their landing, they staggered about as if they were drunk.

It was still about a mile to the sea. Keeping close together, we left the ford, and, skirting the river's bank, proceeded onwards. The natives crossed and dogged our heels in multitudes, which obliged us occasionally to halt, and check their advance by a volley. At last we opened a view of the schooner's hull, and the drooping and staggering men breathed a new life. Our hopes were now sanguine, when a

cloud of sand uprose before us, which, partially withdrawn by the wind, exhibited to our view the vampire-prince, and his bright red, fiery, and foaming horse, looming through the vapoury mirage of the dazzling white sand, like a centaur.

A small cluster of palms, shadowing the roofless ruins of a mud hut, stood to our left: all around was a sandy waste. To reach this spot was our only hope: thither we ran for our lives, panting as if our hearts would burst, and threw ourselves over the walls of the hut. One of our wounded fell from exhaustion on the road. Hearing a yell, I looked behind, and saw the malignant prince riding over his body, and endeavouring to trample him to death. He then jumped from his horse, and, as if disdaining to use his sword, smashed the man's skull with the butt of his match-lock or musket, sprang on his horse, yelled to his men, and rode to within a hundred yards of us. The horsemen then separated, and galloped round and round the hut, till, nearing us, they hurled their lances, which we returned with a volley. Two or three of the best shots, with myself, singled out the prince, when I observed his horse swerve round, and go off with a staggering gait, while a plume of the bird of paradise in his turban was scattered in the air. I thought our comrade's death avenged; but no such thing; the prince pulled up, dismounted, shook himself, and after surveying his steed, remounted, and was again in motion; but his ardour appeared to be somewhat cooled.

We now had but a cartridge or two apiece, and were completely surrounded. Desponding and well-nigh exhausted, we prepared to sell our lives dearly, by desperately sallying out. I thought of death—it seemed inevitable. De Ruyter crossed my mind; but Zela's image drove him away and totally engrossed all my thoughts, which were sad, for I believed they were my last.

The back of the hut was high, and, under its shelter, the natives had approached close to us. We smelt fire and drove a hole in the wall with our bayonets, when we beheld they had gathered dry reeds and bushes, and had fired it. We drove them off; but to extinguish the flames was out of our power. In the front of the hut there were palm trees, surrounded by a hedge of vacoua, a strong, prickly, impervious fence. I had several times reproached myself for not having occupied this spot in preference to the hut, being equally secure against the horse, and giving us room to act, with a better view of the proceedings of the natives. Luckily, the front of the hut formed one side of this enclosure, to which it opened as to a courtyard, and had therefore prevented the natives from entering it. The Javanese prince was impelling the savages to close in, and oppose our leaving the hut. My men had been murmuring at the predicament into which I had led them, and followed my injunctions hesitatingly and tardily to form themselves outside the hut in line, to drive the enemy, now close upon us, back with the bayonet.

At that moment the low thundering sound of a heavy gun seawards saluted our ears—it was the schooner's! Its effect was magical; my glowing and desponding men brightened up, threw their caps in the air, and wildly gave tongue like a pack of hounds. It was the signal of succour nigh—a sound that restored the dead to life. Another gun was fired; and while the natives were astounded at its echo from the jungle and the hills, we rushed out amongst them, drove them panic-struck before us, and threw ourselves under cover of the palms. With a busy and cheerful alacrity the men took up their appointed stations, and, shaking hands, swore to defend themselves against all odds. Yet still the foiled barbarians were forced upon us by their prince and leader, who, with unslackened courage, urged on his reeking horse from point to point. We had but five or six cartridges remaining amongst us, and trusted alone to our bayonets. The natives, observing that no succour was near us, and that our fire was discontinued, advanced close to the prickly hedge, and wounded several of our men through the branches. In reality our situation was more hopeless than ever; but most of the horsemen had gone towards the sea, and the prince could not induce his followers to assault us, so much had they already suffered, or we should have fallen an easy prey. I began to imagine, what all my men had long believed, that the prince was the evil spirit, and invulnerable.

Thus encircled like a scorpion girt with fire, we had

passed nearly an hour—it seemed a thousand!—when my attention was directed to the margin of the sea by the Javanese, who all turned that way, and simultaneously yelled. Instantly I heard a fire of musketry, and a cloud of doubt hanging over my mind was dispelled. They were my crew coming to our rescue. Our first impulse was to rush out and join them; but we could not abandon the wounded. We shouted, and when I saw, by the crowd of natives collected in front of us, that our men were approaching in the right point, up the bank of the river, and as soon as we caught a glimpse of the scarlet-capped Arabs, I gave signal of our position by firing my carbine; upon which I distinctly heard the war-cry of my Arabs. The prince, with his now diminished troopers, was galloping and wheeling about them; but I knew, by the continued and heavy fire, there was a force sufficient to repel any effort he might make. Yet did this undaunted leader, who, by the swarms gathered around him, seemed to have been reinforced, dispute with wonderful pertinacity their advance, so that they were frequently compelled to halt and fire. At length they approached the bank of the river on our flank and, spreading in two bodies, advanced to our position. The natives retreated; and in my impatience, I sprung over the enclosure, cap in hand, cheering my gallant crew; when, ere I had proceeded half-way to them, a light and bounding figure, with her loose vest and streaming hair flying in the wind, and in speed like a swallow (but oh!

how infinitely more welcome than that harbinger of spring and flowers!)—came all my joy, my hope, my happiness, my Zela! She sprung into my arms, we clasped each other in speechless ecstasy, and there thrilled through my frame a rapture that swelled my heart and veins almost to bursting. The rude seamen forgot their danger, and looked on not unmoved. This, in an instant, was followed by—"What cheer, Captain?"—"Where are our messmates?"—and more vociferous cries and questions from Zela's Arabs mingled, from a multitude of voices, with shouts and blaspheming threats against the Javanese.

Assisting our wounded along, we regained the bank of the river, and continued our march to the shore in good order, small bodies of the natives hovering about us but not impeding our progress. The prince and the main body of the armed natives were in advance of us, seemingly with the purpose of disputing our embarkation, or attacking the boats previously to our arrival. This urged us on, for I knew the schooner lay too far out to cover the boats with her guns; but my second mate told me he had ordered the boats to lie out at their grapnels, and that the long-boat had a carronade in it. We were worn out with hardship, suffering from hunger, and more from thirst. Zela alone, as a child of the desert, had thought of bringing water, which had been given to the wounded. The boats were evidently kept from the shore by the armed natives on the beach. The schooner was in sight, and getting under way to

run nearer in. As we approached the beach, I drew up my men, broke the throng before us with a volley, and drove through them with the bayonet, when the boats pushed in to the mouth of the river, and we succeeded in getting the wounded into them. But, as the men were following, the natives renewed their attack and several of our men were killed in disorderly skirmishes in the water. The long-boat, full of men, was fast grounded in the mud, and the mêlée was hand to hand. The creeses of the natives were better weapons than our muskets; besides, our cartridge-boxes were full of water, and the confusion was so great, there being neither order nor command, that we were in imminent peril. We could not stand on the slimy bottom of the water, stained with mud, and encrimsoned with blood, and, in struggling, the men fell, when the natives stabbed them under water. Having placed Zela in the long-boat, aided by two or three steady men, the natives crowding round and holding on the gunwale, we discharged the carronade loaded with grape-shot. This made them pause, and gave our men time to rally. A second discharge cleared a space on the beach, and enabled us to get the boats afloat.

I was standing in the bow of the boat, with the match in my hand; the bow was hanging on a sand-bank, whence the men were shoving her. The natives were scattered, and flying in terror of the cannon, and the beach was strewed with dead and dying, when the invulnerable prince, with unabated fury,

headed and led on half a dozen horsemen, who stopped on seeing the engine, whose roar they so much dreaded, pointed directly on them. Turning round, the prince spoke some energetic words to them; then, with a shout, and an expression of scorn and daring, he forced his bright red horse along the sand-bank, up to the bow of the boat, point-blank before the gun. I blew the match, and touched the priming —it did not ignite. The prince dashed his turban in my face, and discharged a pistol at me. Whilst I was staggering from the shock, Zela promptly grasped the match, which had dropped from my hand, and fired the gun. A wailing scream arose along the beach from the Javanese. A wounded horse was madly plunging and trampling on his now prostrate rider—but that was not the prince. Farther on, just on the margin of the red surge, lay a mass of mutilated remains, huddled darkly together—a human leg and a horse's, hands and hoofs, the garments of a man and the garniture of a horse, blackened with powder, and red with blood. Yet was there enough to identify the best horse that warrior ever mounted and the most heroic warrior that ever led to battle.

I felt myself severely wounded, without knowing where the ball had entered. Unable to move my lower extremities, a dull and torpid sensation crept throughout my frame. On looking downwards, I saw that my garments, from the right side to the hip, were rent and stained with powder, and that my loose cotton

trousers were on fire. No bleeding could be discerned. I lay down on the thwarts of the boat, now afloat, and, the natives having entirely discontinued their opposition, we left the shore. The schooner was standing in, keeping up a desultory fire over the beach. With returning sensibility, the heavy and benumbing torpor was succeeded by excruciating agony. They laid me in the after-part of the boat. Zela bent over me, and tried, with gentle words and soothing attentions, to assuage my agony. "Zela!" I said—"my good spirit!—tell me, was that our evil fate that struck at my life?—was it Azrael, the red angel of death?—has he wounded me mortally?"

"Bis Allah!" she answered, "the good spirit paralysed the warrior's arm, when he aimed at your life. God is strong, and we are weak. Death strikes the trunk, and not the limbs."

The ball had entered just below my right groin, inclining downwards, the prince having been considerably above me when he fired. The pain augmented, but the wound did not bleed; and it was not a consolatory reflection at the time that we had no surgeon on board. I was hoisted on the schooner's deck, carried down into the cabin, and laid on the couch. The prince had been so close to me that a large portion of the powder had apparently entered with the ball, and torn and scarified the surrounding flesh, which was black and livid. Zela applied the yolks of raw eggs over the wound to draw out the powder—an Eastern remedy, and certainly effectual.

Nothing was done after this but washing with hot wine and laying on poultices. For four or five days and nights the pain was immitigable; except, which I have always experienced with gunshot wounds, that it was more severe from noon till sunrise; and no Rajput ever watched and worshipped the first ray of the rising luminary of day so devoutly as I did. For twelve days I ate nothing, living, like the whale, on suction. What is the strongest impressed on my memory is the unparalleled devotion and unwearied attention of Zela, who, I really believe, suffered mentally more than I did bodily. A friend of our own sex cannot pass through the ordeal of attendance on a sick couch. Friends shrink from the trial; they will share danger—nay, more, their purses —they may give their aid, their counsel, and their pity; but they cannot sympathize with one in sorrow or sickness. No, it is the woman who loves—she alone can soothe, watch with exhaustless affection and patience, endure the waywardness of mind and the vexatious absurdity which arise from sickness or sorrow. Can the friendship of man, however ardent and sincere, be compared with the idolatry with which women give up soul and body to the man consecrated by their virgin affections? Friendship is founded on necessity; it must be planted and cultured with care; it flourishes only on particular soils; whilst love is indigenous throughout the world. Friendship, like bread, is the staff of our existence; but love is the origin and perpetuator of existence itself. Can I

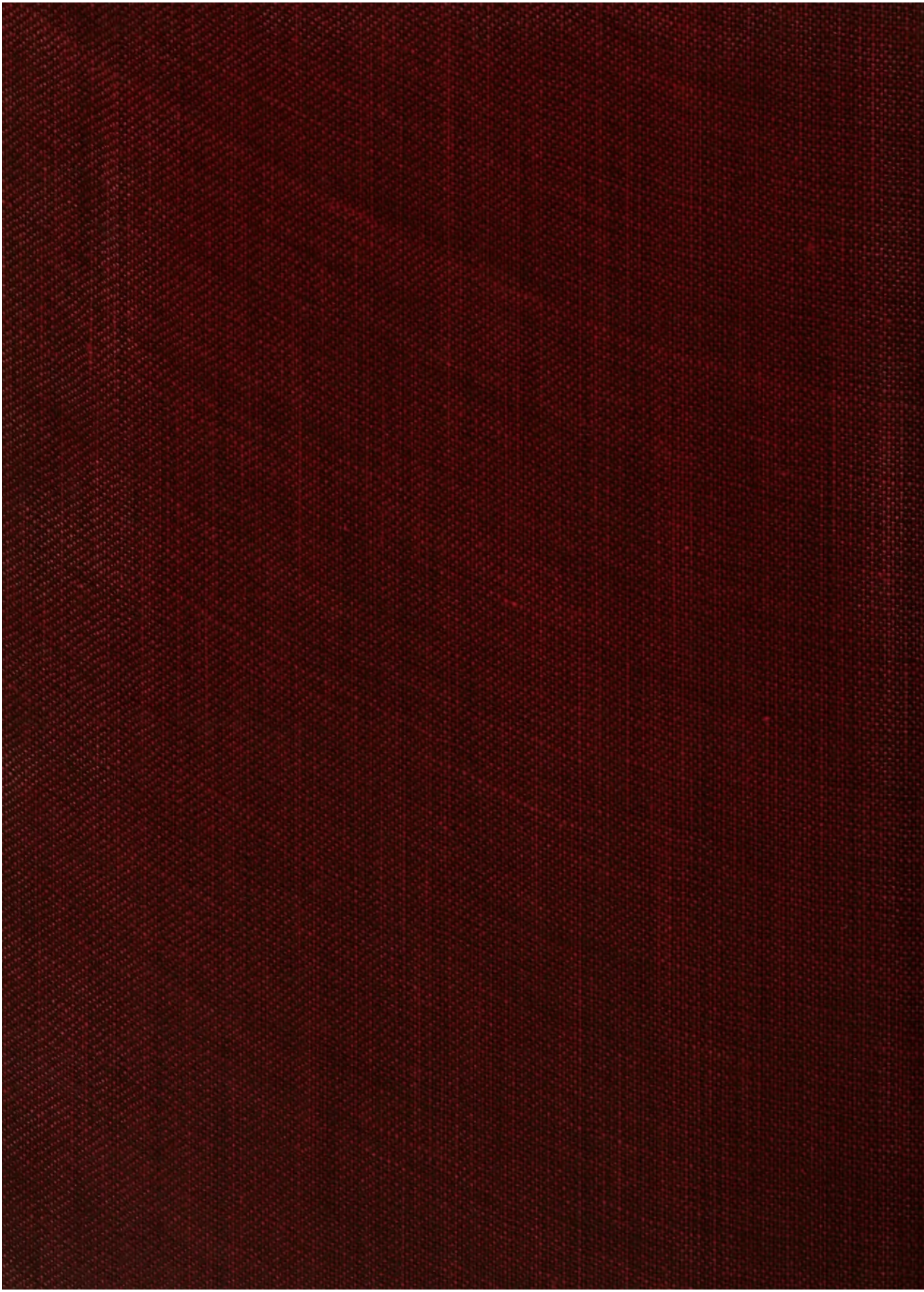
think of Zela's care and watchfulness during my sufferings, without digressing on the matchless love of women? If there is a portion I would snatch from my past life to live over again, it should be that month in which I lay wounded, pained, and helpless, nursed with far deeper love than that of the fondest mother when she watches the symptoms of disease, or returning health, over her first-born child.

As my appetite returned, my strength was gradually restored; and, with the dignified addition of crutches, I resumed my duty on deck. One of our wounded died, certainly not from the effect of his wound, which was but a scratch, but from the lingering effects of the drug in the coffee, with which he had greedily drenched himself. His comrades, for a long time, complained of the Javanese poison; but their disorder, I believe, arose from their taking the medicine I had prescribed for the sick—wine. A steady sea-breeze, a moderate temperature, and the methodical regularity of a sea-life, dispelled fever and dysentery, and restored my men to health.

A few words will explain the cause of our receiving the timely succour. Zela, with her younger handmaiden, had embarked in a small canoe, fancifully denominated her barge, and had pulled along the shore to a sheltered nook, where she might indulge in her favourite recreation of swimming. This had been our diurnal habit, and we were almost amphibious. De Ruyter, at the Isle of France, used to compare me to a shark, and Zela, clothed in striped cotton, to

the little blue and white pilot-fish, while she was preceding me in the water, or floating on the surface. At this time, as she was swimming, she caught the sound of musketry, borne by the land-wind, and conveyed along the sheltered and unbroken surface of the sea; it was distant, low, and indistinct. At first she naturally concluded we were at our sport; but, she said, an indefinable presentiment of evil had crept on her mind. She dressed herself hurriedly; her first impulse was to land and trace the noise to its source; but reflection forbade her following her inclination, and she paddled the canoe along the beach, towards the mouth of the river, where she had observed the boats were lying, but they were not there. The report of guns then became more distinct, and her exquisite sense of hearing enabled her to distinguish the sound of my carbine, by its sharp and ringing report. Soon after she faintly distinguished the shouts of the natives, which she discovered to be those of war, not of hunting. Hastening on board, she told the mate her fears. He went up to the mast-head, and there caught a glimpse of the advancing cavalry, and the detached parties of Javanese hurrying from the village. The boats were luckily alongside, the long-boat having the gun in it for the protection of the wood-cutters when on shore; they were quickly manned and armed. In spite of every remonstrance, Zela peremptorily insisted on accompanying them; and, by being conversant in savage warfare, with unerring sagacity directed the party, which otherwise

would not have arrived in time; so that I may justly call her the angel of my fate. And when dull mortality returns to dust, when the spirit bursts its charnel-vault and wings its way, like a dove, it will find no resting-place, or olive branch of peace, till reunited with Zela's; then will they blend, two sunbeams together, shining onward to eternity.

THE END

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