HAIR BREADTH ESCAPES

OR

PERILOUS INCIDENTS IN THE LIVES OF SAILORS
AND TRAVELERS IN JAPAN, CUBA,
EAST INDIES, ETC., ETC.

BY

T. S. ARTHUR

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ADVENTURES.

Pirate Life.

I served as assistant pilot on board the merchant vessel Dolphin, bound from Jamaica for London, which had already doubled the southern point of the Island of Cuba, favored by the wind, when one afternoon, I suddenly observed a very suspicious-looking schooner bearing down upon us from the coast. I climbed the mast, with my spy glass, and became convinced that it was a pirate. I directed the captain, who was taking his siesta, to be awaked instantly, showed him the craft, and advised him to alter our course, that we might avoid her. The captain, a man of unfortunate temper, whose principal traits of character were arrogance, avarice, and obstinacy, scorned my counsel, and insisted that we had nothing to fear, as we were perfectly well protected by the English flag.

We sailed on, while the schooner drew nearer, for about half a league, when we observed that the deck of the strange vessel swarmed with armed men, and her people were busy in getting out their boats. Upon seeing this, our captain was not a little frightened, and ordered a change in the course of the ship; but it was too late, for we were already within reach of the pirate, who soon hailed us, commanding our captain to come on board of his vessel, and as his commands were not obeyed, fired a broadside into us, which, however, did us no injury. At the same time a boat, containing nine men, pushed off towards us. They presented a most ferocious appearance, being armed with guns, swords, and long knives. They boarded our brig, as we offered not the least resistance.

They then commanded the captain, the ship's carpenter, and myself, to enter their boat, and sent us with an armed escort of four men, who handled us most roughly, to the schooner, where the pirate captain received us with deep curses. He was a gigantic, powerful, well-formed man, of a pale, sallow complexion, large prominent eyes, a hooked nose, and a huge mouth, and glossy hair and beard. He might be about thirty years old, and spoke broken English with a Spanish accent.

"Have you specie on board?" he asked.

"None at all," answered our Captain, thoughtlessly enough, for we had only too much of it, and unfortunately the papers referring to it lay upon the cabin table.

"The devil," cried the robber, "do you take me for a child? All home-bound vessels have money on board; give up yours quietly, and depart in the devil's name whither you will."

The captain repeated his silly denial, and enraged the pirate still further.

"Well," he said with frightful calmness, "if you will not give up the money, I will throw your cargo overboard, and search for it myself. If I find it, I'll lock you in your cabin, and burn your vessel with every man on board."

After this threat he walked up and down the deck, and said more quietly, turning to me:

"You must remain with us, for there is no one among my men who thoroughly understands a helmsman's duty, and I must give myself more rest, I am not well."

One can imagine my sensations. In the meanwhile supper had been prepared, and the pirate officers, six or seven in number, invited us politely to partake of it; we accepted, as

we did not wish to displease them. The meal consisted of onion soup with bread, tolerable fish, and a very good ham, with plenty of excellent Cogniac and Bordeaux wine. During supper the schooner approached the Dolphin, and lay alongside. It was now perfectly dark, and they showed us a place close by the cabin door, where we could sleep.

The following morning we were invited to breakfast, which consisted of coffee with goat's milk, broiled fish, smoked pork, very good biscuit, and sweet brandy. After breakfast we were sent back to the Dolphin, which, as the captain still persisted in his obstinate assertion that there was no money on board, was being emptied of her contents by the robber captain's commands. First of all I slipped into the cabin to look after my chest; it had been broken open and robbed of all articles of value, among which were two diamond rings. Some suits of clothes, and some shirts, were all that remained. In unloading the vessel they began first with the cow; then they threw over the poultry, and all the other provisions, and then the wine and brandy casks. They next came to the actual cargo of the brig, out of which only what was very valuable was preserved, for there was no room to stow any thing away in the pirate ship. Thus they worked until towards evening, when we were again invited to supper, and again shown to our sleeping place. The sailors had already become intoxicated, and were singing and rioting upon deck, without either officers or captain daring to check them, for on board such ships discipline is not to be thought of.

The next day, right after breakfast, the pirate called the captain to the after deck.

"I speak now," said he, "in kindness to you, for the last time; give up your money, or tell where it is concealed. Do it, or, God d—n me, the Dolphin, yourself, and all on board are lost."

The captain answered as before, that there was no money on board.

"Well then," cried the captain in a rage, "you shall find out who you have to deal with. Ho there!" he cried to his men, "down with him into the hold, tie up the pumps, and bring fire!"

The command was instantly obeyed, and a quantity of dry wood was heaped up around the unfortunate man, which they were just about to kindle, when his agony wrung from him the confession that under a board in the cabin floor there was a box containing about five hundred doubloons. He was unbound, and the gold was found.

"Well," said the pirate, "that is something. But you have more—I know it! Give it up, or by all the devils, you shall be burnt."

The captain now swore, with tears, that he had not a penny more, but the pirate would not believe him.

"I will refresh your memory," said he, "rely upon it. Bind up the pumps again, and kindle the fire quickly!"

The poor man was again bound fast, and the light wood around him was kindled; the flames licked his clothes and hands, and his eye-brows and hair were already singed, but he renewed his protestations and commended himself to God's mercy. The pirate at last believing his assertion, let the pumps play and extinguished the fire.

“Well,” he said in a milder tone, “I will set you at liberty, and you may sail whither you please, except to any Cuban port, for if I find you again in these waters I will scuttle your vessel and leave you to your fate.”

He supplied the Dolphin with water and provisions for ten days and loosened it from the schooner. I was obliged to remain upon the pirate ship while the brig set sail, and had soon vanished from our sight. As a thick mist arose we anchored on the edge of a sand-bank, and remained there over night; at break of day we again set sail and ran into a small, concealed, but very safe harbor on the coast of Cuba.

II.

We had scarcely cast anchor when a whole fleet of large and small boats pushed off from the shore and sailed towards us. The pirate knew with whom he had to deal, and made ready for them. Two officials and several other gentlemen and ladies now stepped on board, and were saluted with fifteen guns. After the guests had congratulated the robber upon his successful expedition, refreshments were brought, and the whole company commenced dancing on the deck, where some black musicians were playing. The merriment lasted far into the night, and all left the vessel, delighted with the rich presents of silks and jewels that they had received, while they promised to send purchasers to the sale of the pirate’s booty, which was to take place on the following day. As soon as we were alone again, the pirate captain informed me confidentially, that he maintained the friendliest relations with the government, and that he had no dread whatever of any hostile attempts against him.

“I can easily settle all that with these people,” said he, “with presents.”

On the following morning the deck was swept and preparations were made for the sale, and a crowd of ladies and gentlemen soon appeared; the captain and I received them on board, and conducted them under the blue canopy with silver fringe that had been erected for their accommodation. At a signal from the ship’s bell the sale began. As many articles were sold by weight, I presided over the scales, that were placed near the mainmast. The purchasers stood around me in a semi-circle, and as every one of them bought either a whole or half a hundred weight, it was immediately shoveled into the bags and baskets they had brought. Some attendants, in the meanwhile, handed round wine, cakes, and biscuit, and the wine had its effect; the sale was very lively, and before three o’clock in the afternoon, our casks and barrels were almost empty.

The captain now invited the whole company to dinner, and the further sale of silks, linens, and ornaments, was postponed until afterwards. He then called me aside, and gave me a peculiar commission; he ordered me to concoct a drink which should be no less intoxicating than pleasant.

“After the guests shall have partaken of it,” said he, “they will bid high enough, and I shall have an excellent sale. Call it English punch and they will like it all the better.”

I had to promise him to do my best, and go to work at once; as we had a good store of all kinds of intoxicating liquors on board, I could choose what I pleased. I mixed together, Bordeaux, Madeira, Rum, Arrac, Geneva, Cogniac, and Porter; dissolved in it half a hat-full of sugar and threw in about two dozen oranges, and as many sweet lemons. It certainly tasted most excellently, and even the smell of it affected my head. After dinner,

when the dessert was about to be placed upon the table, I called six sailors, and providing each with a large bowl of my mixture, they marched into the cabin in procession and placed them on the table; then I informed the company that the mixture was a new kind of English punch, and filled their glasses for them.

The delicious drink was very popular and even the ladies sipped it with delight. The effect was immediate; after the first two glasses, all grew very loquacious; two more glasses and the gentlemen were thoroughly intoxicated without being stupified. At this moment the sale began, and all rushed on deck, and proceeded to purchase in such a wild, excited manner, that the worst article that we had, sold for twice its real value. When the business was nearly concluded, a frightful noise arose on the forward deck; the crew had received a double allowance of rum and brandy, and very naturally, a quarrel had arisen between two of the most excited, in which one of them was stabbed in the breast. As I understood something of surgery, I was called upon to dress and bandage the wound, and whilst I was thus engaged the company departed in the boats, the gentlemen in a high state of excitement and much pleased with their bargains.

When all was quiet on board, the captain called to him the man who had escaped from the combat unhurt, and inquired into the cause of the bloody fray. And now a fearful secret came to light. The man revealed a conspiracy against the captain, headed by one of the officers, which had been in progress for a month. The officer who commanded it had asked leave of absence, and was at that time on land, engaged in perfecting his plan, which was, to fall upon the captain and murder him with the greater part of the crew. The wounded sailor had belonged to this conspiracy, which was frightful enough, and so angered the captain that he was almost beside himself with rage. He forthwith called together the whole ship’s company and made known to them the plot he had discovered. He had scarcely finished speaking when fierce cries for revenge arose among the crew; they rushed below, and in a few minutes dragged up the wounded sailor, hacked off his arms and legs, plunged their knives into his body, and threw it overboard. They then dragged out his chest; destroyed and tore to rags every thing in it, and in a perfect frenzy of rage, threw it into the sea also. Then the watch was trebled and set; all sharpened their daggers and knives, and prepared for an attack. But the night passed and nothing occurred.

On the following afternoon, a sail appeared, which steered towards us; the captain took the spy glass, and instantly recognized the boat which had carried the treacherous officer and part of the crew on land the day before.

“Here come the conspirators,” he cried, with a fearful curse, “we’ll give them the welcome they deserve. Thirty of you load your muskets and be ready.”

When the boat was within a short distance of us, it stopped and hoisted a white flag in token of peace; the captain did the same, and the boat then approached perfectly unsuspiciously. When they were within musket shot, the captain ordered his men to fire. Five men fell dead, a sixth sprang into the sea, and the rest turned and rowed away. The captain sent a boat out after the unhappy wretch who was in the water, and in less than five minutes they dragged him on board. He was wounded in the arm and was bleeding freely. But, notwithstanding, his clothes were, by the captain’s orders, torn off, and he was exposed naked to the burning rays of the sun. When he had suffered thus for an hour, the tyrant went to him and asked with suppressed rage:

“Now traitor, will you confess?”

“I am innocent,” replied the half-dead wretch, “I know of nothing.”

“Here,” cried the captain to his savages, “take him and row him into the inlet; there leave him in the swamp; we’ll see whether the gad-flies will not help his memory. You,” continued the captain, “go with them, and give heed to this example.”

Five of the pirates, armed with pistols and swords, bound the wretched man, hand and foot, threw him into the boat and rowed into the inlet. Just at the mouth of it there was a morass filled with gad-flies and other poisonous insects. Into this dreadful ditch they threw their former comrade, and then withdrew to a short distance to jeer at and mock him. In about an hour they drew him out again; he was still living, but his body was so covered with blisters that he looked like nothing human. In this condition he was taken to the ship again.

“Has he confessed?” shouted the captain to us as we were approaching.

We replied in the negative.

“Then shoot him down like a dog.”

Two of the robbers seized him, one presented a pistol to his forehead, another to his breast; they were both discharged at the same moment, and the unhappy man was bathed in his own blood. As he gave no further sign of life, they hurled him overboard.

What a deed of horror! I passed a fearful night, for I could not close my eyes when I thought of the probable fate that awaited me among these miscreants.

III.

The next morning I went sadly enough to my labor, which consisted in cutting and making a new sail, when at about ten o’clock, the watch at the mast-head, cried out:

“A sail! a sail!”

I went aloft, and saw that it was a large merchant vessel. The captain weighed anchor, sailed down upon her and when he supposed himself sure of his prey, fired off a cannon; the brig hoisted the English flag and lay to. This unexpected manœuvre seemed very suspicious to the captain; he began to believe that he had to deal with a man-of-war; changed his plan, and determined upon boarding the strange vessel; he gave orders to have two boats manned with the bravest of his crew, which should attack the ship upon both sides at once, and commanded me to head the expedition. Such an order terrified me not a little.

“What,” I cried, “must I fight thus shamefully with my countrymen. If I am taken prisoner what can I expect but the most shameful death. No, Senor, I can never obey your orders.”

“Who are you,” he answered fiercely, “who think yourself so much better than me and my men? Do we not expose ourselves to death every hour of the day? My vessel shall never be taken, for when I can no longer defend it I will blow it up. Obey me instantly or I will have you shot in the twinkling of an eye.”

“Do it,” I coolly rejoined, “I do not fear death, but I will never obey your orders.”

“Well then,” he cried furiously, “to death with him. Bandage his eyes. Five minutes respite only, and let three men aim at his head and three at his heart.”

The pirates obeyed instantly, and I commended my soul to God. When the five minutes had gone, the captain asked:

“Are you ready, helmsman?”

“Yes, Senor.”

“You persist then in your obstinacy.”

“Yes, Senor.”

“Attention! Make ready! Fire!”

The men fired, but I remained unhurt; a burning cork flew in my face, but made no wound. The captain had intended to frighten me, and his men had only loaded with blank cartridges.

“Well, helmsman,” he cried, “are you mortally wounded? Have you had enough?”

“I am not wounded, Senor,” I replied, “but I am not a boy to be trifled with; if you are going to kill me, do it quickly, for I will never disgrace myself by obeying your orders.”

“So be it then,” cried the pirate, foaming with rage; “bind him to the mainmast; unbandage his eyes; let us have plenty of tinder; lay a train of powder, and to the devil with him!”

His orders were obeyed; I closed my eyes and awaited death for the second time. In about ten seconds I heard a terrible explosion, which stunned me for some minutes. When I recovered my consciousness, I felt a terrible pain in my lower limbs; my hands were bound, and my clothes on fire.

“Shoot me upon the spot; why do you torture me so?”

But the captain and his men only laughed; and when my stockings were entirely burnt, he gave orders to pour water over me and unbind me, saying composedly, as if nothing had happened:

“You provoked me or I should not have done it; now go below and get cured.”

But the moment I was unbound, I fainted away, and when I came to myself I lay upon a matrass in the cabin, and felt the most intolerable pain in all my limbs, but particularly in my legs. On a chair beside me sat the cook; he told me that lemonade had been prepared for me; I took some of it, and asked him to support me, that I might look at my legs; they were frightfully burnt; in some places the bone was exposed. While I was examining them, the captain appeared, looked at my horrible wounds, and said, with a show of compassion:

“Helmsman, ask for whatsoever you want, and you, cook, see that he has it. Make haste and get better; by heaven, I hope you’ll get over it.”

With these words he left me. I called for a better bed, the medicine chest, lint, and bandages; every thing was instantly brought, and I did my best to soothe my sufferings. I inquired of my officious attendants where we were, and learnt, to my surprise, that we were again at anchor in the harbour. The captain had decided that the brig was an English

man-of-war, and had made a hasty retreat to a place of safety.

After dinner, the cook made his appearance again, and as he had nothing else to do, remained with me. He informed me that the captain, a naturally quick-tempered, tyrannical man, was a perfect tiger when he was in a passion, that he had already shot and stabbed twenty of his men with his own hands, and begged me to be upon my guard, for I had not a man, but a monster, to deal with.

“Whatever you want,” he added, compassionately, “let me know, and be assured that I mean you well.”

With this comforting assurance he departed, while I prepared a cooling salve and bandaged my wounds neatly. I drank quantities of lemonade and broth, and felt that as the afternoon wore on, the heat in my limbs was subsiding. Towards sunset, the kind cook again appeared, to see how I was, and to inform me that the captain was raging like a maniac on deck, for a coasting vessel had brought him news that my former captain had sailed straight for Havana, and had there made all sorts of complaints with regard to the robbery that he had sustained. While he was speaking the captain himself rushed into the cabin.

“See,” he cried, “what rogues your countrymen are. Spite of my commands, that traitor sailed directly for Havana and entered a complaint against me. But I know how to deal with him; I have sent four bold fellows after him; he is a dead man if he lingers two days longer, and to make all sure, I shall send a fifth this evening, who understands his business well, and will despatch him without mercy.”

With these words he left the cabin. “What a monster, what cruelty!” I thought, but borne down by fatigue, I soon fell asleep.

I had been sleeping about two hours when I was roused by the captain.

“You must come on deck,” he said, rather anxiously, “we are in trouble.”

Four sailors seized me, and immediately carried me above, sick as I was. Here I learned that a boat was approaching in the darkness, and that preparations for defence were being made.

“Hail it in English,” said the captain.

I did so, but received no answer.

“Now let me try,” he continued; “we’ll see if they understand Spanish.”

They answered immediately as friends, and announced that they came with important news for the captain. The partisans of the officer, who had formed the before-mentioned conspiracy, maddened by the death of their comrades, had sworn to be revenged. They had tracked the fifth assassin, who had been sent off this evening to the house of one of the government officials, who was in friendly connection with the pirate captain, and our informants assured us that if timely aid were not rendered him, he would certainly be put to death. This information had a most distressing effect upon the crew, and no one offered to go upon such a dangerous errand. But the captain did not lose courage, gave the men quantities of rum and brandy, and promised four pieces of gold to each volunteer. Ten of the boldest then came forward, got ready immediately, and were fully provided with

weapons, as well as biscuit and wine. Before the end of a quarter of an hour, they rowed ashore in company with the other boat. The captain commanded the whole crew to remain on deck, and doubled the watch. Every thing was quiet, and prepared for any emergency. I was carried down into the cabin again, but could not close my eyes; the door was open, and I heard every thing that passed on deck. About midnight our boat returned, but only with five men, who gave the following account of their adventures to the captain.

After they had landed, and proceeded a few steps, they came upon a servant of that *honest* official to whose house the fifth assassin had been tracked, and who was to have furnished him with a pass. This man informed them that the assassin had actually fallen into the hands of the conspirators, and that he was lost if they did not instantly hasten to his rescue. They made a circuit to avoid their enemies, and succeeded in surprising a few stragglers, from whom they extorted the information that a considerable number of the conspirators were making merry in the house of the officer, where they had taken their comrade prisoner. They immediately proceeded to this house, where they commenced a most destructive fire through the doors and windows, not taking any aim or making any discrimination between friend or foe. They then entered, killed the wounded, and took some prisoners. Unfortunately the *good old host* had received two serious shots, and now sent to the captain to request him to send to his relief the Englishman in whom he placed such confidence. With regard to the assassin, he had been found bound hand and foot, but uninjured, and having been provided with a passport, had proceeded to Havana.

“Helmsman,” cried the captain, now entering the cabin, “it can’t be helped. You must go on shore, and look after the old gentleman’s wounds, for he is my best friend, and I cannot treat him with too much consideration. Put a mattrass into the boat,” he continued, “that he may lie comfortably upon it, and when you get to land carry him as carefully as possible.”

They let me down into the boat in an arm-chair, laid me upon a mattrass, put a cushion under my head, and covered me with a silken coverlet. The moon was just rising, and it was about one o’clock. The current was against us, and we were almost an hour in reaching the shore. After we had taken something to eat and drink in a little ale-house, not ten steps from the beach, I was placed on a bamboo litter, furnished with an abundance of soft cushions, and put upon a horse. We journeyed for about an hour through a high mahogany forest, until we arrived comfortably at a small town, and before the door of the mansion of Don Toribios, as the conscientious official was called. I immediately examined the old man’s wounds, which proved to be not at all dangerous, extracted the balls without difficulty, and left him to the care of his wife and daughter. We returned slowly to our boat, and reached the schooner before sunrise.

The sailors rendered an account of their expedition, and each received as a reward a double allowance of brandy, and they were told that the prisoners they had taken had been tortured and then shot. The captain asked me particularly concerning Don Toribios, and as I was able to give him favorable replies, he was greatly rejoiced, and loaded me with praises.

“You must go on shore to him every morning or afternoon,” said he, “for this man is my best friend. But now go and rest, you seem very weary; you shall be called when the breakfast is ready.” I was indeed rejoiced to be able to rest. I bandaged my wounds afresh, stretched myself on my couch, and fell asleep immediately.

V.

After dinner, I was about to go on shore, in accordance with the captain's orders, when, just as they were letting me down into the boat, a large vessel appeared in sight. I was immediately assisted to the mast-head, and commanded to report what vessel it was. I examined it for a quarter of an hour through my spy-glass, and was at last convinced that it was a large Dutch merchantman. The captain then had me brought down, and communicated my discovery to the crew, who received it with a loud "huzza."

"These Dutchmen," said he, "are rich prizes; they are sure to have cash on board."

Instantly we weighed anchor, and the chase began. But the Dutchman was suspicious, and tried every means of avoiding us; it was too late, however, for we sailed twice as fast as he, and besides had the advantage of the wind. To deceive him, we hoisted the English flag, and fired a shot. He then turned towards us. Our captain supposed that he would offer resistance, and accordingly, when he came within shot, sent a ball into him from our forty-four pounder, which struck the water by the side of the vessel, and then hoisted the blood-red pirate flag.

"Send the captain, with his papers, on board," he shouted through the speaking trumpet. As the fulfilment of this command seemed tardy to the pirates, they enforced it by discharging a dozen muskets. This produced the desired effect; the captain and supercargo immediately came on board; they were both pale as death, and trembled with fear. The pirate snatched their papers from them, and threw them to me saying, "There! translate those things for me." Although I understood very little Dutch, I managed to make out that the vessel was bound from Antwerp for some Mexican port, and that it was freighted with wine, cheese, hams, cloths and linens. The pirate was not a little rejoiced to hear this, and ordered me to ask the amount of cash on board. The Dutchman assured us that he had none.

"We will soon see for ourselves!" said the captain, and taking with him the pilot and four sailors, he went on board of the merchantman. In half an hour he called out to the schooner to come alongside. This was done, and the Dutchman was again sent on board of his vessel, where he was greeted with a blow from the flat of a sword that stretched him on the deck. The inquiries concerning the money now began afresh, accompanied by the threats of burning both ship and crew, if money should actually be found on board. Then the Dutchman was placed in confinement, while the crew were sent on board the schooner, and down into the hold. Both ships sailed into the harbour at sundown, that they might spend the night in safety. I received permission to retire to the cabin, and there found a neat little supper that the care of the benevolent cook had provided for me. The salve that I had prepared for my wounds had an excellent effect, and I was now quite free from pain.

The next morning the freight of the captured vessel was transferred to the schooner, and I was again obliged to assist with my small knowledge of Dutch. After dinner I was sent on shore again, to dress Don Toribios' wounds. As they were healing rapidly, and the fever had quite left him, I soon returned, his daughter having presented me with a box of Havana cigars.

As night had not yet set in, they proceeded vigorously in transferring the cargo of the Dutchman, and the goods were piled up high on the deck of the schooner; they were not to

be sold, as before, but taken by a coasting vessel to Havana, and disposed of there. The next morning the coaster appeared, and the transfer of the cargo began again. While all were thus busied, the captain drew me aside, and said to me in an unusually confidential tone, “I must accompany this coaster some distance; we shall be gone four or five days. Therefore, go on shore once more, and carry to Don Toribios as much physic as he will want during this time, but be sure to be back before sunset.”

I immediately obeyed, fulfilled my commission, and returned at the appointed hour; the captain was making merry with the coaster, and as I would take no part in their excesses, I retired to rest, but could not sleep. The door of my cabin opened gently, to admit the cook; he sat down by me, and said as softly as possible:

“While you were on shore to-day, the captain called together the crew, and told them that during the course of four weeks they had all learned to know the captive Englishman, and must be aware that he was most useful in every capacity. ‘But,’ said the captain, ‘he is not to be trusted; I see that he meditates escape, day and night, and if his plans should succeed, which is not impossible, the first English man-of-war that he meets will have the secret of our retreat here, and all will be over with us. I have, therefore, formed a resolution that will certainly seem right to you all. We will let him finish the sails that he is now at work upon, and then get rid of him. Some evening I will get up a dispute with him; you will gather around us and take sides, and in the heat of argument I will plunge my knife into his bosom, and you will finish the business.’ The crew consulted together, and opinion was divided; only a few of the most bloody-minded agreed to the thought of your murder; at last it was determined to have you closely watched, and not to allow you to go on shore any more.”

“Have it so then,” cried the captain, angrily; “you will see what will come of it.”

“Now my friend,” concluded the brave fellow, “now you know every thing. I fear the captain has not given up his intention; therefore, take your measures accordingly. If I can assist you in carrying out any plan that you may form, rely upon my desire to serve you. God grant, that if you escape, I may accompany you.”

With these words he bade me good night and left me. What were my sensations. “Am I then,” I said to myself “to be thus cut off in the midst of my youth? No! I will balk these monsters. I must attempt to save myself even if the attempt cost me my life.” These thoughts occupied me during the night, and I did not sleep until towards four o’clock in the morning.

VI.

At sunrise the schooner weighed anchor, in order to accompany the coaster. Towards noon we discovered an English brig, which proved to be a merchantman, and the customary pursuit and capture ensued. The cargo consisted of rum, for the vessel was bound for Liverpool from Jamaica. The English captain, who was an old acquaintance of mine, offered to ransom his vessel, and begged me to make the arrangement for him; this I gladly did, and the brig was ransomed for four hundred doubloons and eight casks of rum. The Englishman, who had a considerable amount of cash on board, pressed upon me, at parting, twenty doubloons.

Towards evening the skies were covered with black clouds; the sea began to rage, and

every thing indicated an approaching storm. We therefore ran into a little bay, sheltered by high rocks, and passed a very quiet night, although a fearful storm was raging on the open sea, and the rain fell in torrents. The next morning we set sail again and conveyed the coaster almost to the place of her destination. On our return voyage we captured a French vessel, but it was also ransomed, and on the evening of the fourth day we reached again our old station, where the Dutch brig had been left under the command of the pilot. The Dutch captain and a great part of his crew had accompanied us.

The pirate was very well pleased with his short, profitable trip, and gave orders to the steward to prepare a magnificent collation, to which he invited his officers, the Dutch captain, and myself. As it was too warm in the cabin the table was laid on deck; the steward had done his best, and when the wine had begun to take effect, the Dutchman informed me that he had a proposition to make. He spoke in Dutch, and that no suspicion might be excited, I immediately informed the captain of what he had said, and offered to carry on the negociation. This was agreed to, and the Dutchman then informed me that he had concealed upon his person, a heavy gold chain, a gold watch set with brilliants, and two diamond rings, and that he would give them all if the pirate would release his vessel and allow him to depart, with provisions for eight days. I translated all this to the captain as well as I could, and his countenance immediately beamed with the friendliest expression.

“Tell the captain,” he replied mildly, “that I accept his offer, and if he will hand over to me the articles in question, I swear by the holy virgin, that he shall depart to-morrow morning early, with eight days’ provisions, and sail whither he pleases.”

I interpreted this to the captain, who hastened, joyfully, into the cabin, and returned in a few minutes with the jewels, which he laid before the captain, on the table.

“Done,” said he, reaching his hand and filling his glass; “join me captain and gentlemen all. By heaven, I will keep my word; you are all witnesses.”

We remained at table until eleven o’clock, when all retired; my thoughts kept me awake during the whole night. Immediately after sunrise, the Dutch vessel was supplied with the promised provisions, besides six casks of water and two of Geneva. The captain took leave of us all; put several pieces of gold into my hand, and betook himself on board of his own ship. In half an hour he set sail, and with a favourable wind was soon out of sight.

Towards eight o’clock, a boat appeared from the shore, and brought two calves and two sheep, just killed, and a quantity of fowls, vegetables, and fruit, as a present for the captain, from Don Toribios and the other officials. They announced their intention, also, of paying us a visit with their wives, in the afternoon, whereat the captain was much pleased. Preparations were instantly made for their reception, and the steward was busy enough; at half-past two the little fleet appeared, and the guests arrived on board, where they were served with refreshments. They talked, laughed, joked, played the guitar, and sang, until near sunset, when the air grew cooler. Then the seats and benches were cleared away; the old people betook themselves, with their wine, to the cabin, and the young ones danced until they were called to supper. The time was passed most pleasantly, and I almost forgot that I was on board a pirate vessel. Don Toribios, too, was very friendly, and called out as soon as he saw me, “Going on excellently! all healed over!” I examined his wounds and

found it actually so. The old gentleman then applied himself industriously to the wine, and appeared determined to make up for the abstinence of two weeks. My warning, to be prudent, was not regarded in the least.

The company found the entertainment so much to their liking that they remained three hours longer on board than they had at first intended; the moon was in her first quarter, but shone brighter than even the full moon in England. A little after nine, the guests took leave of the captain and entered their boats; the little fleet rowed away in the glorious moonlight, and every thing was restored to order on board of the schooner.

The captain was unusually gay and friendly; had three bottles of Bordeaux brought, and called to me: “Sit down; we will drink another glass together. Fill for yourself. I see you are a brave, fine fellow, and if you conduct yourself well, you shall have such wages as you’ll get on no ship of the line, I can tell you. Come, drink; here’s to our noble profession!”

I was obliged to join him, and drank in this way almost a bottle full. I succeeded, however, in allaying all his suspicion of me. Towards midnight I threw myself upon my bed, but could not close my eyes, my thoughts were so busy with plans of escape. Where shall I be, I asked myself, in one—two weeks—in a month? If my plan succeeds, I shall be upon my way home; but if not, where then? Of this last alternative I would not think, and towards two o’clock I fell asleep.

VII.

The next afternoon I sat working at my sails, when a boat with three negroes in it, pushed off from the shore, and approached the schooner. The man at the helm had a large basket, covered with black, before him, and the usually white aprons of the negroes were black. This indicated a death, and I was very anxious to know which of yesterday’s company had so quickly had their joy turned to mourning; in the meanwhile the boat arrived, and the chief negro came on board.

“Master dead!” he said, in his broken Spanish. “Don Toribios dead! last night! Here a letter and presents for Senor captain and Senor helmsman.”

With these words he handed the captain four bundles of Havana cigars, as many baskets of fruit, and two great pastries, besides four jars of sweet-meats. This giving of presents is customary in Cuba in case of any death, and I also received the due proportion of gifts. The negro was dismissed with a present in money.

When the captain, after dinner, had taken his siesta, he made known to the crew the death of Don Toribios, and ordered preparations to be made for paying the last honors to his deceased friend. A hundred bottles of wine, torches, crape, and whatever else is necessary upon such occasions, were put into the long-boat, into which the captain entered, with ten sailors, six musicians, and myself. We found horses and mules waiting for us on the shore, and we soon reached the house of death, before which a great many tar barrels were burning, and in the centre stood a bier, upon which the coffin was placed. A number of mourners, among whom were twelve or fifteen ladies, now greeted us. We returned their salutations and entered the brilliantly lighted saloon, hung with black, where sat the mother and daughter of the dead man, dressed in the deepest mourning. We expressed our sympathy for them; refreshments were handed round, and all were provided with torches.

The procession was then arranged. Our sailors carried the coffin; the musicians commenced a mournful march; the priest, with the choristers, led the way and the others followed in pairs; the captain conducted the mother, and I the daughter. Our sailors sent up some rockets, and at this signal the schooner fired minute guns for a half hour. After the conclusion of the solemnity, we went to the funeral supper, and the guests indulged in all kinds of gayety.

Midnight had past, when we broke up; towards two o'clock we got on board the schooner and retired to rest. The next morning I returned to my sails, but thought incessantly of my plan for escape, and how it could be most prudently carried into execution, for the danger of such an attempt was immense. I believed that I could possess myself of one of the boats, but where could I find a companion to be depended upon? Yet such a one was absolutely necessary. I could never row alone for five or six leagues, which was the shortest distance that would place me out of reach of the pirates. Whether I should confide in the steward, I could not exactly decide. Imagine my astonishment when the honest fellow came to me while the captain was taking his afternoon's nap in the cabin, and began gently to whisper in my ear.

"My friend, we must fly. In a few days there will be horrible work on board here; a new conspiracy has been formed against the captain, and his death is inevitable. We must seize the first opportunity to get away. I know these waters well, for I was born upon the Cuban coast. You know that quantities of fishing boats come every evening to exchange their fish for brandy, and their owners often remain all night on board, while their boats are floating by the side of the vessel. My plan is to get into one of these about midnight, and trust ourselves to the wind and the current, until the next morning, when we can find our way to Havana."

"Well, my honest friend," I replied, "I agree with you entirely; in this way we cannot fail to succeed. We will, therefore, hold ourselves in readiness any day, and God will not forsake us in our hour of need."

Thus we separated.

When the captain awoke he complained of violent pain in his limbs, and I saw clearly that a fever had attacked him. With his consent, I opened a vein and took from him thirteen ounces of blood. His bed was placed on the forward deck, and an awning spread above it, for the cabin was too close and hot. I left him for the night and prescribed almond milk and orange flower water.

VIII.

It was about sunset, the weather was sultry, and towards the south masses of clouds were forming, which betokened a storm. The sea, too, began to be disturbed. Two fishing boats, that had ventured too far into the open sea, came alongside and asked to be allowed to lodge on board for the night. The lieutenant granted their request, after conferring with the captain, and told them to make fast their boats to the stern of the vessel. They did so, and came on board, bringing with them a large basket of the fish that they had caught.

After they had presented the captain and lieutenant with the two finest fish in their basket, they exchanged the rest for rum and brandy.

They took two of the dozen great bottles they received to treat the crew with. The captain, who had no appetite, gave up his fish to the crew, and the lieutenant invited his comrades and me to share his with him.

When the steward came to receive the fish, I said to him, with peculiar emphasis: “Well, steward! now or never! display your art!”

He understood me perfectly.

“Yes, indeed, Senor,” he replied, significantly, “I will make an English sauce for the gentlemen, such as they cannot find in all Havana.”

He went out, and I went to inquire after the captain.

“I feel much better,” he replied to my inquiries; “only give me something strengthening.”

I retired to the cabin, wrote down what I wanted upon a card, and sent it to the steward. I soon received two dozen oranges and sweet lemons, a great bottle of Canary, half a loaf of bread, a pound of sugar, three spoons full of East India cinnamon, and a bottle of old Malaga wine. From these I prepared most artistically, a strong, delicious drink. I mixed with it, finally, one hundred and fifty drops of opium that I took from the medicine chest. The dose was rather large, but I had to do, not with men, but with beasts. After I had poured it all into a large bowl, I carried it to the captain, who immediately took ten or twelve spoons full of it, and was quite delighted; I told him that he might drink as much of it as he pleased.

“Well,” he said, kindly, “since you are so skilful, go and get two dozen bottles of Bordeaux; you can share them with the officers.”

I thanked him and turned to go.

“Stop!” he cried, “if I am well my men shall feel well too; they have been grumbling for several days; I’ll moisten their throats with rum; we’re perfectly safe here; tell the steward to roll a barrel on deck; they shall drink until they can’t stand.”

The storm had, in the meantime, blown over; the sea was placid, and the full moon was rising gloriously. The table was already spread; I hastened to the cabin, taking with me the laudanum bottle from the medicine chest, out of which I poured a stupefying dose into the rum-cask and into every bottle of Bordeaux, except the one destined for my own use, which I marked by a cut in the cork. Then I gave the captain’s orders to the steward, who immediately obeyed them, and the crew expressed their gratitude by three cheers and a

“Long live the captain!”

I now placed the bottles of Bordeaux upon the table so that the one I had marked stood by my plate. Eight o’clock struck during these preparations; supper was brought and we immediately took our places. The crew lay about on the deck, and seemed very good humored. When the keenness of their appetite was appeased, they began to drink, and the officers broke the necks of the bottles of Bordeaux.

I did not neglect the captain meanwhile; he was very well content, for he had already emptied half the bowl. I perceived that the laudanum was taking effect upon all, and when I returned to the officers I found them all very much excited. They were relating their various exploits so noisily that scarcely a word could be heard. On deck the wildest confusion reigned, and the sailors were shouting their horrible pirate songs. The noise lasted about a half an hour and then grew fainter and fainter till it ceased entirely; the opium had done its duty; all lay buried in profound slumber, just where they had been drinking.

The steward and I delayed not an instant in taking advantage of this favourable moment. We immediately put into one of the fishing boats, a cask of water, a brandy flask, a ham and some other provisions, and then provided ourselves with the necessary clothes. I put on my overcoat, into which I had sewed a considerable number of gold-pieces; took a pocket compass, and a good spy glass, and was in the boat in less than five seconds. The steward threw down a bundle and followed me immediately.

We quickly cut the rope that fastened us to the hated schooner, put up the sail, and as the wind was favourable, were soon out of sight of her. We got into the current and shot along like an arrow. I was rather terrified when the moon set, but the stars shone brightly, and the steward was indeed well acquainted with those waters. When the sun rose, we were not more than five leagues from Havana, and as the wind and current continued to be favorable, we sailed into port a little after nine o’clock, heard the bells ringing, and the great city with its threatening fortifications and forest of masts lay before us. We landed, and before a half an hour had elapsed, were in the house of the English consul, relating to him our wonderful escape from the pirates, whom I had served, much against my will, for more than a month.

Two days afterwards, an English frigate set sail for home. I took my passage in it, and after a short, prosperous voyage, landed at Plymouth, my native town.

Captivity among the Japanese.

On the fifth of July, A. D., 1811, the Russian sloop of war, Diana, approached Kumachir, one of the most southerly of the Kurile islands, belonging to Japan, for the purpose of seeking shelter in one of its bays against an approaching storm. They were received, on their arrival, by a shower of balls from a fort which commanded the bay. As no one, however, approached the vessel, its commander, Vassillii Golownin, considering this hostile reception as the natural consequence of former deeds of violence perpetrated by his countrymen in those waters, did not return the fire, but endeavored, by means of signs, to make the natives understand that his intentions towards them were friendly, and that he wished to land merely to fill his water casks. After a protracted negociation, a nearer conference was agreed on, and Golownin was imprudent enough to fall into the snare set for him. But we will let him describe the dangers and sufferings he underwent, in his own words:

After we had cast anchor, says he, in the spot designated to us, I landed with midshipman Moor, the steersman, Chleb Nikow, four sailors, and Alexis, a native of the Kuriles, who acted as interpreter. So deceived were we by the apparent friendliness of the Japanese, that we took no arms with us, except our swords. In order to destroy any distrust they might feel towards us, I ordered our boat to be partly drawn on shore, and left a sailor to watch it. The rest of the men, by my orders, carried after us some chairs, and the presents we intended for the natives. As I entered the fort, I was astonished to find that a large crowd had collected in it. There were at least four hundred soldiers, armed with guns, pikes, and javelins, drawn up in an open space to the right of the gates. Opposite to them was a tent made of striped cotton stuffs, into which we were conducted. The commander of the fort, a stately man, dressed in a complete suit of armor, and wearing two sabres by his side, rose on our entrance, and when we had saluted him, politely begged us to be seated on some benches which were set ready for us. We thanked him for his courtesy, but preferred taking our seats on the chairs which we had brought with us. When we were seated, they served us with tea without sugar, which they carried on lacquered wooden waiters. According to the Japanese custom, the cups were only half full. After we had partaken of it, they supplied us with pipes and tobacco, and the conference began. They first inquired the name and rank of each of us, and then asked repeatedly, and in an insidious manner, where we came from, whither we were going, and why our countrymen had formerly ravaged their northern coasts. When we had returned guarded answers to these questions, they wanted to know how many men were in our vessel. As I thought it prudent to magnify our strength, I replied “a hundred;” but Alexis could not translate this number, and I was obliged to make a hundred marks on a piece of paper, with a pencil, and let the Japanese count them. Whilst they were thus employed, midshipman Moor observed that naked sabres were being distributed among the soldiers, and immediately advised me of the fact; but as we had been so kindly treated, I thought little of the circumstance, especially as they were preparing for us a feast, consisting of rice, fish served up with a green sauce, and many other delicacies, the names of which we did not know. After we had partaken heartily of these solids, and for a drink been given a kind of beer called “Sagic,” I declared that we could not stay any longer, and begged them to tell us the price

of the meal, which we designed paying for. To this request of mine, they returned very evasive answers, and when they saw that we were tired of the useless and fruitless questioning we had undergone, and were making preparations to depart, they suddenly threw off the mask they had hitherto worn, and by their threatening gestures showed plainly enough what their intentions were. Their chief, who, until the present moment, had spoken in a friendly and pleasant manner, now raised his voice, and pronouncing the name of the Russian who had ravaged their coasts, made a long speech, during which he often fiercely struck his hand on his sword, and ended by swearing that the Emperor would have him cut in two if he suffered a single Russian, who was in his power, to escape. As soon as Alexis, in whose anxious countenance we discovered coming evil, had translated these words to us, we sprang to our feet, and made for the door. The Japanese immediately set up a loud and threatening cry, but did not attempt to seize us, contenting themselves with throwing oars and blocks of wood in our way, in order that in running we might stumble over them and fall. When we had almost reached the entrance of the fort, they fired a volley at us, but fortunately hit no one, although the balls whistled most unpleasantly near to our heads. We were lucky enough to get out of the fort, and had almost reached our boat, when I saw to my horror that it was lying high and dry on shore, for in our absence the tide had ebbed. As our pursuers were well aware that we could not float it again, and had also made themselves acquainted with the fact that there were no weapons in it, they grew bolder, and surrounded us on all sides, brandishing their huge sabres, which they held in both hands. As resistance in such a case would be little less than madness, we surrendered ourselves to them as their prisoners. They seized me by the arms, and dragged me back to the fort, together with my unhappy companions. On the way a soldier struck me with a small iron rod, but an officer angrily ordered him to desist, and no more blows followed.

They took us into a large building resembling a barrack, which stood on the shore, and having forced us to kneel, bound us with cords of the thickness of one’s finger. Over these they lapped thinner ones, which gave us great pain. The Japanese are perfect masters of this art, and we were excellent specimens of their skill. We had about us just the same number of ropes and knots, and were tied in precisely the same parts of our bodies. Cords ran round our breasts and necks, our elbows nearly touched each other behind our backs, and our hands were tied fast together. A long rope was fastened to us, one end of which a Japanese held, and on the least intimation of flight, had only to pull it, and our elbows were painfully pressed together, whilst the ropes around our necks were so tightly drawn, that we were nearly choked. But as if this was not enough, they bound our legs together above the knees and ancles, and then making slip-knots in the ends of some ropes, they put them over our necks, and tied them to the rafters of the building, pulling them so tight that we could not stir. They then searched our pockets, and having taken from them every thing they could find, very coolly lit their pipes and sat down to smoke. Whilst they were binding us, the chief came in, and taking his station in front of us, made a speech, during which he frequently pointed to his mouth, with the intention probably of intimating to us, that at present they had no intention of starving us. In this pitiful and agonizing position we remained for an hour, not knowing what was to be our fate. When I saw them put the ropes over the rafters, I concluded, of course, that their intention was to hang us, and never have I so despised death as I did in that moment; my only wish was, that they would finish the murderous work as soon as possible. But the Japanese, it seemed, had no idea,

whatever, of taking such a step. Their sole design and object was to render futile any attempt at escape on our part. After a while they unbound our ancles, loosened the ropes about our knees, and leading us out of the building, conducted us through some cultivated fields into a wood. We were so tightly and skilfully bound that a boy ten years of age might have conducted us in perfect safety, but these anxious and careful people did not think so, for each of us had an especial watchman who held the rope, and an armed soldier to walk by his side. From a hill we saw our vessel for the last time, and with bleeding hearts, bid it and our native land, a long farewell.

II.

We walked along in single file, and had proceeded on our journey for about half an hour, when we heard the distant thunder of cannon, and concluded that our vessel must have attacked the fort. I was so tightly bound, especially about the neck, that my face became swollen, and I found that my breath was fast leaving me. I could scarcely swallow, and only with the greatest difficulty, articulate. We repeatedly begged our guards to loosen a little the cords which bound us, but the noise of the cannon had thrown them into such paroxysms of terror that they took no notice whatever of our entreaties, but kept looking back, and urging us to go on faster. Life, at this moment, appeared to me a most intolerable burden, and I made up my mind to get rid of it, by leaping into the next stream of water we came to. But this determination of mine, I found, was easier to be made than carried out, for whenever we passed over a stream of the smallest size even, our suspicious guards held us tightly by the arms. At last, unable to proceed farther, I sank exhausted and senseless to the ground. When I recovered, I found that blood had flowed from my mouth and nostrils, and that I was sprinkled with water. For the first time, the natives now listened to our entreaties, and loosening our bonds, greatly relieved us, enabling us to proceed on our way with renewed strength.

After walking for about three hours longer, we arrived at a little village, which is situated on the shores of the strait separating Kumachir from the island of Jesso. Here we were led into a house, and rice bread offered us, but as our appetites were entirely gone, they took us into another room, and made us lie down near the walls, so that none of us could communicate with the others. The ropes by which we had been led along, they tied to iron spikes, which were driven into the floor, and they drew off our boots, and again tied our legs as before. When our guards had thus disposed of us to their entire satisfaction, they seated themselves in the middle of the apartment, round a pan of coals, and began to drink tea and smoke tobacco. One would imagine that men might rest in peace even among lions, if they were bound as we were, but the Japanese did not seem to consider themselves safe even now, for they carefully examined our bonds every quarter of an hour or so.

Letters were very often brought to the captain of our guards, which he read attentively, and then communicated their contents to his companions. They conversed, however, in such a low tone of voice, that we saw very well they feared our hearing what they said, though on that subject they might have made themselves perfectly easy, for we did not understand a single word of the Japanese language. Towards midnight they made preparations for departure. A wide board was brought in, to the four corners of which ropes had been attached; through these ropes a pole was put, by means of which they raised it from the

ground. They now laid me on the board, and carried me away, which made us fully believe that they were going to separate us, and that we now saw each other for the last time. We, therefore, took leave of each other like dying men, our eyes filled with tears. The farewell of the sailors, which they sobbed aloud, cut me to the heart, for I felt that my imprudence was the cause of all their misery. I was carried to the shore, and laid on a mat in a large boat, and to my joy and surprise they brought down my comrades, one after the other, and laid them near to me. This was so unexpected, and so gratifying, that for a moment I almost forgot my sufferings. They then covered me and my companions with moss, and an armed guard having taken his seat by the side of each of us, they pushed off from the shore. During our journey by water that night, the Japanese kept perfectly quiet. They spoke not a word, and turned a deaf ear to all our lamentations and complaints.

At the break of day we arrived at a little village on the coast of Jesso, where they placed us in several smaller boats, which they drew along the shore by means of ropes. From time to time they offered us rice-broth, and roasted fish, and if any of us wanted to eat, they put the food into his mouth by means of slender sticks, which, in Japan, are used instead of forks.

The good people who had bound us in such an unmerciful manner, from a fear only that we would escape from them, or commit suicide, now showed themselves to be any thing but cruel, for they were even, careful to brush the flies from us with green bushes, which otherwise would have plagued us sadly. After they had carried us along the coast in this manner, for the space of two days, the boats were dragged upon the land, and shoved along by the aid of a large number of people, without either we or our guards being obliged to leave them. They pulled us through thickets and woods, and at last we found ourselves on the top of a high hill. We could not conceive what possible object the Japanese could have in drawing across the land, with so much trouble, boats of no inconsiderable size. We concluded, at last, that they must have seen our vessel, and feared lest they should lose their prize. But the solution of the riddle was soon apparent, for when they had got the boats up to the top of the hill, they allowed them to slide down the other side by the force of their own gravity, and then launched them on a small stream, which, after having navigated for two days, we left in order to continue our journey by land. They loosened the bands from our legs, and having drawn on our boots, asked us whether we would walk or be carried in litters, by which name they designated boards, some four feet in length, fastened to ropes, by which they were borne along. We chose to walk, and accordingly the chief formed the procession. First walked two of the natives, side by side, with red staves in their hands, who pointed out the way. After them came three soldiers, and then myself. On one side of me walked a soldier, and on the other a servant, who, with a green bush, brushed the flies from me. After me walked a guard, who held the rope that bound me, and then followed people bearing my litter. In the same manner, Moor, Chleb Nikow, and the sailors, were led along, and the procession closed with soldiers and a crowd of servants, who carried the baggage and provisions. Each one of the latter had fastened to his girdle a small wooden tablet, marked so as to designate to which of us he was attached, and what was his duty. During the whole of the journey, the Japanese preserved the same order, and the day was spent in the following manner: At dawn we prepared to start, breakfasted, and set out on our march. At the villages through which we passed, we generally stopped to rest, to drink tea, and smoke tobacco. At noon we dined.

An hour after dinner, we started again, and two or three hours before sunset halted for the night, generally in some village, or where a garrison lay. Immediately on our arrival, we were led to the chief's dwelling, and seated on benches, until that magnate reviewed and mustered us. We were then taken to a house appropriated to us, and bound fast to iron clamps. Afterwards they pulled off our boots, and washed our feet with salt and water. We ate regularly three times a day; in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. Our food varied very little, consisting of rice-broth, instead of bread, with salted radishes, instead of salt, a mess of greens, balls of pastry, or roasted fish. Sometimes we received mushroom soup, and a hard boiled egg. The food was not measured out to us, but each one was at liberty to eat as much as he pleased. Our drink was generally bad tea, without sugar, and sometimes, though rarely, beer. In this manner we were taken to our place of destination, which was as yet unknown to us.

By degrees they loosened the ropes, which had been put round our necks, and when, after a time, a man of higher rank took the command of our party, he permitted our hands to be untied, so that we could feed ourselves. Only when we were carried across some strait or river, did they bind us so unmercifully tight, and this did not happen often, nor last long. Our conductors were very careful of us, and carried their caution and watchfulness so far, that for a long time they would not suffer us to approach the shore. However, as we pleaded hard to be allowed to do so, because we could walk so much easier on the wet sand, they at last gave a reluctant consent, taking care to keep between us and the water, even where they were obliged to wade in it. When, also, they allowed us to smoke pipes, they held them with both hands, or fastened to the mouth-pieces wooden balls of the size of hen's eggs, for they seemed to imagine that if we were not restrained, we would choke ourselves with them. We laughed heartily at this proceeding, and made them understand, by signs, that it was much easier to strangle ourselves with these balls than with pipe-stems. At this they laughed too, but told us that they had most positive orders to prevent us in every possible way from committing suicide. They were so very anxious about our health, that they watched us from the tops of our heads to the soles of our feet, carried us across the smallest brooks or puddles, and asked us every morning how we felt.

On the eighth of August, we arrived at Khakodade, a large town, which they told us was to be our abode for the present. An immense multitude came forth to meet us. The road was lined on both sides with spectators, but they behaved themselves very soberly, none of them betraying in their looks, as I saw to my satisfaction, either hatred, scorn, or malicious pleasure; still less did they attempt to annoy us with either mockery or outrage. After we had passed through the town gates, and a long and very narrow street, we turned into a by-lane, and saw on a high piece of ground before us, which was surrounded by an earthen wall and thick-set hedge, and guarded by armed soldiers, a building which was, perhaps, to be our prison during life.

As soon as we entered we were mustered by an officer, according to the instructions given him by the captain of our guards, and then led farther into the court, where we saw a large, dark shed, in which stood cages made of strong bars of wood, and resembling bird-cages in every thing but size. After the Japanese had taken counsel among themselves for some time, as to how they should dispose of us, they led me along a passage, and forced me to go into one of the little apartments, which was partitioned off by means of wooden posts. I looked around for my companions, and judge of my horror, when I found that they had

vanished. After the guards had taken off my bonds, and also, taken off my boots, they fastened the door of my cage, without saying a word, and left me to myself. The thought that I was separated from my comrades, overcame me, and I threw myself on the ground in despair.

III.

I had lain there, almost unconscious, for some time, when I perceived a man at the window, who, by signs, invited me to approach him. As I did so, he handed me through the grating, a couple of little sweet cakes, and signified to me that I was to eat them quickly, without letting any one see me do so, for if that was to happen it might be all the worse for him. Although at this moment I felt a positive aversion towards all kinds of food, yet with a great exertion, I gulped them both down, because I did not wish either to anger or injure him. He now left me, with a pleased countenance, promising to provide me in future, with the same kind of food. I thanked him as well as I was able, and wondered not a little, that a man, who to judge from his appearance, was of the lowest rank in life, should possess so much goodness of heart, as to resolve on comforting a stranger, at his own peril. Pretty soon they brought me food, but as I had not the least appetite, I sent it back untouched, as I did again in the evening.

One object now wholly occupied my thoughts, and that was my escape from imprisonment. With this view I examined my cage very carefully. It was six feet long, about as broad, and some eight feet high. Tolerably thick beams separated it from the passage, and in the wall were a couple of windows, having on the outside, a strong wooden grating, and within, paper curtains which could be rolled up or let down. From one of these windows you looked out on a wall about two feet distant, but the other commanded a beautiful view of mountains, fields, and the sea. All the furniture which the apartment could boast of, was a little bench, so small that one could hardly lie down on it, and some mats spread out on the floor.

I was thoroughly convinced that with the aid of an ordinary knife, it would be very easy to cut through the wooden grating of the window, and that in a dark night, I could, with very little difficulty, find my way into the court-yard and over the wall. But then, where was the knife to come from, when they had not trusted us with even a needle? And suppose that I was lucky enough to escape, whither could I turn my steps? The fear too of aggravating the already hard lot of my companions, turned aside any ideas which I might have entertained of attempting a flight. Moreover, our guards were not by any means remiss in their duties. During the whole night, I heard very plainly, people walking round the walls, and striking the hours by means of a couple of dry sticks. My attendants too came very often into the entry with a light, in order to see what I was doing. Before night set in, they brought me a thick cotton covering, and a night-gown, wide and wadded, but which smelt so badly, as it was old and dirty, that I threw it aside into one corner of my cage.

On the following morning, whilst every thing was yet still, I heard, to my great joy, some Russian words very plainly pronounced. I sprang up from the bench on which I was lying, and going to the window, which looked out on the next building, heard midshipman Moor in conversation with one of the sailors. Most fervently did I thank God for this unexpected discovery, for I now knew that my companions not only were under the same roof, but were not imprisoned in separate cells, and had, therefore, opportunity for comforting each

other, and making the time appear shorter. After several days, during which the tedious and solitary life I led had well nigh driven me to despair, there walked into my cell a Japanese officer, whom I took to be of some rank and importance. After lamenting that they had thus far been obliged to confine me by myself, he agreeably surprised me by asking which of the sailors I would like to have as a companion? I replied that they were all equally dear to me, and that I wished to have them all with me in turns; he immediately gave orders to have my wish attended to. I asked him if the Japanese intended to treat us always in this manner?

“No,” answered he; “in future you will all live together, and after a while be sent home.”

“Will this soon happen?” I asked.

“Not so very soon,” replied he, shortly, and left without further explanations.

Men who find themselves in a situation like ours, catch up every word, and meditate on it closely. Had he said “soon,” I would have regarded his words as a mere attempt at consolation; but now I believed him, and grew more contented. Hardly was this officer gone, when one of the sailors was brought to me. The man was not a little astonished to see what a pleasant apartment I had, and feasted his eyes on the objects he saw from my window. My prison seemed a paradise compared to the cells in which he and the rest had been put. These cells, it was true, were built like mine, but far more narrow and penable, and they stood one on the other in a kind of shed, so that there was a free passage all round them. Instead of a door, they had an opening so low that you had to creep through it. No friendly ray of light ever penetrated to them, and they were surrounded by gloom and darkness.

The conversation I held with the sailor invigorated, in some degree, the sorrow I felt, and I now ate the food that was brought to me for the first time since our arrival at Khakodade. Our food now was worse by far than when we were on our way to the town. They gave us by turns, rice-broth, warm water, with grated radishes, but no herbs, finely cut leeks, boiled beans, salted cucumbers, a soup with balls of meal, made from beans and spoiled fish. Our drink was generally warm water; sometimes, but seldom, they gave us poor tea, without sugar. When we complained of this wretched fare to one of the officers of the guard, he promised us meat, butter, and milk, but excused himself afterwards, when we reminded him of his promise, by jocosely telling us that the cows were still at pasture. When, in order to accomplish our purpose in another manner, we feigned illness, he asked us, in a sympathizing manner, what the Russians did when they were sick? and what they ate?

“All that the physician prescribes,” answered I; “most commonly chicken broth.”

Immediately he demanded of us a detailed account of how chicken broth was prepared, and when we gave it, he wrote it down on a piece of paper. But it seemed as if this were done merely from curiosity or derision, for the chicken broth was never mentioned afterwards. Once he treated us to beer, and in return wished to see us perform a Russian dance. When I remarked to him that no one could compel us to dance, in such a situation as ours, he said, composedly:

“That’s true; a Japanese, in such a case, would neither dance nor sing.”

As I could not obtain any materials for writing, I invented, in order to note daily occurrences, a diary of a peculiar kind. If any thing pleasant occurred, I tied a knot in a white thread, which I pulled out of my shirt. When any thing unpleasant happened to us, I tied a knot in a black silken thread, from my cravat. If any thing note-worthy took place, either pleasant or the reverse, I tied together the ends of a green thread, which I drew from the lining of my uniform. From time to time I reckoned over these knots, and recalled to my mind the circumstances they were intended to denote.

On the tenth of August, word was brought to us that the commander-in-chief of the town wished to see us, and that at noon we were to be presented to him. Accordingly, at the appointed time, they took us singly from our cages, bound ropes round our bodies, and led us by them, under a strong escort, through a long and wide street, which ran through the town and was filled with people, to a castle surrounded by an earthen wall, at the gates of which stood a numerous guard. Having taken us into the court-yard, they made us take our seats on benches and mats, and treated us to good tea, sugar, and tobacco. We might have sat there about an hour, when a voice was heard calling, “Captain Khovorin!” which was the way the Japanese pronounced my name. Two soldiers, who stood by my side, immediately led me through a door, which was hastily closed behind me, into a large hall, through the paper curtains of which came a dim light. On the walls of this apartment hung irons, with which to fetter criminals, cords, and other instruments of punishment, which made me conclude that I was in a chamber devoted to the torture. In the middle of the hall, sat the commander-in-chief, on a kind of raised platform. He was surrounded by several officers and scribes, each of whom had before him his paper and inkstand, and at his side a dagger and huge sabre. After the other prisoners had been led in, a most tedious and insignificantly minute examination was commenced, concerning our names and ages, our parents, and places of birth; also as to the Russian Empire, its power on land and sea, the ship we arrived in, and the object of our journey. The answers we deemed advisable to give, were, as well as the interpreter could understand them and translate them into Japanese, noted down with the greatest exactness.

At last the commander-in-chief asked, with particular emphasis, if the religion of Russia had not been lately changed, as an ambassador who had formerly been in Japan, had worn a long cue, and hair thickly powdered, whilst we had it cut short. When we told him that in our country, the style of wearing the hair had nothing whatever to do with religion, the Japanese laughed in a contemptuous manner, and wondered not a little, that we had no fixed laws on so important a subject. As it was now nearly dark, we were led back to our cages.

Afterwards, we were several more times taken into this hall, where the same questions were put to us, though in a different form, that they might entrap us. They compared the answers we now gave, with those formerly given, and on the slightest difference appearing, made the most diffuse inquiries about it. Finally, on the twenty-seventh of September, they took us from Khakodale to Matsmai, the capital of the island, which is situated on the southern coast, where we were immediately immured in a strongly fortified building, which stood on a hill.

IV.

At the first look which we took of our quarters, we thought that we had seen the sun for

the last time, for although without, the day was clear and bright, yet within almost total darkness reigned.

Imagine a four cornered shed, five and twenty paces long, fifteen wide, and some twelve feet high, three sides of which were walled up without the smallest opening, and the fourth covered with a strong wooden grating made of bars placed about four inches from each other. In the grating was a door and little gate, but both securely bolted. In the middle of the shed stood a couple of cages, likewise made of wooden bars, and separated from each other and the wall, by narrow passages. One of these cages was six feet square and ten high; the other was of the same heighth and breadth, but only eight feet high. In the latter were the sailors, and in the former, Moor, Chleb Nikow, and I. The entrance to each of them was so narrow that one was obliged to creep through it. The door was made of thick beams and fastened by means of a strong iron bolt, over which was a little opening through which they put our food, when they gave it to us. The wall of each cage, which was opposite that of the other, was made of boards, so that we could not see the sailors nor they us. Outside of the grating which formed one side of the shed, was a sentry box, in which two soldiers kept a continual watch. They could see us all, and did not take their eyes off us for a single moment.

During the night they entered the shed every half hour, walked around our cages and looked in through the bars. From sunset until the break of day, numerous watchmen went the rounds with lanterns, and struck the hours with a couple of sticks.

At night our prison was still more dreary, for we had neither light nor fire. A lamp set in a paper lantern, burned in the guard-house, and threw a pale, sickly light into the shed, which it would not have been sufficient to illumine, under any circumstances. Except the scanty portion which the rays of this light fell on, all the shed was shrouded in impenetrable darkness. The rattling which ensued from the opening and shutting of doors, whenever the guards visited us, broke through the deep silence of night, and added to the discomforts of our situation. It was out of our power to enjoy a calm refreshing sleep, for besides the noise, frightful phantoms of every kind drove it away.

The shed, cages, guard-houses, and hedges, by which they were surrounded, were all quite new, and had so lately been finished, that the chips and shavings had not yet been carried away. The building, which was large, and made of beautiful wood, must have cost the Japanese government no trifling sum; greater indeed, we imagined, than they would have devoted to such an object, had their intention been soon to set us free. For a sojourn of two or three years, they might easily have found some suitable building already constructed, and the security and arrangements of this place, seemed to denote that it was to be our abode for a long while, perhaps during life. These reflections tormented us fearfully. For a long while we sat silently gazing at each other, considering ourselves as victims to our own imprudence. On the fourth day after our arrival at Matsmai, the Japanese took us out of our cages, in order, as they told us, to present us to the governor. We went bound in the old way, with soldiers holding the ropes. The road to the fort was through a dirty street, which they had covered with boards, and as it commenced raining, they held umbrellas over our heads. We were led into a roomy court-yard within the fort, which was covered with pebbles, and were placed in a row on a bench which stood within a small building. After we had remained here about an hour, a door was opened, and we were taken through

a second court into a third, where the soldiers who accompanied us, laid aside their sabres, daggers, and the straw sandals which they wore instead of shoes, and at the same time, pulled off our boots. We were now taken into an immense hall, the floor of which was covered with magnificently worked carpets. The doors and windows were made of beautiful wood elaborately carved. On the curtains which according to the Japanese custom, formed the partition walls between the rooms, and could be removed at pleasure, were paintings set in golden frames, and ornaments representing beasts and birds. On both sides of the room were seated Japanese officers, armed with swords and daggers. They laughed and joked among themselves until a noise was heard, and a voice cried, “Hush!” when a deep silence prevailed.

A servant now entered the apartment, kneeled down at the door, laid the palms of his hands on the ground, and bowed his head. The governor then made his appearance, clad in a plain black robe, on the sleeves of which was embroidered his crest, as is customary in Japan. At his girdle hung a dagger, but his sabre was carried by a servant, who had it rolled up in a cloth, that his hands might not touch it. After the governor had taken his seat, the Japanese all made him a reverence, laying the palms of their hands on the floor, and bowing so profoundly that their foreheads touched it, in which position they remained for several seconds. He replied to their salutation by bowing low, his hands placed on his knees. We also saluted him, in the European fashion, and he nodded his head to us, smiling all the while, as if to assure us that his intentions towards us were friendly.

He now drew from his bosom a sheet of paper, and called over the names of each one of us, according to his rank. We replied singly, by a bow, and each time he bent his head. He then spoke to a man who was sitting by his side, and who held the post of interpreter, and commanded him to translate to us what he was about to say. But this individual did not seem to have the slightest knowledge of the Russian language, and began with the words:

“I am a man, thou art a man, another is a man, tell me what kind of a man?”

When we, astounded at the fellow’s impudence, managed to explain to them that we did not understand in the least what he was trying to say, and the officers, after some trouble, had made him confess that he did not know even the commonest phrases in the Russian language, they began to laugh, drove him away, and made use of our interpreter, Alexis, who had hitherto remained a prisoner with us. After an examination, during which the same questions were put to us as had been formerly asked by them, the governor, or “Bunjo,” as the Japanese term him, told us that if we had any request to make, we might now do so.

“We wish only for two things,” we replied, “either to return to our native land, or if that is impossible, to die.”

At this unexpected declaration, the governor made a long and earnest speech, in which he laid particular emphasis on the fact that the Japanese were men, and had feelings like the rest of mankind, and that, therefore, we need not doubt them, nor have any fear, for as soon as it was proved that it was not by the command of the Russian Emperor, that our countrymen had committed violence in Japanese territory, but of their own accord, we should be sent home, abundantly supplied with all things necessary. Until that time, they would take care that we wanted for nothing, and if we needed clothes or any thing else, we

must not be ashamed to ask for them.

The Bunjo then left us, and we returned to our cages with the hope, at least, that through favorable circumstances we might escape from our imprisonment.

V.

From that day our food was greatly improved, for besides the rice broth, and salt radishes, which they had hitherto given us, we now received very good fresh and salt fish, roasted or boiled in poppy-oil, soups made from different kinds of savory herbs, or sea-mussles, and when the snow began to fall, they shot sea-dogs, bears, and rabbits, for us, and prepared under our direction, sometimes, a Russian dish, namely, fish eaten with thin grits, and little barley-cakes. Our food was brought to us three times a day. For drink, we received warm and strong tea, and after any fatiguing examination, they gave us two glasses of warm beer, which they did also in cold weather. They also furnished us with furred coats, and night garments, and when they found that it was not customary in Russia to spend the night on the ground, they made us benches to sleep upon.

This amiable behavior, on the part of the Japanese, emboldened us to ask one of the officers, who visited us, whether it was not possible to have a window cut in the back wall of the shed, so that we might be able to see the sky and the tops of the trees. He did not refuse our request, but examined the wall, asked us where we would like to have it made, praised our choice, and went away. We, of course, believed that our entreaty would be complied with, but we were very much mistaken, for when, a few days afterwards, we repeated our request, the officer replied that the Japanese were very anxious about the state of our health, and feared lest the north wind would give us a cold; therefore, they deemed it more prudent not to make a window.

As the autumn came on, and it grew more and more unpleasant to live in an open building, the Japanese, at our earnest solicitation, pasted paper over the lattice work, and made a window in the roof, which could be opened and shut by means of ropes. Through this window we saw the sky at times, which, in a situation like ours, was a great comfort. Moreover, when it grew colder, they dug a couple of holes in the ground, about two paces distant from the cages, and having lined them with flag-stones, filled them with sand. During the day they burnt charcoal on these hearths, and by sitting close to the grating, we could warm ourselves without being within reach of the coals. After a few days, they gave us pipes with very long stems, to the middle of which they tied wooden balls, which were too large to be drawn through the pales. In this way we could smoke the pipes, which they filled for us, as often as we wished, without having the power to draw them into our prisons. This mistrust of us, raised our indignation to the highest pitch; but when we expostulated with them, and told them, in the strongest terms, what a horror and aversion the Europeans entertained for suicide, they merely laughed, and appealed to their laws, which enjoined on them the necessity of keeping from their prisoners every thing with which they could hurt either themselves or others. For this reason they would never trust us with needles to mend our clothes, nor even with a pair of scissors to cut our nails, obliging us to put our hands through the bars of our cages, that the soldiers might perform the operation for us.

In the beginning of our captivity, they had not allowed us even to change our clothes or

wash our shirts, but now they provided us with water for that purpose, which relieved one of our most pressing necessities. They also invited us to get into a tub, in which water was warmed by means of a pipe connecting with a little oven, and wash ourselves. I took the lead, and we found that we had all to bathe in the same water. This arrangement displeased us not a little, as we held it to be treatment unworthy of the commonest criminals. But we soon were silent on this point however, for to our great astonishment, we saw the soldiers who guarded us, follow our example, and without adding a drop of fresh water, use the same that we had bathed in! and these soldiers did not by any means hold a low rank in society, but were highly esteemed by their countrymen.

We had, in the meantime, by the command of the governor, by whose orders we were supplied with pen and ink, and with the aid of several interpreters, prepared a written defence which, when finished, we sent to him. On the fifteenth of November, we were again led into the fort, but this time with great rejoicing, and with the assurance that our affairs were prospering, and that our innocence was beginning to be universally acknowledged. The Bunjo too declared that after our assertions, and written defence, he now viewed the attack made on Japanese property by the Russian vessel, in an entirely different light, and that he was fully convinced of our entire innocence. It was true that he had not the disposing of us; that remained with the Emperor, but he would do all in his power to bring our affairs to a happy termination. In the meantime we must not be discouraged, but pray to God. This reference to God, which the Bunjo never failed to make when he examined us, always gave us pleasure, for by it we recognized with joy, that the people into whose power we were fallen, had at least some notion of a Supreme being who cared for man.

After this the ropes were taken from us, at which all the Japanese heartily rejoiced; indeed, some were so much moved as to have tears in their eyes. We thanked the Bunjo and officers for their kindness, and for the first time, returned unbound to our prison, where we found every thing so altered that it was unaccountable to us, how the Japanese had accomplished the work in so short a space of time as that during which we were absent. The lattice work of our cages had been removed, and the gloomy passage was transformed into a roomy and cheerful apartment, in which we could all move about conveniently. Round a hearth on which was boiling tea in copper kettles, they had made a kind of wooden frame, on which each of us found a cup, pipe, and tobacco pouch, and instead of the oil lamp which had formerly given us light, we were now treated to candles.

Hardly had we somewhat recovered from our astonishment, when some of the officers came with their children to pay us a visit. They congratulated us on this happy change in our condition, sat down with us by the fire, smoked and chatted. In a word, we were no longer treated as prisoners, but as guests. Our supper was now brought to us, not as usual, in cups, but on new and handsome plates. They gave us also, plenty of beer. The hopes of again seeing our native land was awakened within us anew, and this night was the first since our imprisonment, in which we enjoyed a calm sleep.

But, alas our joy lasted only a few days. Old suspicions reviving, gradually made our situation worse and worse. Our food was changed back to what it was formerly, and nothing remained but the new dishes on which they brought it to us. In the place of candles, the old oil lamp went into service again, and the guards once more hung up

before our eyes the ropes which they had only a little while before removed. Gradually we observed many other indications that our affairs were again assuming a serious aspect since the commander of Kumachir, who had originally made us prisoners by treachery, arrived in Matsmai.

Our suspicions soon became certainty, for the Bunjo ordered us to instruct a Japanese in the Russian language, as they could not trust the interpreter whom we had formerly employed. We refused for a long while to undertake this tedious task, but were at last obliged to do so, as they told us very plainly that on it depended the possibility of our liberation. The Japanese had now an opportunity of satisfying their curiosity, through our very docile scholar, a scribe of the Bunjo's. They took unlimited advantage of this opportunity, to our great disgust and vexation, whilst from them we could not get a word as to the intention of their government towards us, nor even whether a Russian vessel had arrived at Japan during our absence, to demand our release. Every day our conviction grew stronger, that nothing was further from their thoughts than to liberate us, but that they were striving by every means in their power to conceal from us our sad fate, and we came to the conclusion that nothing was left to us but flight.

VI.

We were, however, diverted from these thoughts by the announcement that we were to change our quarters as soon as the fine weather set in. Accordingly, on the first of April, we were removed to a house which was some distance off, and not far from the coast. Yet this was not by any means the commencement of our final liberation, but of a still longer imprisonment, though it was to be in a milder form and more healthy place. At any rate, we thus interpreted the remark of the commander-in-chief, that we must now look upon the Japanese as brethren and countrymen. However, we had so little desire to claim any relationship that we set to work in earnest to make preparations for a flight. The first thing we did was to examine into the condition of our new abode.

The house in which we now found ourselves, lay near the southern gate of the fort, between a wall and a steep rock, at the foot of which lay the town. It was surrounded by a large court-yard and a high wooden fence. Another fence divided the yard into two parts, of which the one nearest the house was set apart for our own use. As there were three or four trees in this enclosure, the Japanese, when they were pointing out to us the advantages of our new residence, dubbed it a garden, but we found that if we wished to get along without wounding their vanity, we must call a pool of water that was in one corner of it, “a lake,” and a heap of mud in this pool, “an island.” This so-called garden was connected with the other court, by means of a little door, which was always kept shut, except when the captain of the guard visited us, or we were permitted to take a walk, which now frequently happened. A gate which was kept carefully closed during the night, led from the second court into the street. Our house was divided into two parts by a lattice work which ran through it in the direction of the fence separating the two court-yards, with one of which each division was connected. In the first of these divisions were three chambers, separated from each other by screens, which were appropriated to our use, and in the second dwelt soldiers armed with guns, javelins, swords, and daggers. In this way they could easily watch us, and their commander generally sat by the lattice and looked into our rooms. A gallery ran round our apartments, from which we could look out upon the sea, and a shore which lay opposite.

Our present habitation was in reality far better than the former one, for we could now at least enjoy the sight of the heavens, walk round the court-yard undisturbed, and inhale the fresh air and cool breeze. Our food, also, was much improved. Yet when we came to reflect on the last words of the governor, we knew not whether to rejoice or be sad. He had told us, in the plainest terms, to consider the Japanese as brethren and countrymen, without striving to cheer us, as he was wont to do, with the prospect of returning to our native land. What could this mean, but that we were now domiciliated in Japan, and must in future give up all thoughts of returning home? Yet we were now more determined than ever, either to free ourselves by force, or escape on some favorable opportunity offering. After mature deliberation, we determined on attempting flight, hoping that ere our absence was discovered we should have time to reach some mountains, in the north of the island, where we could lie concealed until an opportunity offered of seizing some kind of a vessel along the coast, in which we could make a journey from island to island, and so reach the nearest Russian port. Having thus made our plans, the first thing we determined to do was to divert the attention of the Japanese from us, by assuming a cheerful demeanor, and suffering no complaint to escape us. To our great joy, we were successful. It is true that the soldiers, who mounted guard, did not sleep at their posts during the night, but they troubled themselves less about us than formerly, and sat round the fire, smoking their pipes and playing at draughts. The officer still went the rounds every half hour, with his men, but he then sat down in a corner, and amused himself by reading. In the meantime, we sought to provide ourselves with such things as were indispensable to our flight. Every day we put aside some of the rice broth, which continued to be our usual food, and having dried it during the night, put it into bags, which we tied to our girdles, or under our arms. One day, whilst we were walking outside of the town, one of the sailors found a fire-steel. He immediately put his foot upon it, and stooping down under pretence of pulling up his stocking, slipped it into his pocket. We stole some flints from our attendants, and made

tinder by burning an old shirt. “Necessity is the mother of invention,” says an old proverb, which, in our case, spoke truly, for by untiring perseverance we succeeded in constructing a compass, which, though of course imperfect, answered every purpose. After many entreaties, we procured from our attendants a couple of needles, under pretence of mending our clothes. Pretending that we had lost them, we devoted them to the manufacture of our compass. Through repeated rubbings on a magnetic stone, which Chleb Nikow had found, and which we kept carefully concealed in a corner of the yard, we succeeded in rendering one of them magnetic, and then fastened it to a little sheet of copper, which we loosened from the roof of our house. We undertook, besides this, to manufacture some weapons for our defence, in case of need, and in this attempt fortune again favored us. We found, among the grass in the court-yard, a large and sharp chisel, which, most probably, the carpenters had used in the construction of the house, and forgotten. We put it carefully by, in order that we might fasten it to a pole, and use it in the moment of our flight as a spear. We found, also, a spade in the court, which we hid, that it too might serve as a weapon. Besides this, the sailors, on the night when we made the attempt, were to arm themselves with some long poles, which had been used in drying our clothes.

After we had finished our preparations, we noted carefully, whenever we took a walk, the road and footpath which led to the mountains. On the twenty-third of April, having gone farther than usual, we induced our attendants, under the plea of curiosity, to show us a temple, which lay directly in the way we must take in our flight. Whilst we were gathering, as usual, leeks and herbs for our own use, we observed accurately the whole neighborhood, and then set out on our way home. When we arrived there, we went to bed. A half an hour before midnight, two of the sailors, who had taken a couple of knives from the kitchen, which adjoined our rooms, slunk into the garden just after the guard had made the twelfth round, and hiding themselves under the steps, began digging a hole under the hedge, whilst we put a bundle of clothes into each of their beds, that it might appear as if they were still there.

After they had happily finished their task, without being discovered, we all went out, and one after the other crept through the hole. When it came to my turn, I stumbled, but got through, striking my knee, however, as I did so, against a small post, which was nearly buried in the ground. The blow was violent, but the pain soon disappeared. We now found ourselves in a very narrow footpath, between the hedge and the wall of the fort, which we followed, and after some trouble, reached the principal street of the town. We hastened along, keeping among the trees, and at the end of a half hour found ourselves at the foot of a high mountain, which we were obliged to ascend.

VII.

We immediately began to climb up the hill, and endeavored, as far as possible, by means of the stars, our only guides, to direct our course due north. By the time we had reached the first eminence, I felt a stinging pain in my knee, which suddenly swelled up so much, and put me into such agony, that I could proceed only with the greatest difficulty. My companions, therefore, to my great vexation and concern, were obliged to halt every little while, that I might recover myself, and ease my injured limb.

Our intention was to reach, before daybreak, that portion of the hill which was covered

with trees, in order to secure ourselves against the first attempts which the Japanese, who we now considered as our mortal enemies, might make to capture us. In our walks through the valleys which surrounded the town, these woods had not appeared to us to be very far off, but we saw now how much we had been deceived. One of the footpaths which we had remarked during the day as leading directly to them, we were unable to find in the thick darkness, which shrouded from our view objects only a few paces distant.

The only resource left to us was to keep ascending, which the unevenness of the soil, covered as it was with brushwood, rendered tedious and difficult. After three painful hours passed in this way, we came at last to the highest ridge of the mountain, and now imagined that we could go forward on the high level ground, without any great exertion. But fate had many obstacles and much trouble in store for us, that we knew not of. We had now got to a part of the mountain which in many places was covered with snow, and as we did not wish our trail to be visible to the Japanese, we were obliged to go first to the one side and then to the other, and often had to retrace our steps. In this way we expended our strength, and made very little progress. An hour before daybreak, we struck on a broad road, which led towards the north, and which was firm and almost free from snow. As we knew that we could now go on without the fear of leaving our footprints visible, we rejoiced not a little, and redoubled our speed. I still felt much pain in my knee and leg, but as we were now on level ground, it was not to be compared to what I endured whilst ascending the mountain. We believed that we must now reach the wood in a very short time, and had made up our minds to rest in one of its thickets, when suddenly a sailor who chanced to look back, exclaimed, “They are coming after us on horseback, with lanterns!” and immediately sprang into an opening by the road side. Startled by this exclamation, we looked round, and perceived some lights which seemed to be rapidly approaching us. Seeing that there was no time to be lost, we followed the sailor’s example. For a long way the road led us down the mountain, without there being either tree or bush to afford us shelter, or screen us from our pursuers. Soon the day began to break. If there had been more light at that moment, the Japanese must inevitably have seen us from the surrounding heights, as there was nothing which could hide us from their sight. At length we reached the bottom of the ravine, which was surrounded by naked rocks. Deep snow covered it, and we could not find a single place where we could hide. It was now broad day, and we stood still for a moment, looking vainly in every direction, and much perplexed to know what to do. At length we discovered in the rocks an opening, which on examination, turned out to be a cave, but so small as to be hardly able to contain us all. Close to it was a water-fall, which coming down from the mountain, had hollowed out in the snow, directly before the entrance, a pit some ten feet deep. By the aid of a little tree we climbed into this cave, in which, however, we could not sit down, but were obliged to stand upright, squeezed together in a most uncomfortable way. As the bottom of our hiding-place was shelving, and covered with loose stones, we were obliged to change our positions with the greatest caution, for fear of rolling out, and in order to rest ourselves, we leaned first on one elbow and then on the other. However, we were now tolerably secure, for the cave could not be seen by any one who was not close to it.

We remained in this position until sunset, consulting, with drooping courage, on the best way to save ourselves. The day was clear and warm, but the rays of the sun did not penetrate into the ravine, and the water-fall made the air so cold that our teeth absolutely

chattered. We heard plainly the strokes of an axe in the surrounding forest, and as we ventured out in the evening, saw people on the mountains. Suddenly we heard a rushing sound as if some one was sliding down the mountain towards us. It came nearer and grew louder, and we thought that we should now soon see the soldiers who were seeking us. We prepared ourselves for a struggle, when behold a wild stag appeared, and as soon as he saw us, dashed quickly away.

As soon as the stars began to appear, we left our inconvenient hiding-place, and climbed up a high mountain, which in many places was overgrown with brushwood. My situation was now really dreadful. While in the cave I had held my leg in one position, and consequently, felt no great pain, but it returned as soon as I began to walk, and soon became almost intolerable. As we had still to cross many mountains, and in our case great haste was necessary, I saw clearly that I was keeping back my comrades, and most likely would be the cause of their re-capture. I, therefore, implored them to leave me to my fate, and think only of their own safety. But my entreaties had no effect on them whatever, except to render them most determined not to leave me. They swore they would stay by me whilst life remained, and that they were perfectly willing to rest whenever I wished it. Moreover, Makarov, the strongest of the sailors, entreated me to let him help me along, which he could do, if I would go behind him, and hold fast to his girdle. On hearing this I determined to remain with my companions and allow myself to be dragged along by them.

After we had gone some distance from them, over rocky cliffs, and through deep ravines, we came to a couple of huts, from which came a whistling noise, such as, with us, the people use to charm quails, in order to capture them. We stooped down among the grass, and listened for a long while, in order to find out whether it came from a bird, or whether there were people in the huts. As it was not likely that many persons dwelt in such an out of the way place, we took courage, and went up to them; but when we drew near, we found out that what we had taken for huts, were in reality two heaps of wood. As we had not been able to gain a moment’s rest during the preceding day, we laid ourselves down on this spot, where we were protected from the wind and cold, and slept for two or three hours. Greatly refreshed, we started again on our journey, and by daybreak reached the top of a high mountain, which was covered with thick brushwood, and which far out-topped the surrounding hills. Here we determined to pass the day. As at sunrise a thick fog covered the tops of the mountains, we ventured to make a fire among the bushes to warm our limbs, stiffened with wet and cold. We placed on it a tea kettle, which, however, was not for the purpose of preparing tea, a luxury by no means within our reach, but to warm our dry and mouldy rice, in order to render it palatable. We searched, also, for wild herbs, but nothing eatable was to be found any where, for on the heights winter reigned despotic. We melted some snow for a drink, and made a meal of our rice, which was already nearly putrid. In the meantime, black clouds were rising in the east, the wind howled through the trees, and every thing indicated that a storm was fast approaching. As we concluded that none of the Japanese would venture among the mountains in such weather as this, we determined not to wait for the approach of night, but to continue our journey during the day. After we had passed through a deep ravine, and waded through a stream of water, the road again led us up the mountain, and we had already reached a tolerable height, when suddenly a high and steep rock towered up directly in front of us, which could not be ascended without great difficulty and danger, and yet there was no way of avoiding it. Up

we went, I holding fast to the girdle of Makarov, who had nearly reached the top, when he was obliged to free himself from my grasp, in order to climb up a very steep part of the rock just at the top. I braced the toes of my uninjured foot against a projecting stone, wound my right arm round a young tree, which curved up from below, and in this position waited until Makarov had reached the summit, from which he could assist me to mount up to him. But this Hercules of a man was now so fatigued and overcome that he had hardly strength to swing himself to the top of the rock, where he lay as if dead. At this moment the stone, against which I was resting, gave way, and rolled down the mountain, leaving me swinging by one hand, and totally unable, on account of the smoothness of the rock, to get a resting place for my feet. The other sailors, it is true, were not far from me, but they were all so fatigued as to be totally unable to come to my assistance. In this fearful situation I passed several minutes, and my hand began to pain me so intolerably that I was tempted to let go my hold, and have my sufferings ended by being dashed to pieces on the rocks, a hundred fathoms below me.

But at this moment Makarov recovered himself, and seeing the danger I was in, prepared to help me. He braced his left foot against a stone, which projected from the rock directly opposite to my breast, grasped the branches of the tree to which I was clinging, and let me seize his girdle with my unoccupied hand. Then, with a great exertion of strength, he dragged me to his side, and again fell back almost senseless. Had the stone, on which he stood, given way, or the bough he grasped broken, we should both have been inevitably dashed to the ground. After we had rested for some time on the top of the rock, we continued our fatiguing journey until nightfall. We then encamped on a part of the mountain which was overgrown with reeds, and immediately made a fire to prepare our evening meal, which this time consisted of wild leeks and other herbs, collected along the banks of the stream we had waded through. We then dried our clothes, and lay down to rest in a tent hastily constructed of reeds. Want of sleep, and the great fatigue we had undergone, soon closed our eyes, and we slept soundly. After a few hours I awoke, and found the hut so uncomfortably hot that I went out into the open air. I leaned against a tree which grew near by, and thought over our probable fate. The sublime picture of nature first attracted my attention. The sky was clear, but below us and among the mountains rolled dark masses of clouds; it was most probably raining in the valleys. The snow which lay on the mountains glittered brightly in the distance, and never before had I seen the stars shine forth so clearly as they did on that night. A death-like silence prevailed, or was broken only by the sighing of the breeze as it swept softly by. But the beauty and sublimity of this spectacle suddenly vanished, as the thoughts of our situation came thronging upon me, clothed with the most fearful shapes. Six men on one of the highest of the Japanese mountains, without sufficient food, clothing, or even weapons to defend themselves from the attacks of wild animals; possessing neither knowledge nor ability to construct any kind of a vessel in which they might escape, and one of them, moreover, with a wounded leg, which at every step, pained him dreadfully. When I thought of this, our helpless position, my feelings bordered on despair. Whilst I was occupied with these sad thoughts, some of my companions awoke, and their sighs and prayers affected me so deeply that I forgot myself, and shed scalding tears. In this way an hour passed by, but the cold night air finally forced me to seek shelter in the hut, where I lay down, but not to sleep.

VIII.

As the road over these high mountains was filled with difficulties and danger, we now determined to direct our steps towards the coast, creeping along during the day and hiding by night in the woods and among the hills. As we were descending from the heights we suddenly caught sight of some mounted soldiers, who were on the same road which we were travelling, and coming directly towards us. We immediately crept into a hollow, and hid among some bushes. The soldiers, fortunately, rode by without perceiving us, but we now saw plainly enough how vigilant our pursuers were. We grew bolder, however, and on the following night, passed through a village, in order to take a look at a couple of boats which we saw lying on the shore near to it. We found that they were in good condition, but much too small for us to trust ourselves in on the open sea.

During the day as we lay concealed in a thicket, we prepared every thing that was necessary for the success of our anticipated flight. We sewed two of our shirts together for a sail, and made all the necessary rigging of some ropes, which we had brought with us. From one of our hiding-places we remarked at one time, that a large Japanese vessel, which was sailing along the coast, had cast anchor near to a neighboring village, and we determined to surprise and capture it during the night. By good fortune we passed through the village undiscovered, and were close to the vessel, when suddenly it weighed anchor and sailed away. We gazed after it for a while, and then sorrowfully pursued our way along the shore.

After having ventured into the village for several nights without accomplishing our purpose, we were at last discovered on the morning of the first of May, as we were returning rather late, by a woman who was standing on one of the surrounding heights. She immediately beckoned in every direction to give notice of the discovery she had made. We saw immediately that no time was to be lost, and fled into a ravine that we might hide ourselves among the bushes. Unluckily, before we could reach a place of concealment, we found ourselves surrounded by a crowd of people who raised a loud cry. I and Makarov, my inseparable attendant, took refuge in a thicket, but soon being unable to go farther, we lay down and waited the result of the affair. To our great astonishment, instead of our pursuers being the country people, as we imagined, we perceived several well-armed soldiers, and an officer on horseback.

Our companions were immediately surrounded and forced to surrender, and from our hiding-place we could plainly see how the Japanese bound their hands behind their backs, inquired from them where we were, and led them towards the shore, whilst some of them commenced an active search after us.

“What shall we do now?” asked Makarov, trembling with fear.

“Perhaps,” replied I, “the Japanese will not find us to-day, in which case, as soon as it grows dark, we will steal along the coast, capture a boat, and sail from island to island, until we reach the nearest Russian port.”

Makarov agreed to my proposition, but we did not reflect that every thing necessary for such an undertaking, which we had prepared with so much trouble, had fallen into the hands of the Japanese, with our companions.

Whilst we were yet discussing the possibility of flight, four of our pursuers, two of whom

were armed with spears, and the other two with sabres, came directly towards us, searching even nooks and corners, where a dog could hardly hide. I now took in my hand the pole with the chisel fastened to it; but Makarov, with tears in his eyes, begged me not to defend myself, or injure any of the Japanese, for if I did so I would ruin not only us two, but all my companions, whilst by a voluntary surrender, we might all perhaps be saved. These words made such a deep impression on me, that I immediately struck my spear in the ground, and walked out followed by Makarov.

The Japanese were so startled at our sudden appearance, that they stepped backwards a few paces; but when they saw that we were unarmed, they grew bolder, advanced towards us, seized us, bound our hands behind our backs, and led us towards a house which stood on the sea shore. Here we found the rest of our party, who had already been taken. Our captors now treated us to rice-broth, herrings, radishes, tea, and sago. Not the slightest injury did they do us, nor even bestow a single invective on us, either whilst they were taking us to the house, or after we got there. On the contrary, when they remarked that I limped and walked with difficulty, two of them took me by the arms, and assisted me over the hills and dangerous places. After resting here for an hour, they bound our hands, as they had formerly done, and led us along the sea shore under a strong escort, back to Matsmai.

We remarked that the Japanese had stuck little staves in our footprints, wherever we had gone during the night, and we learnt from them that they had never once lost sight of our trail. Indeed, they had often seen us, and had watched us when we slept or took our frugal meals. Why they had never seized us, we could not imagine. Perhaps, with their well known cowardice, they feared lest we might defend ourselves, and kill some of them. As often as we passed through a valley, the inhabitants flocked out of their houses to see us, but to their credit be it said, that we never received from them the slightest injury nor even a mocking word. They all regarded us with pity, and some of the women, who gave us food and drink, wept! So much good feeling was displayed by a people, that we enlightened Europeans consider rude and inhuman! The leader of our escort, however, was far less obliging and polite to us than the Japanese officers had formerly been. Although there was no lack of horses in the neighborhood, we were obliged to walk, and were no longer carried over streams of water, but forced to wade through them. When it rained, too, they did not hold umbrellas over us, but covered us with mats. We soon became very much fatigued, especially I, for the pain in my leg grew more violent every moment. During that night, which was unusually dark, they led us along with the greatest caution. We walked in single file, and before each of us, as also before the leader of the band, a lantern was carried. Men, too, with lights in their hands, went before, and came after the procession. Near steep cliffs, and deep ravines, a crowd of people, who had been summoned from the neighboring villages to attend us on our journey back to Matsmai, shook out bundles of straw, which they carried, and set fire to them, so that it was as bright as day. Had an European seen our train in the distance, he would have imagined that we were carrying along the mortal remains of some distinguished man. On the third of May, we arrived at Matsmai, and halted before the gates of the town. An imperial officer immediately made his appearance, and without saying a word began thoroughly to search us. We remarked to him that he might save himself the trouble, as he would find nothing on us.

“I know that very well,” replied he, coolly, “but the laws of Japan require it.”

As soon as he had performed his duty, the soldiers who accompanied us put on their city clothing, and with slow and weary steps we took our way back into the town. The officer who had taken us prisoners, rode a horse richly caparisoned with silk, and looked round on all sides with the air of a proud victor, returning laden with the spoils of conquest, and who, for his heroic deeds, claimed laurels and thanks from his countrymen. The crowd of spectators was immense, and as it rained, and they all carried umbrellas, the sight was a strange one.

IX.

We were taken directly to the castle. Formerly we had always worn our caps until we entered the court, but now we were obliged to take them off at the castle gates. After being taken into an ante-chamber, and treated to rice-broth, salted radishes, and tea without sugar, they led us into the judgment hall, where the officers had already assembled, and where the governor soon afterwards made his appearance. There was not the slightest change visible in his countenance; he seemed as pleasant and unruffled as ever, and showed no displeasure at our behavior. As soon as he had taken his seat, he inquired, with his accustomed good humor, what were the motives of our flight? I remarked to him that I wished, first of all, to declare that I alone was responsible for the course we had pursued, and that it was against their will that my companions had obeyed my orders; if they had refused to do so, they would be liable to severe penalties, if we ever returned to our native land. Therefore, though the Japanese should kill me, they ought not to harm a hair of their heads. The Bunjo replied, in the coolest manner possible, that if the Japanese considered it necessary to take my life, they could so without my putting them in mind of the fact; if, on the contrary, they did not deem it advisable to do so, all my entreaties would avail nothing. He then repeated his question.

“We fled,” replied I, “because we had not the slightest prospect of ever being set free; on the contrary, every day showed us more clearly that the Japanese were determined never to release us.”

“Who told you that? Have I ever hinted to you that we would always hold you prisoners?”

“The orders from the capital,” replied I, “forboded no good.”

“Whence do you know that?”

“The officer here present, whom we instructed in the Russian language, gave us good ground to suppose so.”

The governor now addressed several questions to this officer, which we understood no better than his answers; we saw only that he was not a little embarrassed, and grew red and white by turns.

The governor now turned to us again and commanded us to give him the history of our flight, without omitting the most trivial circumstance. We were obliged to tell him where we were each day, and make a sketch of several localities, concerning which he seemed to be in some doubt. After he had demanded of us whether some of the guards and servants had not been privy to and aided our escape, he inquired in an earnest manner, what was the precise object of our flight.

“To return to our native land,” replied we.

“How would it have been possible to have carried out this project?”

“We intended to capture a boat somewhere along the coast, and venture in it to the nearest Russian port.”

“Could you not have guessed that as soon as your escape was known, orders would be given immediately, to watch the coast and especially all vessels.”

“Yes, we expected that, but in the course of time our enterprise might have succeeded when we least expected it.”

“But,” continued the governor, “you saw in your former journeys, that the land was covered with mountains, among which it is very difficult to travel, and that along the coast lie numberless villages, which would render escape almost impossible. Your undertaking was thoughtless and childish.”

“And yet,” replied I, “for six nights we wandered along the shore, and through these villages, without being discovered by any one. At any rate, we would leave no plan untried, let it be as thoughtless, or even desperate as it may, to escape from our miserable lot, and as we had an eternal imprisonment hovering over us, we determined either to reach our homes, or find a grave among the mountains or beneath the waves.”

“Why was it necessary to go into the woods or on the sea in order to die, when you could do it very easily here?”

“That would have been suicide, but if we venture our lives to win our freedom, we could rely on the aid of God, and perhaps gain our end.”

“Had you succeeded, what would you have said in Russia, concerning the Japanese?”

“All that we have heard or seen, without adding or concealing any thing.”

“Do not you know that if you had escaped, the governor, and several other officers would have lost their lives in consequence.”

“We could well imagine that the guards would not have escaped punishment, as that is customary in Europe, but we were not aware that the Japanese laws were so cruel as to condemn innocent persons to death.”

“Is there a law in Europe which allows a prisoner to escape?”

“There is certainly no written law, but if he has not pledged his word of honor, it is allowable for him to seize on any favorable opportunity for flight.”

With this equivocal explanation, the examination ended, and the Governor now made a long speech, in which he said: If we were Japanese, and had secretly left our prison, the consequences for us would have been very serious; but as we were foreigners, and not acquainted with the Japanese laws, and had, moreover, no object in view which was injurious to the Japanese, but were influenced solely by a desire to see again our native land, which is dearest to every man; therefore, his good opinion of us remained unchanged. It was true that he could not answer for the light in which the government would regard our flight, but he would still hold himself devoted to our interests, and endeavor to get permission for us to return to Russia; but until our affairs were settled, we

must, according to the Japanese laws, return to prison, and be more carefully guarded than before.

After the governor had finished his speech, he left the hall, whilst we were immediately bound, and led to a prison, which, like our former ones, consisted of cages. I was put into a small one, whilst my companions were confined together in one of a large size. They stood, however, so near together, that we could converse very easily. Our food was now given to us with a very sparing hand, and the sailors continually complained of hunger. After supper, which we ate about four o'clock, our prison was shut up, and as the walls were made of boards, instead of lattice work, not a ray of light reached us after that hour. As soon as it struck six o'clock, the guards came to examine us, which they did very thoroughly, and if we were asleep woke us, to answer to our names. On the fourth of May, we were again led into the hall, at daybreak, where, as I received many hints, something very important was this time to be determined. When we had taken our places on the benches, which were prepared for us, they unloosened our hands, but did not remove from our waists the rope, which we were led by. The governor now repeated the questions he had before asked us, and had the answers we gave, carefully explained. But now came the most important question, which was, whether I considered my conduct as right or wrong, and whether I thought I had acted properly towards the Japanese or not.

"The Japanese," replied I, "forced us to the course we took, by first taking us prisoners by stratagem, and then refusing to give credence to our assertions."

The governor appeared very much astonished at my words; the capturing of us, he said, was now a by-gone affair, about which it was useless to say any thing; he merely wished to know whether I considered myself innocent or guilty, as in the former case he could not lay our case before the Emperor. All the objections I made, did no good; they only made him angry, and he kept repeating the same question. At last as I began to see what he was aiming at, and that he only had our interests in view, I frankly confessed that we had not acted rightly, and that our conduct merited punishment. He seemed very well satisfied with this confession of mine, and we were told that our affairs were prospering.

We were now led back to the house, where we had dwelt before our flight, and treated very well. Besides our usual fare, they gave us tea, and very good tobacco, and provided us, too, with combs, handkerchiefs, and also curtains, to protect us against the gnats, which were very troublesome. Besides these marks of good-will, they gave us some Russian books to read, and pens, ink, and paper; but when we expressed a wish to learn to write the Japanese tongue, they told us that their laws expressly forbade them to teach Christians their language. We never, however, received permission to take walks again, but in order that we might enjoy the fresh air, the governor ordered the doors of our dwelling to be left open from morning until evening.

In this manner, with all our wants gratified, but with time hanging heavy on our hands, we lived until the sixth of September. On that day we were again conducted to the castle, and received the joyful intelligence that the Diana was again at Kumachir, and treating with the Japanese government for our liberation. Our joy, however, was of short duration, for we received information in a letter from the commander of the vessel, that in order to satisfy the Japanese, he was obliged to return to Russia to procure from the government the required avowal, that the acts of violence perpetrated in Japanese territory, was done

without their knowledge or consent. We were, therefore, obliged to remain for another year, but during that time we were treated with the greatest consideration.

In September following, word was brought to us that a Russian vessel had again arrived in the Japanese waters, and a few days afterwards we were informed that the negotiations had been successfully terminated, and that we would soon begin our journey to Khakodade. From this time forward, we were most hospitably entertained. Several officers, with their children, visited us, and heartily wished us joy at our liberation. The mayor of the town, also came to see us, and presented us with a beautifully lacquered casket, filled with confectionary, as a token of remembrance. On the following morning, amid the rejoicing of the inhabitants, we left Matsmai, and after a journey of three days, reached Khakodade, where the Diana soon afterwards arrived, accompanied by a multitude of Japanese boats, tastefully ornamented.

On the morning of the fifth of October, an officer, in the most respectful manner, presented me with my hat and sword, which, during our imprisonment, had been carefully preserved. I was, however, obliged to dress myself as the Japanese wished, namely, in a jacket, and wide breeches of costly silk, which had been made expressly for the occasion. The hat and sword must have made this dress appear strange enough in the eyes of Europeans, but as it was all the same to the Japanese, and since they had returned our arms, they had ceased to regard us as prisoners. I willingly complied with their wishes, and determined to present myself before my countrymen, in a costume in which they would have some difficulty in recognizing me.

As every thing was ready for our departure, we went down to the shore, accompanied by the governor and all the officers. Here we found a magnificently decorated barge waiting for us, in which we embarked, after having taken leave of a crowd of people, who wished us a pleasant journey. A multitude of boats, laden with every thing belonging to us, and numerous presents besides, shot from the shore, and accompanied us to the vessel.

On board the Diana, the officers and men received us with a joy which only brothers or bosom friends feel under such circumstances. As for ourselves, when after an imprisonment of two years, two months, and twenty-six days, we again found ourselves on board an imperial vessel of war, and surrounded by our countrymen, we felt what can only be felt, and not described. On the tenth of October we weighed anchor, and with a favorable wind left the land of our sufferings, whose inhabitants, nevertheless, we had learned to esteem and love.

So ends the narrative of Golownin. He resumed the command of his vessel, sailed for Kamtschatka, and from there went to St. Petersburg, where he and his rescued companions were richly rewarded by the Emperor.

A Sea-Fight on the Cuban Coast.

By the orders of the British government, I cruised for a season in the Cuban waters, for the express purpose of aiding in the suppression of the slave trade, which, in spite of all treaties and efforts to put an end to it, was still carried on with the most unblushing boldness. I had under my command a small, but well-armed schooner, with a crew of picked men, and sailed for my destination with the most positive orders to sink or capture all suspected vessels. We cruised about for some time without making any prizes, and the weary and monotonous life I led, became almost unbearable to me, driving me from the cabin to the deck, and from the deck to the cabin, seeking in vain for some relief from the ennui I suffered.

One very dark evening, it might have been about eight o'clock, I went on deck depressed in spirits, and completely out of sorts. Here I found Timothy Tailtackle, who had the watch, gazing into the surrounding darkness so intently that he did not perceive me until I was standing close to him.

"Any thing in sight, Master Tailtackle?" asked I, eagerly.

"Not exactly, sir, but I have just been begging for your glass. See there! once, twice; but it is as dark as pitch Pray, sir, tell me how far are we from the Hole in the Wall?"

The Hole in the Wall is a very remarkable rock forming the southern promontory of the island of Abaco, one of the Bahamas. As its name signifies, it resembles, either, from the action of the waves, or from the cannonadings it has received, a perforated wall. It rises some forty feet above the surface of the water.

"We are ten miles distant, at least," said I.

"Then," cried Tailtackle, in a sharp tone, "there must be a sail to windward, and not far off either."

"Where?" asked I, eagerly; "quick, get my glass."

"Here it is, sir."

"Let me see, then."

I looked through the glass until my eyes ached, but as I could perceive nothing, I resumed my walk on deck, satisfied in my own mind that Timothy had been mistaken. The latter, however, continued to look through the glass, and when I approached him, a few minutes afterwards, said:

"Well, sir, now that it brightens a little, I see what it is that has been puzzling me."

"The deuce you do! give me the glass." In a moment I saw it also.

"By Jove, Tailtackle, you're right. Send the men to their posts, get the long guns ready, and clear the deck for action."

These orders of mine quickly changed our hitherto quiet vessel into a scene of bustle and confusion. I kept my eyes steadily fixed on the object which had attracted the watchful

gaze of Timothy Tailtackle, but all that I could make out was that it was a strange sail. On account of the distance, and unusual darkness of the night, I could distinguish neither its size nor rig. All this time a fine breeze was driving us rapidly towards the coast of Cuba.

“Give the glass to the boatswain, Master Tailtackle, and come forward here.”

The long gun was now swung round, and the other pieces run into the opened ports. They were all double shotted and carefully primed, and the whole crew, even to a negro we had on board, stood at their posts ready for action.

“I see her now, sir, plain enough,” cried Tailtackle.

“Good! What does she look like?”

“A large brig, sir, hard up against the wind. You can see her now without the glass.”

I looked in the direction indicated by Tailtackle, and sure enough, there was a dark mass towering above the surface of the water, dim and black like a spirit from the deep.

“She’s a large vessel, sir,” said Tailtackle, “there’s no doubt of that; there goes her lower sails, and now they’re furling her topsail; ha! she’s crossing our bows; look out, sir, here comes a shot.”

“The devil!” ejaculated I. I now saw the vessel plain enough, scudding before the wind.

“Keep her close to the wind—ease her a little—that’s right—now give that fellow a shot across his bows—we’ll find out what he’s made of. Reefpoint,” continued I, to one of the midshipmen, “show our signal.”

“Aye, aye, sir.”

The shot was fired and the lights shown, but still our ghostly friend remained silent and dark.

“Scarfemwell,” said I to the gunner, “go forward to the long gun; Tailtackle, I’ve no great liking for that chap, open the magazine.”

The stranger had now neared us considerably, and he shortened sail; but when he found that his endeavors to cross our bows in order to rake us, were unsuccessful, as we ran with him before the wind, broadside to broadside, he hastily let go his topsail, as he was now not more than a cable’s length from us. At this moment, Tailtackle, in his shirt, pantaloons, and shoes, put his head out of the hatchway, and said:

“If I might advise, sir, I think we had better keep our hatches down; that fellow is not honorable, depend upon it, sir.”

“Very well, Tailtackle, very well. Forward there, Master Jigmaree; give him a shot, if he won’t speak, right between the masts, sir. Do you hear?”

“Aye, aye, sir,” answered the boatswain.

“Fire.”

The gun was discharged, and immediately we heard the crashing of timbers on board the stranger, accompanied by a piercing cry, such as a negro makes at the death of his companions, and then came a long and doleful howl.

“A slaver, sir, and our shot has struck him,” cried Handlead, the gunner.

“Then we shall have a little sport,” remarked I. Hardly had I spoken, when the brig again shortened sail, and fired a shot from her bows; then came another, and another, and another.

“She shows a good set of teeth,” cried Jigmaree; “nine on a side, as I am a living sinner!”

Three of the shots struck us, mortally wounding a sailor, and injuring the poor little midshipman, Reefpoint, who was hit by a splinter.

“Steady, men—aim low—fire!”

Again the long gun was discharged, together with two smaller pieces. But our friend was too nimble for us; he crowded on sail, and escaped in spite of our efforts to overtake him. In less than an hour we lost sight of him.

“Crowd on sail, and after him, Master Jigmaree,” said I; but as I feared lest he might lead us too near the coast, I went down into the cabin to consult the chart.

II.

In the cabin I found Wagtail, Gelid, and Bangs, three British officers, stationed at the West Indies, capital fellows, who finding their time hang heavy on their hands, had procured leave of absence, and accompanied me in my cruise, which though somewhat dangerous it is true, still offered occasional opportunities of amusement. They were sitting round a small table, smoking, and before them stood glasses of brandy and water.

“Something of a fight, eh?” said Paul Gelid, a long-limbed Creole from the Bahamas, but a warm-hearted, honorable fellow, with a drawling voice. “Not very pleasant in the evening, I should say.”

“You’re a pretty fellow,” retorted Aaron Bangs, “to be plaguing us with your chatter at such an unseasonable moment as this.”

Bangs had been an active and brave officer, but ease and comfort was every thing to him, and when he could not fight, he did not like to hear it spoken of.

Pepperpot Wagtail was a little round fellow, of an irritable temperament, but great goodness of heart, and very scrupulous in his dealings with mankind. He had been sick and had come on board in order to recruit his health. I do not know how to describe his appearance better than to compare him to an egg, to the large end of which, his little feet were fastened.

“My dear sir,” he said to Bangs, “reach me that cursed biscuit.”

Bangs gave him the bowl, throwing into it some pieces of biscuit which were as hard as stones.

All this time I was occupied with my chart. Wagtail took a piece of the biscuit and put it into his mouth.

“Zounds! my dear Aaron,” cried he, ironically, “what dentist are you in league with? Gelid has just broken off his favorite tooth, and now you want”—

“Bah!” replied Bangs, “don’t frighten yourself; but what the deuce is this? Wagtail, Gelid,

my dear fellows, look here!”

A sailor, who was followed by the ship’s surgeon, brought down on his back, the poor fellow who had been wounded, and laid him on the table. I must here remark that the captain’s cabin in small vessels is sometimes used as a cockpit, as it now was.

“Your pardon, captain and gentlemen,” said the surgeon, “but I must, I fear, perform an ugly operation on this poor lad, and I think it better that you should go on deck.”

I had now an opportunity of seeing what kind of mettle my friends were made of.

“Doctor,” said Bangs, pulling off his coat, “I can be of use, I know very well—no skill, but firm nerves.”

“And I,” cried Wagtail, “can tie a bandage, although I am not a surgeon.”

Gelid said nothing, but when it came to the pinch was the most useful of all. The wounded lad Wiggins, a fine young man, was weak and very pale, but bold as a lion. A cannon shot had shivered the bone of his leg just above the knee. Round his thigh was a tourniquet, and in consequence he did not bleed much.

“Captain,” said the poor boy, “I shall get over this. I have no great pain, sir; I have not indeed.“

All this time the surgeon was cutting his pantaloons from his leg, and now a shocking sight presented itself to our view. The foot and leg were blue and shrivelled, and connected with the thigh by only a small ligament; the knee pan too was shattered. The doctor made the young man swallow a glass of brandy, containing a strong dose of opium, and then began to amputate the limb above the knee. As long as the knife was used, Aaron remained firm, but when the saw grated against the bone, he murmured with a shudder:

“I’m going on deck captain: I can’t stand this—I’m sick as a dog.”

He was so weak that I released him and took his place, holding Wiggins in my arms. Wagtail, too, was soon obliged to beat a retreat, but Gelid remained firm as a rock. The leg was amputated, the arteries tied, and the surgeon busy in loosening the tourniquet, when suddenly the thread which bound the principal artery, gave way, and a stream of blood gushed forth, as if driven by an engine. The poor fellow had hardly time to cry “Take away that cold hand from my heart!” when his eyes grew dim, his lower jaw fell, and in a minute it was all over with him.

“Dead as Julius Cæsar, captain,” said Gelid coolly.

Dead enough, thought I, and left the cabin to go on deck. At the foot of the companion-ladder, I stumbled over something.

“What the deuce is this?” growled I.

“It’s me, sir.”

“Me—and who’s me?”

“Reefpoint, sir.”

“Gracious God! what are you doing here youngster? You’re not wounded, I hope.”

“A little, sir; a scratch from a splinter, sir. The same shot that tripped up poor Wiggins, sent a splinter after me.”

“Why don’t you go to the doctor, Reefpoint?”

“I was waiting until he had finished with Wiggins, sir, but as it is all over with him now, I’ll go and have my wound dressed.”

His voice grew weaker and weaker, until I could hardly understand what he said. I took him in my arms, carried him into the cabin, and undressed him. I found that he was wounded in the right side just above the hip. Bangs, who in the meanwhile had got over his weakness by the aid of a glass of water, lent his aid, and the natural goodness of his heart now made itself apparent.

“What, Reefpoint! little reefer,” he cried; “you are surely not wounded, my dear friend—such a little fellow; why I should as soon have thought they would have shot at a fly.”

“Indeed, I am wounded, Master Bangs; look there.”

Bangs examined the wound, holding the poor little midshipman in his arms.

“God bless me!” he cried, with an outbreak of the most heartfelt grief; “you seem more fit to be in your mother’s nursery, than to be knocked about in this way.”

Reefpoint sank fainting into his arms.

“With the captain’s permission you must have my bed,” said Aaron to him, whilst he and Wagtail undressed the boy with the greatest care and tenderness, and laid him in the hammock.

“Thank you, sir,” sobbed little Reefpoint, “if my mother were here, she would thank you too.”

III.

My duty called me on deck, and I heard no more. The night was very dark, and I could see nothing of the stranger, but I steered as near as I could in the direction I believed him to have taken, hoping to catch a glimpse of him at daybreak. After a little while Bangs came on deck.

“Well, captain, now that the little reefer is asleep, what do you think of this business? A pretty large vessel, eh? We nearly had a brush with her. I’m not particularly sorry, though, she has taken herself off, especially as the wind has gone down.”

“Ah, but my dear sir,” replied I, “I don’t think that we have done with her yet. I hope to have a brush with her at daybreak.”

“Now, captain, you’re jesting; you don’t wish that really and truly, do you?”

“Really and truly, my dear fellow, and the only thing which troubles me, is that you and your friends will thereby be exposed to danger.”

“Bah! don’t bother yourself about that, but reflect before you engage with this slaver, how is it possible to gain any advantage over him? Remember that he has twice as many men as we have, and eighteen guns to our three.”

“Time will show,” replied I, smiling; “but I must and will fight, if I can only get alongside of him. And now, my dear friend, as the surgeon has left the cabin, I advise you to go down to your hammock—good night. I fear that I must remain on deck.”

“Good night, captain. Heaven guard you. I will go down and comfort my friends.”

He went below, and I continued my walk on deck, stopping every moment to look through the nightglass, until my eyes ached. The long night was at last over, and the light of day found me leaning against the mast, sleeping soundly. The noise made by the sailors, in holy-stoning the deck, woke me, and I discovered our friend of the previous night, under full sail, about four miles to leeward of us, and evidently striving to reach the coast of Cuba. During the night, however, we had sailed faster than he had expected, and as we were now between him and the island, his purpose was frustrated. When he saw that he was thus cut off from the land, he hoisted his lower sails, fired a gun, and run up the Spanish flag, as if he had been a vessel of war. It was now bright day, and Wagtail, Bangs, and Gelid, were all three on deck, washing themselves. I, myself, was standing forward by the long gun, when Pegtop, Bangs’ black servant, came to me, and said:

“Scuse me, massa captin; could ye gibe me some guns?”

“Some guns,” replied I; “certainly, a half dozen of them, if you wish it.”

“Jist de number massa told me to fotch him; tank’e, massa captin.”

Pegtop was very fond of this word, “massa,” and could never get accustomed to any other title used by the whites.

“Listen, friend,” said I to Pegtop, “now that you have got the guns; is your master really going to fight?”

The negro stood still, rolling his eyes, and expressing in his countenance the greatest astonishment.

“Massa Bangs fight! Golly, massa, you jestin? Massa Bangs fight? Why yer doesn’t know him. Ye ought to see de way he fotches down de ducks and snipe, and a man isn’t so hard to hit as dem.”

“Granted,” said I; “but a snipe has not a loaded gun in his claws, like a Spaniard, friend Pegtop.”

“Makes no difference, massa,” replied Pegtop, decidedly. “Saw massa Aaron, myself, fight robbers, and helped him to kill de debbils, too. Massa Aaron fight? Don’t say nothin’ more about dat.”

“Very well,” said I; “and is Master Gelid going to fight.”

“B’lieve he will; fust rate friend of massa Bangs—good at shootin’ ducks, too—guess he’ll fight.”

“Ah,” said I, “your friends are all heroes, Pegtop. Will Master Wagtail also fight?”

Pegtop came closer to me, and said in a low, mysterious voice:

“Aint so sartin about him, massa; nice little fat man, but tinks too much of his belly. Not ’zactly sartin if he’ll fight or not.”

With these words, Pegtop and the two other blacks, Chin-Chin and Zampa, Wagtail's and Gelid's servants, took a couple of guns apiece, and providing themselves with the necessary ammunition, went aft, and began carefully cleaning and oiling the weapons. I had expected that the wind would blow fresher at daybreak, but I was mistaken. Well, thought I, we might as well sit down to breakfast, which we accordingly did.

The wind soon died away entirely, and I ordered out the sweeps, but I soon found that we had no chance of overtaking the slaver in that way, and it was just as much out of the question to attack him with our boats. Besides, as we did not know at what moment we might ourselves be attacked, I was unwilling to fatigue my men by compelling them to row under a burning sun, whilst the enemy could man his oars with lusty slaves, and not use a single man of his crew. Accordingly, I ordered the men to desist, and remained all day on deck, watching the brig, which was gradually leaving us. At noon I ordered the boatswain to pipe to dinner. When the men had finished their meal, they came on deck again, and as the calm still continued, and there was no prospect of a wind springing up, we sat down to dinner in the cabin. Very little was spoken by any of us. My friends were brave men, but still they could not help feeling glad that they had escaped an engagement, which would bring them danger without profit. As for myself, my feelings were of a mixed nature, for though I was determined to use every endeavor to bring the enemy to an engagement, yet I confess that my heart would not have been broken had he escaped us. But this was not to be, for we had hardly ordered our meal, when the rush of the water past the vessel caught my ear, and I knew in a moment that we were once more in motion. At this moment Tailtackle appeared at the cabin door, and announced that the wind had sprung up again, and that the strange vessel was bearing down upon us. I immediately rushed on deck, and sure enough, there was the slaver, some two miles from us, his deck crowded with men, and evidently prepared for action. As soon as I saw the state of affairs, I busied myself in putting every thing in order, on board our vessel, for a fight. Wagtail and Gelid had followed me on deck, and were now assisting their servants in putting the muskets in order. Bangs alone remained in the cabin, and when I went down, I found him swallowing the last morsel of his meal. He had on his fork some very respectable pieces of cheese. Before I left the deck, I saw clearly enough that a combat was inevitable, and as the disparity between the two vessels was very great, I confess that I had serious misgivings as to its probable result. That I felt excited and uneasy at the prospect before me, I cannot deny; it was the first time I had commanded a vessel, and on the result of this action rested all my hopes of promotion. God bless me! I was but a boy, not more than one-and-twenty years of age. A strange and indescribable feeling came over me at this moment—an irresistible desire to open my heart to the excellent man I saw before me. I sat down.

"Halloa, captain," cried Bangs, putting down his coffee cup, "what's the matter with you? You look infernally pale, my dear fellow."

"I was up all night," replied I, somewhat embarrassed, "and have been running about all day. I am very tired."

As I pronounced these words, a shudder ran through my frame, and a strong emotion, which I could not account for, kept my tongue tied.

"Master Bangs," said I, at length, "you are the only friend in whom at this moment I can

confide. You know my circumstances in life, and I feel that I can with confidence ask you to do the son of my father a favor."

"What is it you wish, my dear fellow—speak out."

"I will speak. In the first place, I am very much worried that I have exposed you and your friends to so much danger, but I could not foresee it; on that score my conscience is easy; the only thing I ask of you all is to remain below and not expose yourselves unnecessarily. If I should fall,"—here I involuntarily grasped Bang's hand—"and I doubt if I shall see another sunset, for we are going to fight against fearful odds."

“Well,” interrupted Bangs, “if the enemy is too strong for you, why didn’t you leave him to himself, my dear fellow, and take to flight?”

“A thousand things, my worthy friend, prevented me from taking such a step. I am a young man and a young officer, and must win my character in the service; no, it is impossible to fly; an older and more tried seaman than myself might have done so, but I must fight; if a shot finishes me, will you, my dear friend, deliver this portfolio to my poor mother, whose only support I am?”

As I uttered these words, the scalding tears rolled in torrents down my cheeks. I trembled like a leaf, and firmly pressing my friend’s hand in mine, I fell on my knees and fervently and silently prayed to that God in whose all-mighty hand my destiny lay, that he would give me strength on this day, to do my duty as became an English sailor. Bangs knelt by my side. Suddenly my tears ceased to flow and I arose.

“I am not ashamed to have shown so much feeling before you, my friend.”

“Don’t mention it, my dear boy, neither of us will fight any the worse for it.”

I looked at him in astonishment.

“Are you going to fight?” I asked.

“Of course I am,” replied he; “why not? I have no longer either mother or wife. Fight? Of course I will fight.”

IV.

“Another shot, sir,” cried Tailtackle, through the open cabin window.

All was now noise and confusion, and I hastened on deck. Our opponent was a large brig of at least three hundred tons burthen, a low vessel painted black. Its sides were as round as an apple, the yards were unusually large, and it was evidently filled with men. I counted nine guns on a side and prayed silently that they might not prove long guns. I was not a little horrified to find, on looking through the glass, that the deck was covered with naked negroes. That the vessel was a slaver, I had not for a moment doubted, and I had also imagined that its crew might number fifty men, but that the captain would resort to such a dangerous expedient—dangerous to himself as well as to us—as to arm the slaves, had never entered my mind, and it startled me not a little to find that he had done so, as it showed that I must expect the most desperate resistance.

Tailtackle had pulled off his jacket, and was standing by my side. His belt was tightly drawn round his waist, and his cutlass hung from it. The rest of the men were armed in the same manner; some of them had also, muskets, and the others stood at their posts, near the guns. The grapnels were loosened, and tubs of wadding, and boxes of cartridge stood ready for use. In short, all was prepared for action.

“Master Tailtackle,” said I, “your post is in the magazine. Lay aside your cutlass; it is not your duty to lead the boarders.”

“Master Timothy,” said Bangs, “could you do without one of these pikes?”

“Certainly, sir,” replied Timothy, laughing, “but you do not intend to lead the boarders yourself, do you, sir?”

“How do you know that?” returned Aaron, with a grim smile, “since I have been fool enough to trust myself in this dancing cork of a vessel;” as he spoke he laid aside his coat, unsheathed a cutlass, and bound a red woolen cloth round his head.

The slaver, who was now hardly a cable’s length from us, suddenly put up his helm with the evident intention of running under our quarters, but at this moment we poured a broadside into him. I could see the white splinters fly from his side, and again there rang in our ears a sharp piercing cry, followed by that long, melancholy howl already described.

“We have hit some of the poor blacks again,” said Tailtackle, who was still on deck.

But we had no further time for observation, for the Spaniard returned our broadside with the same cold-blooded precision as before.

“Down with the helm and let her swing round,” cried I—“cross his quarters—forward there—out with the sweeps, and hold her steady—that’s right—now run over a gun and let him have it—steady boys—aim well—fire!”

We now lay directly across the stern of the slaver, hardly thirty feet from him, and although he defended himself with great determination and courage, pouring upon us a perfect shower of musket balls from his rigging and cabin windows, yet I saw very clearly that in consequence of the skill with which our helm was managed, enabling us to retain a raking position, that our fire was making terrible havoc on board of him.

“Hurrah! his foremast’s down. Well done, boys; pepper him well, whilst he is in confusion. There goes his gaff and flag, but don’t stop firing on that account; it did not come down with his consent. I told you so—he has run it up again. Good, my lads; you have shot the main yard away now, and he can’t escape us.”

Nimbly as monkeys, two sailors clambered up the rigging to repair the injury done. Had they succeeded in their object, the slaver would again have got under way and escaped from our fire. All this time, Bangs and Gelid had been firing at the enemy with the most murderous precision. They lay behind the bulwarks, and their black servants were in the cabin busily engaged in loading their muskets for them. Wagtail, who was not much of a shot, sat on deck and passed the weapons up and down.

“For heaven’s sake, Master Bangs,” cried I, “pick off those two men in the rigging. Down with them.”

“What! those two chaps at the end of the long pole?” asked Bangs, turning to me with the greatest coolness imaginable.

“Yes, yes—down with them.”

He raised his musket as deliberately as if he were shooting at a target.

“I say, Gelid, my boy, take the one this way, will you?”

“Certainly,” replied Paul.

They fired, and the seamen fell, and after struggling in the water for a moment like wounded birds, sank to the bottom, leaving on the surface of the sea, pools of blood to mark their graves.

“Now,” cried I, to the man at the wheel, “run her alongside of the Spaniard. Out with the

grapnels, men; that's right. Hurrah! she's ours."

"Follow me, ye boarders!" I exclaimed as soon as I had collected my people, and in the excitement of the moment I sprang on the slaver's deck, followed by eight-and-twenty men. But the enemy was ready for us, and we were received by a shower of musket balls that sent four of our tars into the next world, and wounded three more. Spite of this warm reception, however, we reached the quarter-deck, where the Spanish captain with about forty men, armed with swords and pistols, presented a formidable front. We attacked them; Tailtackle, who as soon as he heard the cry of "boarders," had rushed out of the magazine and followed us, split the captain's skull with his cutlass. The lieutenant was my bird, and I had nearly finished him, when he suddenly drew a pistol from his belt and shot me through the shoulder. I felt no pain except a sharp twinge, and then a sensation of cold, as if some one had poured water over my neck.

Our fellows fought with the accustomed bravery of British sailors, but for some time the chances of the combat were doubtful. At last our opponents began to waver, and finally gave way; but at this moment some fifty blacks, armed with muskets, sprang suddenly upon deck, and rushed to the aid of the Spaniards. I now gave up all as lost. My men, disheartened at this accession to the number of their foes, began to give way, whilst the Spanish crew fought with renewed courage. Moreover, we found that we were now fighting not for glory, but for life itself; for, on looking round, we saw to our horror that the grapnels had been loosened, and thus all retreat cut off. Our vessel was no longer lying alongside of the brig, but across its bows, so that the bowsprit of the latter crossed its deck. We could not, therefore, reach it, since the Spaniards had possession of the forecastle of their own vessel. At this critical moment we received unexpected aid in the shape of a shower of grape shot from our schooner, which swept away many of the negroes, besides wounding a large number of them, whilst at the same time a new party of combatants sprang on deck to our rescue.

V.

When we boarded the slaver, we left on board our vessel the helmsman Peter Mangrave, the black quarter-master Pearl, five negroes who were on board as passengers, little Reefpoint, who was wounded, and Bangs, Gelid, and Wagtail. At the moment when I had given up all as lost, honest Pearl sprang on deck, his cutlass in his hand, accompanied by the five blacks and Peter Mangrave, whilst behind him came no less a person than Aaron Bangs, with the three negro servants, whom he had armed with pikes.

"Now Pearl, my beauty," cried Bangs, waving his cutlass, "give them a touch of their own lingo."

Immediately the black quarter-master called out:

"Coramantee Sheik Cowloo kokemoni pepulorum fir."

Which I afterwards found out meant, "See the Sultan Cowloo, the great ostrich, with a feather on his back as big as a palm leaf; fight for him, you dogs."

Immediately the blacks joined Bangs' party, and commenced so fierce an attack on their former masters, that they soon drove them down the hatchway, leaving half their number on the bloody deck, dead or dangerously wounded. But, driven to desperation, they still

resisted, firing up the hatchway, and paying no attention to my repeated demands to them to surrender.

“God in Heaven!” cried Jigmaree, “that is the sound of hammers; they are freeing the blacks.”

“If you unchain the negroes,” cried I, in the Spanish language, “by the Heaven above us, I will blow you into the air, if I have to go with you. Stop, Spanairds! think madmen, what you are doing.”

“Cover the hatches,” cried Tailtackle.

But the covers must have been lost overboard, for they were nowhere to be found. The firing from the hold still continued.

“Loosen the gun, and load it with grape,” cried I. “Forward with it, and fire down the hatchway.”

The shot struck among the closely packed slaves, and a fearful, heart-rending cry rent the air. Oh God! I shall never forget it. Yet still the madmen continued their fire.

“Load, and fire again.”

My men were now mad with rage, and fought more like devils than human beings.

“Once more, my lads,” cried I; but this time they pushed the gun so madly forward, that both it and the carriage were precipitated with a fearful crash into the hold. At the same moment a cloud of smoke burst forth from the hold.

“They have fired the brig,” cried Jigmaree. “Back to the schooner, or we shall be blown into the air like onion peels.”

But the schooner had got loose, and was fast leaving us. Gelid, Wagtail, and Reefpoint, were on board; the latter, though badly wounded, had crept out of his hammock, and on deck. They made us understand, by signs, that they could not hoist the sails, and that, moreover, the rudder was shot away, and the vessel unmanageable in consequence.

“Up with the foresail, men,” cried I; “hoist the foresail, and get the brig under way, or we are lost.”

My men obeyed my orders with the calmness of desperation. I took hold of the wheel myself, and in a few moments we lay alongside of our vessel once more. It was high time, for already some hundred and fifty unfettered slaves had rushed on deck, and we had hardly time to spring on board, to escape the furious charge they made on us from the hinder part of the vessel. The murderous fire of grape shot they had endured, had made them perfectly mad with rage, and had they been able to get at us we should undoubtedly have been torn to pieces.

But the fire was quicker than they. The smoke, which rose like a pillar of clouds through the hatchway, was now mingled with red tongues of flame, which, like fiery serpents, twined themselves round the crackling masts and rigging, that shrivelled in their hot embrace. The sea, too, vied with its fierce brother element in destroying the ill-fated vessel. Either through our shots, or from the falling of the gun into its hold, some of the planks had been started, and the water rushed in in torrents. The flames increase, the guns

become heated and go off, and at last the ship suddenly sinks from our view, whilst the loud and awful death-cry of five hundred helpless beings, imprisoned in the burning vessel, rings in our ears, curdling our blood, and seeming as if it would burst the very vault of Heaven with its appalling tones. It was a fitting knell to be rung over the slaver's grave.

And now the brilliant rays of the setting sun, streaming brightly over the waters, gild with an unearthly glare the whirling clouds of smoke, that rising towards the blue sky, grow fainter and fainter until they are lost in the clear ether. The sea no longer dances and flashes in the red light, as if exulting with the glee of fiends at the mortal agony of its victims. Calm and smooth as a polished mirror, it lies spread out over the spot where the slaver sank.

Suddenly a huge cloud of thick black smoke rises from the bosom of the deep. It mounts upward until it rivals in height our vessel's masts, and then it spreads itself over the scene like a sable pall, as if it would prevent the fumes of such unclean and hideous offering from rising to Heaven, and hurl them down on our accursed heads, as witnesses of the wrath of that Being, who has said: "Thou shalt not kill." And now for a moment all is still as the grave, and it seems to me that the air is too hot and close to breathe; it stifles me, and I feel like a second Cain.

At this moment a crowd of slaves, men, women, and little children, who had been drawn down by the sinking vessel, appeared struggling on the surface of the sea. The strongest cried like very devils in their despair, whilst the women and children, the weak and the helpless, gasped vainly for breath, and worn out by their efforts to sustain themselves above the water, sank at last to the bottom with a look of mute agony I shall never forget. Among the whole number, we did not see one of the ship's crew. Like desperate men, they had sunk with their vessel. We fished up about one half of the unhappy blacks, but the direst necessity compelled us to leave the rest of them, as it was impossible for us to take them on board. Oh that I could for ever blot this scene from my memory!

It chanced that among those saved, was a young and pretty girl, who, weak and exhausted, was lying on deck, her head resting on a block of wood. A powerful negro swam to that part of the vessel where she lay. Seeing him in the water, she sprang up and held out her hand to him, to help him on board. As he was about to grasp it, he was struck in the breast by a shot, and mortally wounded. With a shriek the poor girl sprang overboard, clasped him in her arms, and they sank together.

"Oh, woman, woman," said Aaron, "whatever may be the color of thy skin, thy heart is always the same."

Soon all was still again; here and there a wounded negro still struggled for a moment ere he sank into his watery grave. A few spars from the ill-fated vessel, were yet tossed about on the surface of the sea, whilst the blood-red rays of the setting sun poured a flood of light over the bloody deck, shattered hull, and torn rigging of the schooner, lighting up the faces of the dead with an unearthly glare. At this moment some drops of rain fell from a passing cloud, like tears from the pitying eyes of an angel, who, sailing through the skies, had stopped for a moment in her flight to look down sorrowfully on the scene of desolation which man, the worm of a day, had caused in a moment of power and savage

madness.

On a gun-carriage, close to me, sat Aaron, whilst the surgeon bound up a cut in his neck. He looked solemnly at me for a moment, and then pointing towards the brilliant luminary, which, as it sank beneath the waves, lit up the western sky with a crimson and golden light, said:

“Remember this morning, captain, and thank the Almighty, who whilst sending so many poor creatures to their final account, has in his great mercy permitted us to see the end of this fearful day. Oh, thank him, captain, that you have once more seen the sun set.”

VI.

The wound in Bangs’ neck, which had been made by a boarding pike, was not deep, but still it was an ugly cut, and if, as he himself expressed it, he had not been bull-necked, it would have gone hard with him.

“Captain, my boy,” said he, when the surgeon had finished dressing his wound, “I’m pretty well patched up now, and feel as good as new, except a little stiffness, but I’m very thankful I have such a strong bundle of muscles, or some of the arteries would have been in danger. Come, and get mended yourself now, and I will hold the light.”

A calm had fallen on the sea, which rendered all work unnecessary at present, and the cabin, which was again used as a cockpit, was filled with poor fellows waiting to have their wounds dressed. When it came to my turn I took off my clothes and seated myself on a tub. The pistol bullet which had struck me, was sticking in the fleshy part of my left shoulder, just below the skin, and made a small protuberance resembling a sloe in form and colour. The collar bone which it had first struck, but glanced off from, to bury itself in the muscles of the arm, was somewhat injured, and my breast was not a little bruised. The opening in the skin, caused by the bullet, was so small that one could hardly introduce a pea into it, and scarcely any blood flowed therefrom.

“It is a very simple thing, sir,” said the surgeon, as he introduced a small probe into the wound; putting a finger on each side of the ball, he pressed them together, causing it to fly out.

“It is a lucky thing, captain,” said Bangs, “that your collar bone can bear something, as well as my neck, but this bruise on your breast is of more consequence; you must go to bed, and take care of yourself.”

But there was no bed on which I could lie down. The cabin was filled with the wounded, and the surgeon had plenty of work before him, for out of our little crew of forty-two men, nine were killed and eleven wounded. Accordingly I had a tent erected on deck, in which I and my friends determined to take up our quarters for the night. It was now eight o’clock. I could only remain in the tent until I saw my friends provided for, for my presence was constantly required to direct the repairing of the injuries we had sustained. The greatest part of our rigging was shot away, and the tired sailors were busy in mending it as well as they were able. Our mainmast was much injured near the deck, and we were obliged as well as circumstances would permit, to steady it with wooden props. Our foremast had fortunately come off with a whole skin, but we had received thirteen shots in our hull, three of them between wind and water.

When all was done that skill and the most determined perseverance could do, I returned to our tent. Not far from it, near the stern of the vessel, sat Wagtail, preparing our supper with the help of the cook. This meal, as you may imagine, was uncommonly simple—salt beef, biscuits and cold grog, but I doubt if any of us before or since, ever partook of a meal with such an appetite as we did then. The beef disappeared as if by magic; the bones were polished off until they were as white as ivory, whilst the rum sank in the flask like the quicksilver in a barometer, on the approach of a hurricane.

“Holloa captain,” cried Bangs, when he had stopped to take breath, “how do you feel, my boy?”

“Well, not as easy as I could wish for; this day has been a day of fearful responsibility to me.”

“Just so,” replied he, “I shall sleep with a heavy heart myself, for though I am no butcher by profession, I have this day shed the blood of more than one fellow creature; it is a dreadful reflection, and what was it all for, captain? You meet a large vessel in the night, and sing out ’heave to.’ The large vessel says ‘I won’t.’ You say ‘You shall.’ The large vessel replies ‘I’ll be damned if I do.’ And immediately you take measures to make the large vessel heave to, and thereby some five hundred human beings, who a few hours ago were in possession of life and health, are now food for fishes.”

I felt hurt. “I had not expected this from you, sir, and——”

“Hush!” said he, “I do not blame you. You have done right; but why will not the government at home take some decisive measures to put an end to this horrible traffic, and so prevent scenes like this from occurring?”

We spoke for some time on this subject, and my friends grew so warm that many bitter speeches were made, and the conversation became unpleasant.

“Well, gentlemen,” said I at last, “I don’t know how you feel, but I am completely knocked up; fortunately it is now calm, and I think we shall sleep well, and so, good night.”

We went to bed, and the sun was already some distance above the horizon when we awoke on the next morning. It had been perfectly calm during the night, and we found ourselves still so near the scene of the preceding day’s combat, that several corpses were swimming around the vessel. As I went forward I was not a little alarmed to see the number of black faces that were there.

“Master Tailtackle, how many of these poor creatures have we on board?”

“Fifty-nine in the hold, sir, and thirty-five on deck.”

At this moment Bangs walked out of the tent and approached the spot where I stood. Hardly was he perceived by the blacks, when the cry of “Shiek Cowloo,” rent the air. Bangs was greatly startled at this unexpected salute, for he had forgotten his heroic deeds of yesterday, and did not know what to attribute it to; at last the cause of it seemed to strike him, for he rushed back to the tent with a roar of laughter. I went down into the cabin and sat down to breakfast with Gelid and Wagtail. Suddenly we heard Bangs cry out, “Pegtop! come here, Pegtop—do you hear? Help me to tie my cravat—that’s right.

Now I will go on deck."

Here Pearl, the black quarter-master, was impatiently waiting for him.

"Well Pearl, my boy, what is the matter?" and then before Pearl could reply, "I say, Pearl, go to the other end of the vessel and tell your black friends that it was all a humbug—that I am neither the Sultan Cowloo, nor have a feather as big as a palm leaf on my back, of which I can easily satisfy them if they wish it."

"Oh, sir," said Pearl, bowing, "I think the less we say about that the better, because we have not half enough fetters for the savages, and if they were undeceived, they could easily rise, as our crew are much diminished, and murder the whole of us."

"The devil!" muttered Aaron; "well then go and tell them that I am a bigger ostrich than ever, and that I will very soon astonish them; they may take my word for it."

"Pegtop, you rascal," continued he, "come here. I say, Pegtop, bring me my uniform—that's right—now my sword—never mind the pantaloons, I want them to see that it's all fudge about the feather—now my hat—that's right—now go before me, and fan me with the lid of that box of herrings."

Pegtop did as he was bid, and Bangs followed him, affecting the most majestic walk and gravest look. But hardly had he left the tent, when the blacks again set up a wild cry, and those who were not chained, flocked around him, dancing and shouting, and whilst some of them rubbed their flat noses and wooly heads against him, others seized hold of his clothes, so that after several vain attempts to shake them off, he took to his heels and fled back to the tent, amid the laughter of the whole crew. Bangs laughed louder than any of them.

"I say, captain," said he, lying down on the deck and looking through the window into the cabin where we were just beginning to breakfast, "how the deuce am I to get down there? If I stir outside of the tent, these black barbarians swarm round me. Ah! I see——"

Without further reflection, he put his legs through the small hatchway which was directly over the breakfast table, in order to get into the cabin in that way, but unluckily he trod in a bowl of broth, with which Wagtail used always to begin his breakfast. The broth happening to be broiling hot, he jerked his foot out of it, striking Gelid in the face as he did so.

"Oh! oh!" cried Paul, whilst Wagtail threw himself on the sofa, and roared with laughter. But the next moment Bangs gave another kick, and this time Pepperpot got a sound blow on the side of the head, whilst down came the great ostrich, clattering among cups and dishes, and making an awful havoc amongst them. After indulging in peals of laughter for a while longer, we collected the fragments of our breakfast, and ate it with undiminished appetites.

About this time a light breeze sprang up, and we crept slowly forward to the place of our destination.

VII.

"Land ahead!" cried the lookout, from the mast head.

“What does it look like?” asked I.

“Low hills, sir, and now I see houses on the highest peaks.”

“Hurrah, New Providence, Fort Nassau, ho!”

Soon we saw the shores of the British island, New Providence, but the wind lulled, and we were soon nearly becalmed again.

“I say, captain,” said Bangs, “we must be your guests for this night at least, and trouble you for lodgings on board your nut-shell. No hopes, as I see, of getting into port to-night, and if we did it would be too late to land.”

He was right, and we sat down to our rude and homely meal in the little broiling hot cabin. We were all in a very good humor. I flattered myself that my conduct in our late combat with the slaver, would advance me several steps up the ladder of promotion, whilst my friends were overjoyed at the thoughts of soon being on terra firma once more.

“Captain, my boy,” said Bangs, “I honor your profession; but, nevertheless, have no great desire to belong to it. I am satisfied that no persuasion or bribery can ever induce me to make my home on the deep; and, indeed, viewing the thing closely——”

“By the mark two fathoms less three quarters,” called out the leadsman.

We ran into the harbor of Nassau, where we saw the glimmering of lights, but as it was too late to land that night, we dropped anchor, and after taking a parting glass of grog, went to bed. As I was convinced of the perfect security of the harbor, I ran the schooner, as she needed repairing badly, quite near to the shore, in order to be close to the dock-yard. During the night the little vessel softly touched the bottom. The shock woke me and several of the men, for though a seaman is accustomed to the swell and motion of the heaving ocean, yet the slightest touch of any hard, opposing substance, rouses him quick as lightning. I could hear, through the thin partition, the officers in earnest conversation.

“We are aground,” said one.

“Well, what of it,” said another; “there is no sea here; all is still and calm, and shut in by the land.”

However, we were all soon snoring again, for during the last few days we had over-tasked our strength considerably, and since the late action had deprived us of the services of one half of the crew, the other half had had still harder duty to perform, and were almost exhausted. It might have been about four o’clock in the morning, when I was suddenly roused by the sound of voices in the apartment next to the cabin. I heard one person call to another, and then a cry of murder reached my ears. Pretty soon Wagtail, who was sleeping on a mattrass below me, coughed loudly and hastily. A heavy splash followed, and immediately some of the men in the forecastle called out:

“The vessel is full of water—water up to our hammocks.”

“I am drunk,” roared Wagtail, who with might and main was rolling about his little bed. “Captain, I am drunk—Gelid, Bangs, we are all drunk.”

“To the pumps!” cried Tailtackle, who had hastened on deck.

“It is useless,” said I, springing out of bed, and sinking up to my knees in water. “Bring a

light, Tailtackle, one of the planks must have started, and as the tide is rising, get out the boats, and put the wounded into them. Don’t be alarmed men, the vessel is aground, and as it is nearly high tide, there is no danger.”

The sailors were now quiet, and busied themselves in putting bedding and provisions into the boats belonging to the vessel, and those which, on hearing the alarm given, had come from the shore to our rescue. As there was no immediate danger, I returned to the cabin, wading through the water, which rose to my body. Bangs was sitting up in bed, busily engaged in putting on his breeches, which luckily he had put under his pillow. The rest of his own clothes, and those of his friends, were swimming about the cabin, saturated with water. Gelid, who during all the tumult had slept soundly, was now awake. He put one of his legs out of bed, with a view of rising, and plunged it into the water.

“Heavens! Wagtail,” he exclaimed, “the cabin is full of water—we are sinking! Ah! it is deuced hard to be drowned in this puddle, like potatoes in a tub.”

“Captain, captain,” cried Bangs, looking over the side of his bed, “did you ever see the like of that? There, just under your light—look at it; why it’s a bird’s nest, with a thrush in it, swimming about.”

“Damn your bird’s nest,” growled little Pepperpot, “by Jove, it’s my wig with a live rat in it.”

“The deuce take your wig,” said Paul; “Zounds! take care of my boots.”

“Hang the wig and boots, too,” cried Bangs, “there goes my Sunday coat. Captain, who has sunk the ship?”

Here his eyes met mine, and a few words served to explain our situation; the only question now was, how to get ashore, as nothing could be done until daybreak. My determination was soon made. I put my friends into one of the boats, which were lying alongside of the schooner, gave their wet chests into the care of their black servants, and let them find a lodging as well as they could. Then the wounded, and afterwards the rest of the crew were put on board a couple of merchant vessels lying near us, and as their captains were obliging fellows, I easily persuaded them to take the schooner between them, at ebb-tide, and raise it with the flood. When it was pumped out, and afloat again, I took it into port, where it received a thorough overhauling. As there remained nothing more to be done, I put on dry clothes, and towards evening went ashore. Thus ended my first cruise.

A Winter in the Frozen Ocean.

One stormy winter's evening, in the year 1579, Gerhard de Ver was sitting in the warm and cheerful parlor of his plain but comfortable dwelling, in the city of Amsterdam. He was a pleasant, good-natured man, but evidently weak, and suffering from hardships recently undergone. As he sat before the fire, in his easy chair, his eye rested, with evident satisfaction, on a group of young sailors, who were accustomed to visit him, both to show the sympathy they felt for the sufferings he had undergone in the service of his native land, and to gain information from his rich store of experience. After a lively conversation, in which they had now and then, to their no little joy, succeeded in bringing a smile to the care-worn face of their patron, they began to converse together in a low tone of voice, and to show by their manner that they were about to prefer a very unusual request.

"Father Gerhard," at last began one of the party, "you are well aware that nothing would give us greater pleasure than the restoration of your health, and that with you we are impatiently waiting for the moment when you shall be able to leave your room again, but we know well enough that when that moment arrives, the irresistible desire of being useful to your native land, will drive you to distant parts of the earth, and separate us for a long time again; do not, therefore, consider it indiscreet if we now remind you of a promise formerly made to us, and beg you to relate the history of your last voyage to the Frozen Ocean, which must certainly be as astonishing as instructive; indeed, the reports which circulate among the neighbors concerning it, are so incredible that we find it almost impossible to believe them, without having them confirmed by yourself."

"Truly," replied Gerhard, "you could have chosen no more appropriate time to remind me of my promise than this evening. The storm, which now sweeps through the street, and drives the snow against the windows, brings most vividly to my recollection the wretched hut in which I and my unhappy companions, of whom few ever saw their homes again, passed the most miserable portion of our lives, tormented by hunger and sickness, and in continual dread of the fierce and ravenous polar bears; shut up in that distant part of the world, where the winter lasts for eight months, and there is unbroken night from the beginning of November to the end of January; where the cold is so intense that it is impossible, even when wrapped up in thick furs, to remain in the open air for any length of time; where the breath is changed to rime; where one's hands, nose, and ears, freeze if exposed to the air for a moment; where brandy is quickly congealed, and quicksilver becomes hard enough to be struck with a hammer."

"You have roused our curiosity so," remarked the young man, when Gerhard, who had betrayed considerable warmth of manner, suddenly ceased speaking, "that it will really be an act of kindness to satisfy it; therefore, pray commence, at least this evening, a recital of your adventures, but steer your course so as not to fatigue yourself too much; sail along gently, for a day's journey, more or less you know, is of little consequence. But heave the anchor, Father Gerhard, if it please you."

"In God's name then," said Gerhard, and commenced as follows:

"You all know the difficulties and dangers of a voyage to the East Indies, but you do not

know what wealth may be gained by a commercial intercourse with those distant regions, or that, as is very natural, men for a long time have had their attention turned to the discovery of a nearer route than any one at present known of. At first, repeated attempts were made to find out a strait which, as many still believe, divides the continent of America, but as the voyagers met with no success whatever, their attention was drawn to the Arctic Ocean, which washes the northern coasts of Asia and Europe. The enterprising merchants who had been engaged in former expeditions, now resolved to send one to that part of the world which though so near to them was so little known. It is true that a small squadron which was sent out for the purpose, and with which I sailed, failed in reaching its destination, owing to the advanced state of the season, but it was found that the northern coast of the continent ran off in a southeasternly direction, and great hopes were entertained that an expedition sent out at a more favourable season, would be attended with the happiest results. Although many who had engaged in enterprises like these, had lost both money and courage, yet, induced by the accounts which we brought home, and by my advice, the city of Amsterdam resolved to make another and final attempt. It fitted out at its own expense, a couple of vessels, and having provided them with all things necessary, entrusted them to the care of myself and three others, viz: Jacob Heemskerk, John Cornelius Ryp, and William Barents.

“On the 10th of May, 1569, we left Amsterdam, accompanied by the good wishes of the whole town, and as a favourable wind filled our sails, we made our way so rapidly towards the north, that by the 5th of June, we encountered vast floes of ice, which covered the sea as far as the eye could reach. Four days later, we discovered land, which was not noted down on the chart; it proved to be an island some four miles long, and evidently hitherto unknown. Some of the men took one of the boats and went ashore; they found many gull’s eggs, and had a narrow escape from losing their lives. They ascended a hill of snow which was as solid as a block of marble, but in attempting to descend, they found themselves obliged to slide to the bottom, and were in imminent danger of being hurled upon the sharp rocks by which it was surrounded; happily, they received no injury. The next day we had a hard struggle with a polar bear, for dangerous as these creatures were, we always felt desirous of attacking them, and we now undertook to take one alive. Accordingly, seeing a big fellow not far from us, we took a boat, and set out with the intention of capturing him, by throwing a noose over his head, but when we came near to him we did not dare to attack him, on account of the ferocity he exhibited, but returned for more men, muskets, and pikes. Ryp’s people were coming to our aid; we went after him again, but we were obliged to fight for more than four hours, as our shots did him very little harm. After having received a blow in the back with a hatchet, which was wielded by such a strong arm that it remained sticking in him, he attempted to swim off, but a cut on the head finished him. We took the carcase on board Ryp’s vessel, and stripped off the hide, which measured twelve feet in length. The flesh we cooked, and some of us liked it as well as beef. In consequence of this adventure we named the island ‘Bear’s Island.’

“After remaining here for a few days, we continued our journey towards the north, and after sailing for ten days, through a sea blocked up with masses of ice, we arrived at a coast which ran off in an easterly direction, where we determined to cast anchor. We imagined it to be a part of Greenland, and as it was formed of sharp pointed hills, we gave it the name of ‘Spitzbergen,’ (pointed mountains.) We were not a little surprised to find an

active vegetation existing in this high latitude, and went on shore to gather sorrel and scurvy grass, which are excellent preventatives against the scurvy, a disease which, as you know, breaks out with great violence on board of vessels going so far north, and is occasioned by a want of fresh meat. We saw also a great many bears, foxes, and reindeers, and also immense flocks of wild geese, which we drove from their nests in order to procure their eggs, which we found excellent.

“As the wind remained unfavorable, and the masses of ice continued to press closer together, we were obliged to give up our plan of reaching the most northern point of Spitzbergen, and then sailing towards the east, and return to Bear’s Island. The two captains now differed in their opinion as to the best course to be pursued; Ryp persisted that if we were to keep on towards the north, we would without doubt, reach an open sea, while Barents thought we were already too far north; so it was finally determined that each should go his own way. Accordingly, on the 1st of July, the two vessels parted company, Ryp sailing for Spitzbergen, whilst we steered towards the south coast. From this moment commenced all the suffering and danger, which we experienced on our adventurous voyage.”

II.

“After having with great difficulty and danger, worked our way between huge blocks of ice, for two weeks, we at last, on the 16th of July, at noon, came in sight of Nova Zembla, a spot very frequently visited by whalers, and steered our course along the western shore, as our object was to sail round the island, in order to make our way towards the east. But although it was now the middle of summer, we were much impeded by floating masses of ice, which covered the sea in every direction, as far as the eye could reach, and obliged us to wait until an opening offered, through which we might sail. We arrived at last at an island which from the number of crosses the whalers have there set up, is called the “Isle of Crosses.” Here we anchored to take in a supply of fresh water. Heemskerk took one of the boats and went ashore to visit the crosses. I accompanied him, and we were walking along, not dreaming of danger, when suddenly we came upon a couple of bears, who were hid near by. As we were totally unprovided with weapons, we were not a little alarmed at the sight. The bears, as is customary with these animals, raised themselves on their hind legs, to find out what was going on, as they can smell further than they can see. As soon as they became aware of our presence, they came running towards us. Our hair now actually stood on end at the frightful danger we ran, and we started off for our boats as fast as we could go. But Heemskerk, who had far more presence of mind and courage, stood still, and swore that he would put a boat hook he held in his hand, into the first man who attempted to fly. ‘If we run away one by one in this way,’ cried he, ‘some of us will most assuredly be torn to pieces, but if we stand still and raise a shrill cry all together, the bears will be frightened and retreat.’ We followed his advice, and it turned out exactly as he predicted, so that whilst the bears stood stupified, we regained our boat. This shows how good a thing presence of mind is; fear always rushes into danger sooner than courage.

“After much suffering and danger, we at last reached the northern extremity of the island, and began to double it. Some of the men, who had been sent on shore to ascend a mountain, and report what was visible from it, surprised us with the joyful information that they believed the sea to be free from ice towards the east. But, alas, the next day

showed how much they had been deceived; we had not sailed but a few miles further, when we encountered a huge bank of ice, which rendered further progress in that direction impossible. As the snow storm every hour raged more fiercely, and the cold grew more intense, we determined to retrace our course along the eastern shore, in order to reach the continent, there in some secure harbor to wait for more favorable weather. But we had only gone a short distance in this direction, when the ice closed in all around us, and on the twenty-sixth of August we remained firmly fixed in it. All our endeavors to float our vessel again, were in vain, and we very nearly lost three of our best men in the attempt; the ice on which they were standing suddenly gave way, but fortunately they were near the vessel, and very active, so they seized hold of the ropes which hung down from the yards, and clambered on board. It was an anxious moment for all parties, for they would most assuredly have been driven away with the ice and lost, had they not been saved by the aid of God, and their own activity.

“The ice was often in motion, but did not break up; but masses of it piled themselves up in all directions. In consequence of this, our vessel was hoisted up as if by pulleys, and then thrown on its side with such a fearful crash, that we expected every moment to see it go to pieces. We found it necessary to bring the boat and shallop to land, as in case of the ship’s going to pieces, we depended on them for our safety. We also stored away, under a tent hastily constructed of sails, provisions, ammunition, and useful tools. The sea was now covered with ice as far as the eye could reach; part of it swam about in huge masses, whilst the rest was smooth and firm as a frozen mill-pond. The cold was now so intense, that we found it impossible to keep ourselves warm under the upper deck, where the kitchen was, but were obliged to remove the stove to the hold, and were almost smothered by the smoke in consequence.

“Some of the men, who had been sent further into the country, to ascertain its character, brought back the welcome news that there was a stream of excellent fresh water not far distant, and that along its banks lay piles of drift wood. As we considered it possible, after this discovery, to pass the winter here, we gave up the desperate plan we had formed, of making our way back to the continent in our two miserable boats, and commenced erecting a roomy and substantial hut. While thus occupied, we were much troubled by the increasing cold, and the hungry bears, who lay in wait for us in every direction. In order to give you a correct picture of our hardships, and miserable life, I will endeavor to relate to you the most note-worthy events as they occurred day by day, and in this way to keep the thread of my narrative unbroken.

“September 1st.—This day we began to build our hut, and transported to it, on sledges, sufficient drift wood to be used for fires during the winter, which we piled up in convenient places. Whilst part of the men were occupied in this arduous task, the rest remained on board the vessel to prepare the meals, and keep a watch for the safety of those on shore. One day we received a visit from three huge bears; two of them came towards the ship, but the third remained hidden behind a piece of ice. It happened that a tub of salt meat, which we intended to soak in fresh water, was standing on the shore; one of the bears ran up to it, and putting his muzzle in, was about to help himself to a piece, when a shot struck him in the head so cleverly that he fell dead without a groan. It was curious to see how the second bear stood gazing at his motionless companion, with a stupified look, and then walked round him, trying to discover what was the matter with

him. When he found that he could make nothing of him, he left him, and went away. But we had no idea of trusting the fellow, and as we wished to go ashore, we armed ourselves with muskets and pikes, in case he should come back, which he pretty soon did. He raised himself on his hind legs, in a threatening manner, but one of us shot him in the stomach, which caused him to sink down with a howl on all fours again, and make off as fast as he could go. We now took out the entrails of the dead bear, and placed him on his legs, in order that he might be frozen, and so preserved until spring, when we intended to take him home with us. Some time afterwards, one of the men was chased by a bear, and happened to come by this spot. His pursuer was close on his heels, but as soon as he saw his immovable companion, who was covered with snow, his front paws alone being visible, he stopped short, and approached him. In this way the sailor gained sufficient time to reach the ship, and alarm us with the cry of 'a bear! a bear!' We hastened on deck, but not one of us could see, so much had our eyes suffered with the thick smoke in which we had been obliged to remain during the bad weather, in order to escape being frozen. Our aid, however, was not needed, as the bear, when he saw the number of his opponents, made off in great haste.

"September 24th.—On this day we began to put up the beams of our hut, as the idea of being obliged to pass a winter here, filled us with great anxiety; but as the vessel was now firmly embedded in the ice, and we saw no prospect of getting it free again until the return of fine weather, we were obliged to make a virtue of necessity, and submit quietly to our hard fate. We tore up a part of the deck of our vessel, and made a roof for our hut of it; then we plastered the walls with pitch, and when, on the second of October, the building was finished, instead of putting on the roof, as is customary, a pole or bush, we erected a kind of staff, made of hard snow. We now took our sleds, and drew tools and provisions to it; but the cold was so intense that the beer casks burst, and their contents became a solid mass of ice. After we had, for greater security, drawn the boats on shore, and turned them upside down, we betook ourselves to our hut, and arranged every thing within it as well as we were able.

III.

"With the beginning of November, the cold became so intense, that we could venture out into the air for a very short time only, long enough merely to collect what fuel we needed, and to set the traps which we had placed round the hut to catch foxes, which I assure you were considered quite a dainty by us poor wretches, greedy as we were after fresh meat. On the 4th of November, the sun was no longer visible, and a long and dreary night set in. All the light we had came from the moon, aurora borealis, and the lamps which we hung around our hut, and fed with bear's fat. The only consolation left us was that with the sun the bears had left us, and we could now leave the hut without danger of being devoured. The cold still continued to increase hourly, and we were obliged to distribute our stock of clothing among the men, in order to protect them better against the frost, yet in spite of every precaution, hands and feet which were wrapped up in thick furs and cloths, became stiff and numb, when only a few paces from the fire. The best protection against the cold, we found to be heated stones. We felt the want of spirituous liquors sadly; those we had, froze, and when thawed lost both strength and flavour. Our health, however, was much better than we had reason to expect, when our mode of life is taken into consideration; but this, I imagine was owing to the good advice of the surgeon to bathe daily, which we

always did. One morning, towards the end of November, one of us wishing to leave the hut, found the door tightly closed by the snow, and was obliged to dig through it. This work we had to repeat daily, or otherwise we should have been completely buried. On the 16th of November, we found that we had used all the fuel that was in the hut, and were therefore, obliged to dig out of the snow the rest of what we had gathered for use, and bring it into our dwelling. We worked alternately in couples, and had to make all the haste we could, for in spite of fox-skins and extra clothing, we were not able to endure the cold long. Until the 29th of December, we experienced dreadful weather; snow fell in abundance, and for three days we were unable to leave the hut. On the evening of the fourth day, it moderated somewhat, and one of the sailors ventured to make a hole through the wall, near to the door, and creep through it in order to see how things stood without. He came back pretty soon and told us that the snow was piled up higher than the hut, and that it was just as cold as ever; he said that if he had not returned, his ears would have been frozen. On the 29th of December, some of the men dug the door free again, and made a kind of a tunnel through the snow, out of which we emerged as from a cellar. But all our trouble was in vain, for the next day another fall of snow blocked up the door, and made us prisoners again. Stormy days were the more unendurable, as the fire would not burn, but filled the hut with smoke. At such times we commonly lay in our beds, which like the walls of the hut, were covered with a thick coating of ice, whenever the fire did not burn brightly. Whilst in this unpleasant situation, one of us happened to remember that there was a good store of coals on board the vessel, and the most hardy of the party immediately made an attempt to bring them to the hut, and after great exertions, succeeded in their attempt. We immediately kindled a good fire, and for the first time an agreeable warmth spread through the room. In order better to retain it, we stopped up the hole we had made to let the smoke escape, and merrier than usual, went to bed and began chatting together; but soon, giddiness and then stupefaction attacked us, and had not one of the party had the presence of mind to crawl to the door and open it, we would soon have been suffocated by the poisonous gas which came from the coal. Thus ended the year 1596. The next year commenced with the same unpleasant weather, so that we were obliged to pass New Year’s day in the house. We had now used up all our split wood, and on account of the cold, were unable to go out to procure more. On the 5th of January, the weather at last moderated, and we got the door open, cleaned the house out, and split some more wood, as we were afraid that we should again be buried by the snow. After working hard all day, we began in the evening to talk about home, and it occurred to us that our countrymen were at that very moment celebrating one of their merriest festivals, namely, that of the Three Kings. We determined, therefore, to forget our sad lot for a while, and prepare a little feast. Each one of the men put by some of his biscuit, and the captain gave some wine. We now made a good wine soup, and prepared also some pancakes, which we made of a couple of pounds of starch which had been taken on board for the purpose of pasting cartridges, and some oil; the biscuits we soaked in wine. We now celebrated the evening in fine style, and for the time, forgot our sad lot, and imagined ourselves once more surrounded by our friends and relations. In this way we enjoyed our humble meal as much as if it had been a sumptuous feast. We got into such a good humor that we chose a king, as it is customary to do on such occasions, and saluted him by the title of “Lord of Nova Zembla,” a kingdom which though of considerable size, is not very well provided with either inhabitants or revenue.

“On leaving the hut next day, we found the air a little less keen, and felt that since the snow had ceased to fall, the cold had somewhat abated. We could now hope to see the sun before long, and on the 8th of January we really perceived a faint glimmering in the sky, at which we rejoiced not a little. Eight days later we perceived a reddish tinge, which we hailed as the harbinger of the near approach of the sun. We perceived, also, a slight warmth in the wind, which, joined to the heat of our fire, partially melted the ice on the walls of the hut, which, until now, had remained perfectly solid. As the glimmering light grew stronger every day, we at length ventured, well-armed, to the ship, which still remained in the same position as formerly, but had been frequently visited by bears, as their footsteps in the snow plainly showed. We took a light, and descended into the hold, where we found the water a foot in depth, and frozen perfectly tight.

“As the weather remained fair, we went out into the open air daily. Our usual resort was a hill about a half mile distant, from which we brought stones to our hut, and heated them, in order to warm our beds. It now grew brighter every day, and we were soon able to amuse ourselves by shooting with a cross-bow, using for a mark the top of our snowy flag-staff, which, until now, we had been unable to see. Indeed, we took exercise in any way possible, and endeavored by throwing, running, and other gymnastic sports, to restore strength and suppleness to our half frozen limbs. The foxes, in capturing whom we had formerly been so busily engaged, now suddenly vanished, a sure sign of the re-appearance of the bears. These dangerous beasts soon visited us again, and the war against them was renewed; they evidently came from some more southerly climate, where they had been passing the long winter, as they were very fat. They often endeavored to break open the door of the hut, and one of them even clambered upon the roof, and endeavored to get inside through the hole we had made to allow the smoke to escape; it required the united energies of all of us to defeat his intentions.

“The 27th of January was a sad day for us, for on it one of our party died. He had been sick at the building of the hut, and we had been obliged to convey him to it on a sled. We buried him in the snow, with a prayer, and held a funeral feast to his honor; but we soon recovered our wonted flow of spirits, as we were now confidently expecting a speedy release from the wretched situation in which we had been placed.

“The cold continued unbroken for three months longer, although it was not so severe as formerly. Our provisions now gave out, and on the 3rd of May we cooked our last piece of pork. During the latter part of May we began to make preparations for our journey, and as we found our ship was no longer sea-worthy, we dug out the shallop and boat, which had been protected by the deep snow. We spent all the month of May in mending and fitting out these two vessels. Whilst we were prosecuting this work, we were more than once in great danger of being torn to pieces by the bears. We shot a great many of them, but it happened we found them more dangerous when dead than when alive. Being greatly in want of food we cooked a liver of one of them, and found it very palatable, but all of us fell sick in consequence, and some were so very ill that their lives were despaired of; they were covered from head to foot with a loathsome eruption. However, they at last recovered, for which we thanked God most sincerely, for had we lost them, the rest of us would not have had sufficient strength to launch the boats. In spite of this warning one of the men was imprudent enough, one day, to bring a pot of bear’s liver to the fire, as he was

hungry; but Heemskerk, who was standing by, threw it out of the window.

“The weather often grew milder, and the sea began to be free from ice, but a single north wind brought back the most intense cold, and the sea was again covered with ice. In the meanwhile we worked hard to get out of our leaky vessel all that was necessary for our dangerous voyage, but suddenly we experienced a more dreadful storm of snow, hail, and rain, than had yet overtaken us, and which we did not expect at this time of the year. The weather was so bad that we were obliged to leave every thing and retreat to the hut. But we found this in a miserable condition, for we had used the boards, of which the roof was composed, to mend our vessels, and a piece of sail, which had taken their place, answered its purpose so badly that the hut was full of water. Often and often did our courage sink, and we give up in despair, but Heemskerk always cried, ‘If you do not wish to remain in Nova Zembla, and dig your graves in the snow, you must exert all your remaining strength to equip the boats, on which depend all our hopes of safety.’ These words acted like an electrical shock on us, and spurred us on to do what seemed almost impossible.

“In the beginning of June, we dragged the two boats to the vessel, in order, when all was ready, to take them from there to the edge of the ice and launch them into the sea. Suddenly another storm arose unexpectedly, and we were in constant dread lest the ice should break up, and all our property be lost. In that case there would be no hope for us; but Providence watched over us, and the storm passed by, and did us not the slightest harm. We had now to perform our last but most difficult task, viz: to open a passage through the ice from the ship to the open sea, through which we might take the shallop. This, after incredible toil, we accomplished, and loaded our two boats with the tools and provisions we had just taken from the wreck, which consisted of thirteen casks of biscuits, and several more of bacon, oil, and wine. Then being all ready, we started on our voyage on the morning of the 14th of June, 1597.

IV.

“In high spirits and full of courage, we now began a voyage, which certainly was the most remarkable ever undertaken. Crowded together in two wretched, open, and heavily laden boats, we had to cross a space of not less than two hundred miles, in order to reach the nearest shore, and this in a climate where the middle of summer is as cold as our severest winters, and upon a sea covered with huge masses of ice, which at one moment are stationary, and in the next hurled together by a storm, with terrific force. Besides, we were weak from our previous exertions, and had not really the strength to strive successfully against the dangers which threatened us.

“As the eastern shore of Nova Zembla appeared to be bound up with unbroken ice, Barents, with admirable prudence, had advised us to steer towards the north, so that having passed round the northern point of land, we might reach the western coast, and from there run for some Russian port, where we might hope to meet some vessel bound for the Netherlands. We had not gone far on this projected route, when we found ourselves so hemmed in by icebergs, as to be totally unable to make any further progress. Such an unpropitious commencement would have disheartened many men, but fortunately, we were accustomed to danger and disappointment in every shape; so we kept up our spirits, and cast anchor in order to wait until the breaking up of the ice should afford us an opportunity of proceeding on our journey again. In the meantime we employed ourselves

in seeking bird's eggs for our sick, of whom we now had several, and in melting snow by the fire for drinking water. On the 15th of June, the ice in which we were embedded, broke up, and a favorable wind springing up, our men handled their oars so well, that by the 17th we had reached the most northerly point of the island. But, unfortunately, on the same day the icebergs were put in such violent agitation by a storm, and struck the boats with such force, that the boldest grew disheartened. We took a last farewell of each other, and expected every moment would be our last. In this fearful extremity we held a consultation as to what was best to be done; no other means of safety could we see, than to work our way out of the floating ice, and get upon some iceberg. But all our endeavors to get alongside of one of these were in vain, and unable to endure longer the lamentations of my companions, I caught hold of the end of a rope, and leaped like a frog from one place to another, until I reached the firm ice. As the rope was fastened to the two boats, they were quickly drawn to the spot I had reached, when the men took out their cargoes and pulled them upon the ice. We found they were so much injured by striking against the ice, as to need a thorough overhauling, which we set about without delay. The driftwood, which lay along the shore in considerable quantities, now stood us in good need, as by means of it we were enabled to boil our pitch and tar.

"For four long and dreary days had we lain among ice and snow, when a south wind sprang up, and once more opened a passage for us. We hastily launched our boats again, and put their cargoes into them; but hardly had we commenced to row when we found ourselves surrounded by masses of ice again, and were obliged to pick our way out of them with great difficulty; at last we reached the open sea once more, and were able to continue our voyage until the 25th of June, when we were obliged to cast anchor again near a field of ice. At the same time a violent storm arose, and drove our miserable crafts to sea, where they were tossed about in great danger of being dashed to pieces against an iceberg, or upset by the wind. Our men now employed what little strength they had left in striving to get back to the land, but as this could not be done by simple rowing, we ventured to hoist a small sail, which we had scarcely done when the foremast of the boat I commanded suddenly broke in two places, and I found myself obliged, in order to keep up with the shallop, to raise the mainsail, which, however, I had to lower again immediately, or my boat would have been inevitably upset.

"We now deemed our destruction inevitable, as the storm of wind, which had hitherto blown from the south, suddenly changed to the north-east, and drove us from the shore. In the meanwhile the shallop had vanished, and we sought for it in vain for a long time, owing to a thick fog which covered the sea. At last I ordered some shots to be fired, and to my great joy they were answered by others from the shallop. I afterwards employed this means of finding the whereabouts of our comrades with great success on all such occasions.

"On the 28th of June we were again shut in, and obliged to anchor alongside of an iceberg. As we were much fatigued by the incessant tossing about of the boats, we erected a tent on it, and determined to pass the night there; but that we might sleep in safety, we set a watch, and it was a happy thing for us that we did so, for at midnight we received a visit from three immense bears, who, had we not been on our guard, would most assuredly have made a comfortable meal off of some of us. At the cry of 'Bears! bears!' we seized our muskets, and although they were loaded with shot merely, fired them at the animals, who

were so stupefied at the inhospitable reception their friendly visit met with, that they allowed us time to load with ball. One of them had fallen at the first fire, and the two others made off in all haste. Pretty soon, however, they changed their minds, and coming back, dragged their dead comrade away with them for a short distance, and then set to work to devour him. As soon as we remarked this, we let them have another shot, and this time they ran off in earnest. Four of us now went to look at the carcass of the dead bear, and found to our no little astonishment that they had devoured half of it. The wind, on this and the two following days, blowing from the same quarter, we were obliged to remain where we were.

“The night of the 1st of July, was one of the most fearful and dangerous that we had as yet experienced. The storm gradually increased in violence, and at last by hurling the floating masses of ice against the firm bank on which we were encamped, broke off that portion of it which held our boats, so that they got loose and were driven away. Many bundles and casks fell into the sea, and it was with great difficulty, that by springing from place to place, we succeeded in securing our boats, in which were the sick. After the storm was somewhat abated, we endeavored to collect our provisions and tools together, but alas, missed a great many which were very necessary for the completion of our voyage. Whilst one half of the men were thus employed, the others went over the ice to the land, in order to get a tree that they might mend the broken mast of the shallop. They found not only what they sought, but also, wedges for splitting wood, and wood already split, from which we judged that men had been in this place before.

“About this time we lost two of our men, who had been sick for some time, having been obliged to be carried from our hut to the boat, when we started on our voyage. When Barents, who had also been ailing, heard this, he assured us that his end too was approaching, but as he at the same time regarded with attention, a chart of that part of the country which we had seen, which I had prepared, we did not believe he was so ill, and paid but little attention to his words. Pretty soon, however, he laid down the chart and asked for water; but hardly had he drank, when suddenly he bowed his head and died, to the great grief of all of us. We lost in him a brave comrade and intelligent man, on whose skill rested most of our hopes of again seeing our native land.

“Sorrowing deeply, we continued on our journey, and at length, on the 4th of August, reached the Russian coast, after having suffered much from the cold, and also from the scurvy, which on account of the want of fresh provisions, had broken out among us. We landed to try and find some signs of life, but could see no habitations, and the ground produced nothing but wild shrubs. Some of the party proposed that we should continue our journey by land; but as we could easily lose our way, and fall into great danger, in a desert, which was very likely filled with wild animals, the majority decided in favor of continuing along the coast. But we could not hold out much longer, for our provisions were reduced to a few mouldy biscuits; the most of us, tormented as we were by hunger and sickness, would have welcomed death as a happy release. Happily, however, we discovered a Russian barque coming towards us under full sail; when she reached us, Heemskirk went on board, and taking some money in one hand, pointed with the other to a cask of fish which stood on deck. The Russians understood him, took the money, and gave him the fish, together with some little cakes. Half starved as we were, we rejoiced greatly at this purchase, and hastened to refresh ourselves with the food.

“We now very often met Russian vessels, and they sold or gave us, very readily, a part of their scanty stock of provisions. By the 20th of August, we reached the western shore of the White Sea, and by good luck arrived at a spot where some little houses were standing. We entered them and were received with great kindness by their owners, who were poor Russian fishermen. They led us into a warm room, where we could dry our wet clothes, and gave us a meal of good fish and soup.

“After continuing our journey for several days more, we were obliged, by a storm, to land again, and found a hut where three men dwelt. They cordially welcomed us, and when at their request we had told them our story, informed us that a vessel from the Netherlands was at anchor at Kola, a Russian port not many miles distant. We entreated them to go with one of our party to Kola by land, but as they could not go themselves they sent a messenger, who in a few days returned without our comrade, but with a letter, through which we learnt to our joy and astonishment, that Ryp himself, the commander of the other vessel, from whom we had separated at Bear’s Island, had arrived at Kola in safety, after seeking for an eastern passage in vain.

“It was not long before he arrived himself, in a boat loaded with provisions, and after a warm greeting we took, for the first time since many days, our usual food and drink. Favored by the wind, Heemskerk soon brought us to Kala, where the Russian governor listened with great sympathy to the history of our adventures and sufferings, and ordered our two boats to be preserved as memorials of our wondrous journey.

“On the 18th of September we set sail, and after a prosperous voyage entered the Meuse. From there we went to Amsterdam, and doubtless it is still fresh in your memories, how we were conducted into the town, dressed in the fox skins we had worn at Nova Zembla, and followed by the acclamations of the whole population.”

Father Gerhard ceased speaking, and for a while the young people kept silent too, so much had they been astonished by the recital of such strange adventures. Most did they marvel at the calm resignation of the voyagers to their sad fate, and they hoped that in the voyages which they themselves might hereafter make, that they should have as excellent and brave companions.

They now thanked their patron for the trouble he had taken to gratify them, and with a hearty squeeze of the hand wished him good night.

The Shipwreck.

A few years ago a company of one of the English regiments of infantry, consisting of eleven officers and two hundred soldiers embarked in a large, strongly built ship, to sail from Quebec to Halifax. Besides the troops, there were forty-eight passengers on board, most of them women and children, and the whole number of persons, including the sailors, amounted to upwards of three hundred.

On the evening of the tenth day, when they were clear of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and a brisk wind had driven them out many leagues to seaward, the pilot who, for the greater security of the troops had been kept on board, directed the course of the vessel to the westward, hoping on the next day to run her into Halifax. From the windward side of the otherwise clear heavens a dark cloud showed itself on the horizon, and in a short time afterwards the ship was enveloped in one of those dense fogs, which make a voyage along these coasts so perilous, during the greater part of the year. They had now come within that space of the ocean in which it was usual to hold a ship's course in sailing from England to the West Indies; torrents of rain increased the thickness of the fog, and fearful gusts of wind increased the danger, and the officers in charge of the troops, thought it expedient to hold a consultation with the captain, as to what course was best to be pursued in the present circumstances. The result of this conference was a determination to keep on the course deemed expedient by the pilot, but with as little sail set as possible. For their further safety a watch was stationed on the foredeck, with the company's drums which they beat from to time, and taking besides every other precaution against their coming into collision with another vessel.

Among the officers, was a lieutenant named Stewart, a young man of uncommon steadiness and bravery, and who in his zeal for the comfort of the soldiers and the discipline necessary to be observed for maintaining order in the ship, had during the whole voyage, limited his own hours of rest to the smallest possible number. One night, completely worn out, he was about to betake himself to his hammock, when the colonel requested in view of the danger that every moment threatened, that he would remain all night upon deck. Stewart rallied his remaining strength, and conquering the importunate demands of sleep, he took his station with ten men on the foredeck, whilst the captain, with eight soldiers, kept watch at the stern. The rain poured down in streams, squalls of wind and angry waves caused the good ship to reel and turn like one drunk, and to add to the horrors of their situation, the night was so dark they could not see half the length of the ship before them, and the fog enshrouded them in its oppressive vapor. At ten o'clock, the watch on the bowsprit called out to the lieutenant on the foredeck, and directed his attention to a clear spot which he declared to proceed from a light. Stewart at once proceeded to the stern where he found the pilot seated on the rudder, apparently watching the same appearance, but when he inquired of him what it meant, he received a very short uncourteous reply, together with a command from the captain who was by, to go back to his post. He did so, and not long after the man on the bowsprit once more called out, that notwithstanding the thick fog he saw a light distinctly; Stewart looked in the direction the sailor pointed out, and plainly saw the glimmer of the friendly beacon, and knew it at once as the signal placed to warn ships from approaching too near the cliffs which lined the

shore. Notwithstanding his first repulse, he approached the pilot a second time; but he met with a second repulse;—he was answered—“Sir, I have been royal pilot on this coast for twenty-five years, and I ought to know where I am.” The captain too, in a sterner manner then before, commanded Stewart to return to his watch. The lieutenant dared utter no further remonstrance, but with a heart, heavy with sad forebodings, busied himself to keep up the failing spirits of his men who were as apprehensive of the threatened danger as himself. And his sad foreboding was only too soon fulfilled, for whilst the pilot imagined his vessel to be sailing on the open sea, she was already among the rocks that lay but a mile and an half from the coast, but yet were sixty distant from the roadstead by which they were to enter Halifax.

By midnight, Stewart felt himself so fairly exhausted by cold and long watching, that he left the quarter deck, and went below to snatch, if possible, a few minutes sleep. He had been in his cabin only long enough to change his damp clothing for dry, when a fearful crash told him the ship had struck upon the rocks. In a moment he was back on the quarter deck. He found that a surging billow had struck the hinder part of the ship, tore off part of the sheathing, and carried away the watch-house in which two women were sleeping—all efforts to rescue them were in vain. Whilst the storm-tossed ocean raged and foamed around the devoted ship, and night shrouded all objects in her veil of impenetrable darkness, wild shrieks and cries arose from the women and children, increasing the horrors of the moment, and filled the stoutest hearted among the mariners and soldiers with dread and despair. Among the soldiers all discipline was at an end, and in many families this hour of terrors had loosed the bonds of affection and dependence, that until now had subsisted for years. The men forsook their wives in the endeavour to save their own lives; their wives and children were entreating the help from strangers denied them by husbands and fathers, and an officer who had heretofore been considered not only as a most courageous soldier, but had showed himself a kind and affectionate husband, now turned a deaf ear to the prayers of his wife, and intent only on his own deliverance, climbed up into the rigging of the mainmast, left her to her fate below, whatever it might be. In the meantime, the captain had ordered the ship to be examined, he found that she had struck upon a hidden rock, and the waves beating over the quarter deck had already filled all the rooms with water. Several men had been washed overboard as they rushed from their hammocks to the deck at the moment of the ship striking, but the greater number had reached the foredeck where they crowded closely together, awaiting in painful anxiety for what the morning would bring.

At length the dappling clouds in the east proclaimed the hour of dawning—the day struggled into existence, and showed to the great joy of the shipwrecked, a rock about fifty yards distant, which raising its dark head above the foaming sea, promised present safety if it could be reached, although the white waves broke furiously against it. But how were they to reach it? The only hope—and it was a weak one—was if they could succeed in passing a rope from the ship to the rock, and fastening it there so firmly that by its aid all might be able to leave the wreck. But who was the adventurous one to carry it thither? The most experienced officers on board, declared it impossible for any one to brave those angry breakers successfully, and the best and most resolute of the sailors, who, perhaps, would have ventured encountering such a risk, had broken into the spirit room and were now lying drunk, seeking to drown the bitterness of death which they were so certain of

meeting, by steeping their senses in oblivion.

In the meantime, Lieutenant Stewart with folded arms and thoughtful mien, stood on the foredeck, measuring with his eyes the distance between the wreck and the rock. After some minutes spent in deep consideration, he threw off his coat, fastened a rope round his body, and plunged into the boiling surf. The soldiers looked on in anxious silence—for the bold swimmer had almost immediately disappeared from their view—a wave had buried him deep in its bosom—but again his head was seen above its foaming crest, and with strong arms he parted the angry waters as he swam boldly forward, like one determined to battle with and conquer fate. His strength would not have sufficed to enable him to accomplish his aim, had not a huge wave borne him onward, and dashing powerfully against the rocky ledge left him behind as it retreated. Stunned by the violence with which he was thrown, he lay for some moments deprived of all consciousness; his senses at length returning, he rose hastily and mustering all his strength, essayed to climb the steep and rugged rock, the difficulty of the assent being increased by the slippery sea-grass with which it was covered. After many toilsome efforts he reached the top, where he succeeded in fastening his rope. But as it was impossible for him to be seen from this height by those on the wreck, on account of the thick fog, he was obliged to descend to the shore, where, as he was nearer the ship, he hoped he might be visible, and thus relieve part of their anxiety. On the side next the ship the breakers dashed so violently that he dreaded making the attempt, and venturing on the other, he fell from the steep and slippery path down into the sea.

Benumbed with cold, and sorely wounded by the sharp edges of the rocks, he was at first scarcely able to move, but still he managed to keep his head above the water, and after an half hour spent in a vigorous struggle with death, a rushing wave once more carried him to the shore, where bruised and bleeding he lay on his back like one dead. He felt like giving up the contest, but he saw the sinking ship and his doomed companions—with great effort, therefore, he raised himself, gave the appointed signal to show that he had succeeded in fastening the rope, and a gleam of joy shot through his heart as he heard the loud cheers with which the news was hailed on board.

In less than a minute, the only boat belonging to the ship was let down, and manned with but one stout sailor. Slipping along by the rope which Stewart had drawn he guided his frail craft to the rock, to which he fastened a stronger one, brought with him for that purpose: this being done, he returned to the wreck in order to bring off the passengers. It was determined to send away the women and children first, and accordingly two grown females or a mother with several children were bound together and sent off, the little boat which was guided by two sailors being too small to hold any more.

Stewart assured that the slippery surface of the rock where he had stood when fastening the rope, would not afford sufficient space for all on board, even to stand upon, was half in despair, but just at the moment however, that the boat containing the colonel’s wife, her two children, and the surgeon of the regiment, pushed off from the ship, the fog lifted and parting at the coast, showed another rock of greater height and broader extent a few yards distant from the one on which he stood. The boat almost touched the one first reached—he gave the sailors a sign—it was understood, and they rowed to the second rock where the surf was much less dangerous, and the breakers small in comparison with those that beat

against the other. A better landing was to be obtained here, and without the loss of a single life or any untoward occurrence, the women and children reached this place of safety if not of comfort Whilst this was being done, they made a running noose to slip along on the rope that Stewart had fastened to the rock on which he now stood, which rope as we before have said reached to the ship. By this contrivance the officers and most of the soldiers attained the smaller rock, and in the course of two or three hours all on board were safely rescued. By a merciful Providence the ship groaning, creaking, tottering, and gradually sinking, just kept above the water until the last man was taken off; then a surging wave dashed over her, and she was seen no more—a few circling eddies alone showed the spot where she went down.

When the men who, as we have said had landed on the smaller rock had assembled, they found it incapable of holding so many—all could not stand in the narrow space its surface afforded, and too closely crowded, they could not resist the pressure of the waves that sometimes broke over it. The higher rock where the women and children were landed showed that there was still room for many more of the shipwrecked; the colonel, therefore, proposed that the officers should be rowed thither in the boat, but to this the soldiers would not listen. With death staring them in the face, they declared all subordination was at an end—that preference on account of rank and birth was not to be thought of—all were now on an equality, life was as dear to the meanest soldier as to the highest in command; no! no preference should be given—it must be decided by lot, who should go, and who remain. All efforts to still the angry tumult that now arose among the excited troops was in vain, and the little island whose rock-covered surface, lifted for ages above that boiling flood, where wave contended with wave, and had never before been pressed by the foot of man, now became a scene of strife and confusion.

In the midst of the crowd who could thus strive with each other in the very presence of death, lay Stewart, senseless and covered with the blood that flowed plentifully from his wounds. All believed him to be dying, and only a few cared to trouble themselves about the noble young officer, to whose disinterested daring the whole crew owed their lives. His strong constitution, however, soon triumphed over his temporary exhaustion, and he awoke to consciousness, just when the oaths and outcries of the striving soldiers was at the loudest. Slowly and painfully he arose on his stiffened limbs, and supported on the arm of one of his own men from whom he learned the cause of the tumult, he approached and commanded silence. This in the presence of his superior officers was out of place, but distinction was at an end, and beloved as he was by all the soldiers, the command was obeyed at once. “My friends,” he began, “death, inevitable death awaits us all alike, both on the other rock and here where the angry waves beat over us, if we do not soon obtain help. Our only hope for deliverance is by means of the boat, through which we may, perhaps, obtain it from the land, which cannot be very distant. Let the officers and sailors then go over to the other rock, where there is more room than on this, and the surf being less violent and itself nearer to the coast, they can better venture to seek the help, without which we must all perish. We will remain here in peace together, awaiting the issue whatever it be; I will not leave you, but am ready to share every danger, and as I was the first to spring into the foaming sea, to try what could be done for the salvation of all, so I will be the very last to leave this rock.”

His words were answered by a cheer; the true heroic spirit which breathed from his

words—the magnanimity of his whole proceedings since the first moment of the common danger, flashed upon the memories of these rude men, and wrought an instant change. The soldiers calmed and encouraged, no longer objected to the departure of the officers and sailors for the other rock, and the boat at once began to ply between. As it would not carry but two persons at once, it took some time before the specified persons had passed over. At the last voyage there was but one to go. This officer as he took his place on the seat beside the rowers, called out to Stewart to “come along, for the flood was rapidly rising on the rock, and his staying behind would do the soldiers no good.” The lieutenant however refused the invitation, with the words that as he had promised the soldiers to remain with them, he was determined to do so, whether the issue was life or death.

So, while the officers with the pilot and sailors were borne to a place of comparative safety, Stewart stood with his two hundred soldiers upon that naked rock that gradually grew less from the rising of the encroaching waters.

Not without good ground for apprehension, had the last departing officer warned the lieutenant of the danger that threatened from the advancing tide. The rock on which two hundred human beings were now crowded, hoping to escape or gain a respite from death, was one which in nautical phrase is called a sunken reef, that is only above water at ebb tide, while at flood, except when swayed by a sweeping north wind, the sea buries it in a depth of ten or fifteen feet.

The pilot knew this well, and having made it known to the colonel, this knowledge was the occasion of his heartless proposition, that the officers should be saved, leaving the soldiers to perish.

But when men deal treacherously with the unfortunate, or seek to ruin the unsuspecting, it is then that a kind Providence watches over them—it is then that the hand of the Most High is stretched forth for their protection;—throughout the whole of this day, the only wind that held the flood tide in check, namely the north-east, swept over the still angry ocean and restrained its perilous advance.

Soon after the ship went down, the sea became covered with boxes and barrels, together with many other articles of the stores on board which had been floated from the hold; the confined air between the decks had caused an explosion, and burst the vessel in every part. This was providential, if those casks of provisions would only flock toward the rock, they might be able to secure enough to support them until help could be obtained either by a passing vessel, or from the shore.

In the meantime, the still rising water had encroached so far upon the rock that but one dry place was left; here the soldiers clustered, standing close to one another, for the confined space admitted but little movement. In order to judge of the rapidity with which the tide was rising, Lieutenant Stewart ordered two large stones to be placed on a rocky projection, whose surface at this time was just even with the water. Leaving the spot and returning after a time, they found them completely hidden. They then placed two others on a spot somewhat higher, and turning away, scarce daring to hope that they should see them again. But what was their joy on returning, to find not only the two last dry, but the first two entirely out of the water; they were thus assured the tide had reached its highest mark.

But now another trouble arose which threatened every moment to increase the sufferings

of the shipwrecked. As the waves dashed over them for many hours, they had swallowed a large quantity of sea water, this created a burning thirst, that was increased by their clothing being entirely saturated with salt water. Whilst thus suffering, an object was seen floating on the surface of the water, and approaching the shore, which promised help in this moment of due necessity. One of the sergeants was the first to remark it, and hastening to Stewart, remarked that a cask was being washed by the waves to the edge of the rock, and that he was sure it contained rum. The lieutenant, who dreaded the effect of strong drink on the men as the greatest possible evil, bade the sergeant to sink it as soon as it reached the shore. The cask came nearer—a huge wave lifted it high and dry upon the rock. The sergeant could not obey Stewart's order—the soldiers at once clustered around it, and having been slightly broken as it was dashed upon the rugged resting place, to their great delight, discovered that it held—not rum, but pure sweet water, and in such quantity that all could drink to their satisfaction.

Thus delivered from dread of being washed away and the torment of thirst, new hope and increased courage sprang up in the breasts of the shipwrecked, and beginning to think over how they might better their condition, their first act was to prepare a comfortable place for their wounded lieutenant, who seemed to be rapidly sinking from loss of blood and the effect of his severe exertions. One corner of the rock, the highest above the sea, presented a smoother surface than the rest; they cleared the slippery sea-grass from the spot, and wrapping a cloak round him, laid him down. Two soldiers, one on the right hand, the other on the left, lay down near to screen him from the cutting sea breeze, some others lay across these, thus forming a pyramid of bodies that secured to the wounded a shelter from wind and rain. The rest of the soldiers threw themselves on the rocky surface, whereon they could find a place, and in a few moments were as sound asleep as if reposing in the most luxurious chamber.

The day closed in, but the fog still continued; the rain poured down in torrents on those half naked men, and the piercing north-east wind made them shiver as it swept over them in their thin and sea-soaked garments. At last all desire for sleep was banished, and rising from their uncomfortable lodging places, each one looked out into the darksome night in hopes of discovering a delivering ship. Sometimes the silence that brooded over the little island was interrupted by the joyful cry of "a ship! a ship!" but directly after, some foam-crested billow rising high above the surrounding waves, showed what had caused the delusion.

The sufferings of the unhappy men after this one short alleviation again increased, the tide rose higher than before, for the wind had now chopped round to the west, there was no restraining influence from it as at first. The sea, as if claiming the rock as part of his domain, advanced higher and higher, until at last only one dry spot remained upon which the soldiers clustered so closely, that those who stood in the middle could scarcely breathe. All believed that death was approaching—all hope of deliverance had faded from each heart, and every one of the seemingly doomed party who could control his thoughts in that dreadful hour, summoned his last effort to be expended in prayer.

As they stood there in silence with hearts darkened by the utter extinction of hope, a red light was seen above the rolling waves—its ruddy glow as it glanced upon the white-capped billows caused those sunken hearts to beat with renewed activity—they gazed far

out upon the sea, but no man spoke; in a moment more the form of a ship was seen, dimly but certainly in the enveloping fog. The loud and joyful huzza that burst from the shipwrecked soldiers proved to those on board the vessel sent to their rescue, that the rock was still unsubmerged, and that life was there, and they returned the cheer with great good-will. It appeared afterwards that some of the sailors had attempted to reach the shore in the jolly boat; that they encountered great toil and danger, but were at last so fortunate as to come up with two fishing vessels. One of these had already taken the officers and women from the larger rock and landed them on the coast; the other turned about to look after the soldiers, although the captain of the wrecked vessel declared it was folly to expect to find any of them living, for he was convinced that the “sunken reef” had long ere this been hidden beneath the foaming waters.

For fear of the ship being injured by the rocks, they could only approach within a certain distance, and with only one small boat. Stewart called through a speaking trumpet to the sailors, and inquired how many they could take at one time in the boat. They answered, “twelve,” at the same time recommending to the shipwrecked to embark quietly, and not rush in such numbers as to peril their own safety. Stewart, exhausted as he was, enforced the necessity there was for this caution, and marshaling his men as well as was possible in the narrow space, he divided off the first twelve, and his command was obeyed with promptness and without confusion. In the meantime, the little boat had reached the rock, and the embarcation began, and without the least disorder. The night came on, but nineteen times the boat made its way through the darkness, from the ship to the now nearly submerged rock, still bearing its living freight in safety, and it was only at the last voyage that they shipped the two last soldiers, and the noble hearted, heroic Stewart, whose soul was full of blissful feelings at the thought that by his courage, obtained through confidence in God, he had saved the lives of three hundred men.

Voyage to the East Indies.

Soon after embarking, and wearied by the exertions I had been obliged to make for the last few days, I betook myself to my cabin and to rest. When I again ascended to the deck, I looked towards the shore we had left, but nothing was to be seen, but a long gray stripe that lay like a dim cloud along the distant horizon. It was the last sight of my native land, and gradually its faint purple outline faded until it was lost in the foam-crested waves. On all sides of me was the wild waste of waters; as far as the eye could reach, it rested upon moving masses like fields of sea-green. Above us was the blue and vaulted heavens that were now illumined with the burnished rays of an August sun, that was even now dipping his broad disk into the waves that formed the distant horizon.

All around was life and motion; ours had not been the only ship that had taken advantage of a favorable wind to put out from Cuxhaven to the open sea. Four or five other ships were sailing along side, and as they spread their snowy sails, on which the bright rays of the summer sun was playing, they skimmed like white-winged sea-mews over the dark green waters.

And now one of the pilot boats that lie here at anchor, yet tossed year in and year out by the restless waves, sending on board both, to the homeward and outward bound a skilful guide, to steer the ship through the perilous shoals and sand banks that lie on this coast, approached, to take up the pilot that had steered us safely into the open sea. He took charge of all our letters—from those written to parent, friend, or lady love left behind, to the tender lines penned by the least shipboy, taking a long farewell of the mother who standing on the pier, waved her hand to her child whose home was henceforward to be on the deep, until long after we sailed. The pilot thrust them all into his great leathern bag, held out his sea-hardened hand to bid each one farewell and gave us his sailor-like greeting: “Farewell, and a lucky voyage to you.” He jumped into the boat, four lusty rowers sat on the benches, and it flew over the glancing waters with the speed of a bird until it reached the one-sailed craft he called his pilot ship. This was our final adieu to the homes we had left, for with the departure of the pilot from on board, the last link that unites the sailor to his native land is broken, and it is then the traveller feels how really every rolling wave increases the distance between him and the fireside joys he has left behind.

Light winds soon drove us into the English channel, where we saw the chalk cliffs of Dover shimmering in the bright sunshine on one side—the coast of France like a soft blue cloud dipping into the sea on the other. We approached so near to the British shore, that we could distinguish the buildings and light-houses plainly. Near to Dover, and on a rocky precipice, stands an old fortress of the middle ages, looking out threateningly with bristling canon on the town and over the sea that breaks and murmurs at its rocky base.

As it became dark, numerous beacon lights blazed from the watch-towers, some speedily vanishing, others twinkling and glancing like meteors that beguile the wanderer from his way, but many with clear and steady ray, shone brightly over the face of the deep and guided the sailor on his adventurous course. The first were the so-called fire drakes, covered partly by metallic plates which turn, and thus is caused the appearing and

vanishing of the light so speedily, the latter is the steady beacon of the light-house, which distinguishable from all others by its brilliancy and the color of its flame, enables the seaman to direct his craft safely through the channel. Hundreds of other lights were glancing everywhere, like the fire flies of the tropics upon the face of night, those were the burning lanterns carried at the prow of the steamboats, warning each other of approaching too near, and giving the same intelligence to ships.

On the following morning we found ourselves in the neighbourhood of the Isle of Wight, and vainly looked out for some compassionate fisher boat, that for a flask of brandy or some salted fish, would carry our last letters to some port, from whence they might be forwarded to our homes. A few days later, and we lost sight of the English coast; and with it the last land in Europe faded from our eyes. We found ourselves on the open sea, and with lightly swelling sails, steering for the Cape de Verd Islands. Of the many vessels which we hailed or passed in the British channel, not one was to be seen; here every ship held silently on her own monotonous way, without troubling herself about the fate of another; and here instead of the life and bustle to be met with on a coasting voyage, nothing was to be seen, but the dark blue waves of the broad Atlantic and the bright resplendent sky.

To enjoy a sea-voyage one must have entirely overcome the severe ordeal of sea-sickness, and then with the high health that generally follows the departure of this disagreeable visitant, life on the ocean is not without a beauty and variety of its own. In a fortnight one becomes sufficiently versed in the laws of equilibrium to maintain his place in his hammock from a sudden lurching of the ship in a squall or night of tempest, or so skilfully to balance himself and his plate at table, that neither shall be thrown to the right or left. By degrees, too, one becomes accustomed to the slovenliness of the cabin servants, and the dusky appearance of stained and soiled table cloths, and at last even ceases to miss the newspapers and the absence of cream in his coffee.

During the first part of our voyage we had most beautiful weather; the deep blue sea upon which the foam-crested waves chased each other as if at play, and the bright heavens where thin and transparent clouds were floating like veils of gossamer, filled the heart with gladness and disposed it to profitable musings. Light winds filled the sails that swelled beautifully on their masts and drove the ship, that under a cloud of white canvass looked like a stately queen, onward. Sometimes she would lie motionless on the waves for a time, then urged by the breeze she would glide forth like a capricious beauty, cutting the water at the rate of more than four miles an hour. So gentle was the motion, that in the cabin one could scarce hear the murmur of the waves as the ship kissed them with her bowsprit, or raised a track of foam as she divided them with her sharp keel or directing rudder.

It may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true, that on the land, the Sabbath never speaks to man with such solemn voice as it does in beautiful weather on the deep blue sea. Then it seems as if wind and wave and sun and sky were all holding sacred festival, and Nature, such as she appears on that wide and wonderful expanse, invited man, the favored creature, to worship with her in her grand and sacred temple. On week days, with the perpetual industry usual on board a ship, the bustling of the sailors as they pursue their several avocations, the call of the boatswain, the noise of the carpenters’ hammer that

cannot be excluded from the cabin, contrasts vividly with the calm brought by the solemn stillness of the Sabbath,—its influence is visible on all. No tar-bucket is seen on deck, no paint-pot stands in the way, the sailor intermits his weekly task of mending the sails, and the ropes that are to be repaired are laid aside. The deck is scoured white and smooth with sand; everything is clean, even the cabin-boy and the table-cloth, two articles that on weekdays seem to hold themselves privileged to be dirty.

The sailors indeed, that is only some of them, take advantage of the time bestowed by the Sabbath, to mend their jackets and stockings, or patch up old boots and shoes; others lie stretched out on the deck with a book in their hands or a cigar in their mouths, murmuring something to which the waves are the only listeners; others are down in the forecastle looking over their chests and coffers, the sight of their humble effects, or perhaps some cherished keepsake, recalling thoughts of loved ones at home. But in whatever business engaged, the influence of the Sabbath is seen on all, for there is no countenance but speaks the calm and quiet content, which this blessed day, so wisely ordered as a respite from toil and care, brings to all, whether on land or sea.

We were out four weeks without having seen anything but sky and water, when one day we saw the rugged crest of a high mountain rising above a pile of thick gray clouds. It was the high hill of the island of St. Anthony, the most westerly of the Cape de Verd group. Little by little the low-lying clouds ascend like a drawn up curtain, and the whole island lay spread out, a living panorama, to our view. But alas! we passengers were not permitted to leave the ship, and as soon as we had taken in provisions and water, the anchor was lifted and we held on our way towards the south.

As in all lands lying in the warm latitudes, the works of nature are found in greater and more vigorous beauty than beneath our colder and melancholy skies, so also do the tropical seas present appearances never seen in the northern waters. If a storm arises, the whole creation seems to be dissolving. No words can be found adequate to describe the scene, or in any measure to convey the frightful experience the sailor has to undergo. But on the other hand, in clear and calm weather, the tropical sea presents an aspect of gorgeousness and grandeur, with which the loveliest natural scenery of a northern climate cannot compare. Here the rising of the sun from his bed of waves, presents a spectacle that fills the heart with reverence and awe at the same time that it swells with rapture of the purest kind. The thick clouds that rested like a veil of darkness upon the illimitable surface of the sea, at the coming of the god of day, disperse in their vapors. The twinkling stars grow paler as he approaches, the dark gray color of the water changes to a cheerful blue, and streaks of clear purple are seen in the east, increasing each moment to a varied hue, and as the horizon brightens, darkness flies far from the bosom of the waters. Suddenly rays of glorious light break forth from heaven and pour their golden glory on the sea, the sun rises in his glowing strength above the bank of purple clouds, and as they disperse themselves over the azure firmament, various are the shapes, whether beautiful or grotesque, that they assume. One can imagine he sees towns, hills, castles with tall towers, ships, and a thousand other objects in their flitting shapes, but yet scarcely formed ere they lose their evanescent beauty both of form and color, as the sun mounts above the horizon.

The animal kingdom of the tropical ocean is extraordinarily rich and varied. The sea birds are distinguished by their size, and beauty of plumage, and greatly surpass those that

belong to the north. Thousands of flying fish spring above the surface, in order to escape some lurking enemy below, only to find their death on the deck of the ship, but oftener to fall an easy prey to some rapacious bird. Nothing can equal the gay colors of the Bonito and Dorado, a smaller kind of ravenous fish peculiar to the Southern seas, and which are always found in close pursuit of their neighbors, the flying fish. With what enchantment does the astonished spectator fasten his gaze upon the lightly moving waters. His eye penetrates the depths that lie far below the crystal surface, and is lost in wonder at beholding the myriads of living creatures with which the mighty ocean teems! Not a moment but what presents some new and interesting subject for inquiry or contemplation, thus breaking in pleasantly on the otherwise monotonous current of sea life.

So the day passes over, full of interest, if man will only take the trouble to secure it; and the sun that here regularly measures his diurnal course in twelve hours, is declining to his setting. Again the attendant clouds, that at times assume the appearance of burning volcanoes, gather around him, as though to curtain him as he sinks to rest, but as his glancing rays reflected on the smooth water are refracted in gushing vapors, thousands of fireballs seemed to rise as from a crater, and streams of burning lava to flow into the ocean. At length the sun is hidden beneath the waves; for a few minutes the western horizon is like a sea of glowing purple, and then night comes, shrouding all in her darksome veil. But there is no gloom; thousands of stars far brighter than those of northern lands glitter in the firmament, and are mirrored in the chrystal waters; fiery meteors dart through the heavens, and the whole surface of the ocean is covered with luminous insects.

Pleasant as is life on shipboard, even in a slow voyage, when with sufficient wind, which is mostly the case in this latitude, to keep the vessel moving, bringing refreshing coolness to the sailor, and spreading life and healthful motion over the sea; not less uncomfortable is the condition of a vessel when becalmed, as is not seldom the case for many weeks together. With heavy heart the mariner sees the breeze that so lately rippled the waves, gradually die away, and leave the bosom of the ocean calm as a slumbering lake. The sails hang flapping from the yards, the sea is motionless, presenting a dull expanse of water as far as the eye can reach, and no zephyrs float through the atmosphere to give relief from the burning rays of the sun. The ship lies like a log on the water, the discontent and murmurs of the crew increase every day, and in vain do they try to drive the tedium away by practising all sorts of diversion. But the night brings some relief, not only in her calm beauty, but cooling dews refresh the heated atmosphere, and the moon and stars shine forth in unsurpassable glory in the cloudless heavens.

On the first of October, we passed the equator. Neptune, as is his custom with all ships, honored us with a visit. With the early twilight, we heard a deep bass voice that seemed to rise up out of the waves, hail the ship in true nautical style. The helmsman answered through his speaking trumpet, to the usual questions of where we were bound, and from whence we had sailed. Two of the ship boys were listening with all their ears, and peering curiously but vainly over the bulwarks in order to get a sight of old Neptune. At length the voice from the bowsprit made itself more audible, and in the following manner. “I see that there are a few on board that have never before been in my territory, and must submit to the regulations I demand, as it becomes them to do.” As the last words were uttered a gigantic figure, his head covered with a periwig of knotted sea-grass, with a false nose, and his face painted in various colors, now ascended the ship’s side, and clambered on deck. He carried a speaking trumpet of three feet long in his right hand, under his left arm was a few thick books, and from the leg of his boot a huge wooden compass protruded itself. A masculine woman in whose soot-begrimed lineaments I, with some trouble, recognized those of our boatswain, personating Amphitrite, followed the god of the sea, carrying a long lubberly boy in her arms, wrapped up in an old sail. They were introduced to us by Neptune as his wife and son. Having advanced to the after deck, where the sailors were assembled, he opened one of his colossal books and spread an old sea chart out upon the deck. “Hallo, helmsman,” he inquired, “what is your latitude and longitude?” The answer being given, he grumbled something as he pulled his huge compass from his boot, and having carefully measured his old chart, at last struck a hole in it, as he exclaimed, “Here you are—all right—what course are you steering?” “South, south-east!” “You must go four degrees to westward—you will have a better wind,” growled Neptune, and therewith he doubled up the chart, and stuck the compass in his boot again. “I must see after my new circumnavigators,” he added in the same gruff tone as he turned his eyes on the two before-mentioned boys and one old sailor who, although he had followed the sea for twelve years, had never, until now, crossed the equator; “we must make a nearer acquaintance.”

The name, birth, and age of each being inquired into, and duly registered in one of the large books, each one after having his eyes blindfolded, was led by the sailors to the forecastle and seated on a plank, under which was placed a large tub of water. The next operation was to shave them, and accordingly their faces were smeared over with a

horrible mixture of shoemaker's wax, train oil and soot, most ungently laid on with a coarse painter's brush. Neptune then performed the office of barber himself, taking a long piece of iron which had once served as the hoop of a tun, he scraped their chins in the most unmerciful manner.

No sooner was this operation ended, then they pulled away the props of the plank on which the three tyros were seated, so that they fell over head and ears in the tub of water below, and thus received what the sailors call a "genuine Neptune's baptism." After all these ceremonies he turned as if to go, but the young sea-god at this moment set up a most fearful outcry—he bawled as loud and lustily as any mortal. "Just listen," said Neptune; "now I cannot go back to my cave in peace, but that cub will roar and bellow the whole night, so as to disturb all the waves below,—nothing even quiets him but a stiff glass of grog, for he likes that far better than sea water."

The captain understood the hint; he laughed and nodded to the steward. Young Neptune continued his lamentation nearly a quarter of an hour; I saw one of the cabin servants carrying a smoking bowl of punch to the foredeck, and the joyful shouts and loud hurrah that attested how welcome was its reception, reached us who were in the cabin below.

On the following day as the ship, driven by a light wind, moved lazily through the waters, we observed two large sharks following in her wake. The sailors were at great pains to take them, but greatly to the vexation of themselves and the passengers who entered quite as eagerly into this sport as themselves, the cunning fish disdained the bait and swam slowly away. To my enquiries of why they had not seized upon the meat thrown out as lure, sharks having always been represented as voracious and greedy, one of the passengers answered,

"It all depends on whether or not they are hungry. In some soundings, where fish abound, I have seen sharks by the hundred, which not only refused the bait, but did not injure the men who went into the water to bathe or accidentally fell overboard. Nevertheless, like yourself, I wonder that these creatures did not bite, for the sharks of the Atlantic are considered particularly greedy."

"I can tell ye," said the boatswain, who was standing close by, "why they did not take hold of the bait. It is because we are just in the track of the Brazilian slave ships; they throw many of the niggers overboard, for many die, and there's no doubt but the creatures find richer morsels than a bit of salt beef."

"Are there not several species of sharks?" I inquired of a passenger who seemed well acquainted with natural history in all its variety.

"A great many," he answered, "and the largest and most rapacious is the white shark, to which class those that have just left us belong. He moves through the Atlantic as if it was his own realm, but is seldom seen beyond the solstitial point, preferring the latitude within the tropics; he is also found in the Mediterranean sea, and also in the gulf of Lyons, where he is peculiarly savage. The blue shark, seen in the English channel, is seldom dangerous; others, larger but less harmless, infest the northern seas, and are often pursued by the whalers merely for sport. Then there is the spotted or tiger shark, not very large but exceedingly rapacious; the hammer shark, which derives its name from the peculiar shape of its head, and the ground shark, which is the most to be dreaded of any, since he lies

deep down in the water, and rising suddenly, seizes his prey without any one suspecting his vicinity."

"Suppose a man is so unfortunate as to fall overboard, and a shark is in the neighborhood," said I, "what can he do to save himself? Is there no hope of escaping from his dreadful jaws?"

"The best means I have seen tried," he replied, "and with good effect is, if a man is a good swimmer, to throw himself on his back, splash the water with his feet, and shout with all his strength. The shark is a great coward and easily frightened—noise will always drive him off. When I was on a voyage to the West Indies, two or three years ago, I had a Newfoundland dog with me, who was accustomed to spring into the water from any height, and after anything. I was greatly attached to the animal, and you may imagine my alarm as, one day we were lying becalmed off the West India islands, I saw him jump down and with, loud barkings, as if delighted with the sport, swim after a large shark that was playing around the ship. I expected nothing else but to see him devoured in an instant, but to my astonishment the monster turned and swam vigorously, evidently frightened by the barking of the dog who continued to follow him, until a boat was let down and himself brought back by the sailors.

"A singular method," continued my learned fellow-passenger, "is practised by the divers who collect pearls on the coast of Ceylon. They often let themselves down an hundred feet in order to reach the mud banks where the pearl oysters are to be found, and whilst they are filling their baskets they must watch carefully on all sides lest a shark fall upon them. If they see one near, they stir up the mud, and then while the enemy is blinded by the turbid water they rise as quickly as possible to the surface. Many escape in this manner, but many also fall victims. Fair ladies as they adorn their persons with these costly ornaments think little of the suffering by which they are obtained,—the arduous adventurous life, or of the unfortunates who are annually swallowed by those savages of the deep. When one considers how often those poor Indians must dive to the bottom, to say nothing of the loss of life, before a string of pearls can be obtained, we may confidently assert that every necklace has been purchased by at least the life of one human being."

Scudding now before a fresher wind, we steered towards the south and soon found ourselves in a colder climate. The flying fish played lively as ever around the ship, and one night so many fell on deck as to furnish an excellent mess for breakfast. Black dolphins, the greatest enemy of their flying neighbors, tumbled playfully about in the rippling water, and at times encircled the ship in great numbers. Their motion is swift and vigorous,—so much so that it is scarcely possible to strike them with a harpoon.

On the 20th of October we reached the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope. Flocks of sea birds fluttered around our masts, for this colder region is the home of the beautiful sea dove, the great white albatross and an innumerable multitude of smaller kinds, that on the approach of stormy weather seem to rise, as by the stroke of a magician's wand, from the sea. One of the few changes one meets with on a voyage to Africa is angling for birds, for they are as easily taken as the finny tribe, by baiting a fish-hook with a piece of fat meat, and especially so in those rough seas, upon whose surface little to nourish can be found, they seize greedily upon the hook, which fastens itself readily in their crooked bills. All

these sea birds are clothed with a coat of feathers so thick and elastic that except in one or two places they are invulnerable to a bullet.

The fable of the Flying Dutchman is well known—the Demon ship is still supposed to traverse his unwearied but unprofitable course in the neighborhood of the Cape. The weather is stormy almost throughout the year, the skies ever dark and cloudy, but while other ships, scarcely able to keep themselves steadily afloat, dare show but one or two storm sails, the phantom ship is scudding before the gale under a full press of canvass. Our captain assured us with an expression of countenance which showed that he himself believed what he asserted, that he had once seen the Dutchman under crowded sail in Table Bay hardly two English miles distant; that he had altered his course in order to come up with him, but all at once he vanished, and although he steered a long time in the same direction, he found no trace of him. The thing easily explains itself when one considers that the sky is always dark and foggy, the sea rough and tempestuous, and not seldom sudden storms of hail and snow prevent the voyager from seeing a quarter of a mile before him; how easy then to lose sight of a vessel in an instant.

Much more dangerous than the Flying Dutchman are the floating bodies of ice, found also in these latitudes; and which often cause great damage to ships, for owing to the thickness of the atmosphere they are not seen, until they are driven against them. A few years ago an English frigate in doubling the Cape, ran foul of an iceberg with such force that she sprung a leak, and broke the rudder in splinters. Luckily a puff of wind that streamed from a cleft in the ice and threw back the sails, freed the ship from her perilous condition since another stroke upon the iceberg would have dashed her to pieces.

There is no climate where gurnets are found in such numbers as in the neighborhood of the Cape. In stormy or cloudy nights the sparkle of these beautiful sea-fish is the brightest. The troubled waves as they dash their foam-crested waters against the ship, glitter as though thousands of brilliant stars were seen among them, and as the rushing keel divides them in her course, the effect is indescribable, and recalls to the mind of the spectator tales of fairies and sea-nymphs that come up from their ocean caves to gaze with bright and curious eyes on the daring mortals that invade their realm.

After doubling the Cape, we had sailed a whole week with a steady and favorable wind towards the Isle of Bourbon, when on one clear day whilst all were assembled on the deck, we were startled by a cannon shot fired at no great distance, and came booming over the waters like the voice of thunder. The captain was hastily summoned from his cabin, but ere he made his appearance a second report broke upon the deep stillness that succeeded the first. At the same moment a sailor on the lookout called out from above, that he “saw a light over the bows of the ship, but could not make out what it was.” “Is it a ship,” inquired the captain, as he began hastily to ascend the mainmast. “No, sir!” was the answer, “the light is too large to come from a ship’s lantern, and it cannot be the Isle of Bourbon.” “It must be a vessel on fire,” exclaimed the captain, as many cannon shots broke upon the silent air, “Bourbon lies much farther to the north. Aloft there! crowd on sail—in order to carry help to those unfortunates before it is too late!”

Whilst the sailors were busy in executing the captain’s orders, he bade the gunners fire the cannon so that the crew of the burning ship might know that help was near. In half an hour from the first alarm, we could plainly discern the blazing vessel with the naked eye, and

soon after distinguished the whirling columns of flame as they towered above the masts. The night, too, had come on, and the impression made by the lurid light that shone far over the quiet waters, and the booming sound of cannon that from time to time burst on its stillness, was one too awful to be soon forgotten. “If we only do not reach them too late!” cried one of the passengers who, like the sailors, never even turned their eyes away from the burning spectacle. “I hope the crew have taken to their boats before this,” said the captain, who with his nightglass to his eye was steadfastly regarding the unfortunate ship.

The breeze springing up more freshly, we sailed with increased speed towards the distressed vessel, the forepart of which was now one sheet of flame; we saw the angry fiery element enveloping the foremast from top to bottom as in a garment, now sweep over to the mainmast, the sails of which were instantly on fire. How far the conflagration had proceeded inside we could not ascertain; but we were very certain the crew had left her and taken to the boats, for our continued cannon shots were answered by muskets fired from the barge and jolly boat.

As we approached carefully so as to avoid danger to ourselves from the collision with the burning ship, a wild cry arose from the foredeck of the latter—piercing yet mournful, and while pained and astonished we looked about to discover what it meant, a spectacle singular as fearful met our eyes. The ship had a number of animals on board which were being taken to England for a menagerie. In their haste to leave, the crew had either forgotten to unloose them, or feared that by liberating them, they might meet in their rage a worse enemy than even the fire. In wild and unavailing efforts, they dashed furiously against the iron bars that inclosed them, and their fearful cries almost drowned the hissing and crackling sound of the flames. At length they reached the mizzenmast, and the falling yards loosened a plank or two of one of the cages—a noble lion with flowing mane and glaring eyes burst forth and sprung overboard. At the same instant an elephant had freed himself from the rope which fettered his hind legs. Flourishing his long proboscis he rushed into the midst of the fire, but soon driven back by the heat he retreated to a portion of the foredeck which had not yet ignited, and his death-cry echoed loud and mournfully over the dusky ocean.

The falling of the mainmast ended the sad catastrophe. The cages of the other animals had taken fire, and their wild occupants bursting through the half burned planks, showed their dark forms here and there on the deck, and maddened with pain, shrieked aloud in agony as they plunged into the sea. The elephant drew himself up as for a last effort, and was about to spring overboard, as one bright, blinding glare shot athwart our eyes, and the next moment, vessel, animals, all had vanished as if by magic. The explosion that followed instantly—the sparkling brands that were hurled in all directions, explained that the flames had reached the magazine and thus blown up the luckless ship.

By this time, we had come up close to the boats, when a strange sound of snorting and moaning caused us to turn our eyes once more to the spot where the ship disappeared. We saw the huge form of the lion contending with the waves; attracted by the voices of men he was making every effort to reach the jolly boat. With consternation, the crew of the frail craft observed the advance of this dangerous messmate, for if he laid but one of his paws upon the side, overladen as she was already, she must inevitably sink by the increased weight. The sailors plied their oars with renewed force—the little boat shot over

the waters like an arrow, and the poor animal was left far behind. For a long time, panting and toiling, he continued the pursuit, battling vigorously with wind and waves; but at last his strokes grew weaker, his breathing shorter, and we saw him finally yield quietly to the waves that settled over him even as they had closed above the devoted ship.

The captain now called the sailors, who silent and motionless were standing about, regarding the singular and impressive spectacle, to their several duties. The sails were taken in, ropes were thrown to the boats, and such a number of dark figures clambered up the deck that we began to be uneasy, and rather doubtful of the character of the rescued. We soon, however, became convinced that we had to do with honorable people, and who, singular as they looked to us in their oriental garb, took all possible pains to show their gratitude for our timely succor. From the few Europeans on board, we learned that the ship was from Sumatra bound to London; we therefore landed them on the Isle of Bourbon whose port we entered two days after.

With the cold climate that we exchanged for a warmer as we again approached the equator, we lost sight of the countless flocks of sea-birds that so long had accompanied us. It is something remarkable that they only inhabit the colder latitudes, for in a warmer climate it is a rare thing to find them. Sometimes a few weary land-birds that have strayed from their homeward way, skim over the ocean, or rest upon the masts; how they maintain themselves on the wing cannot be conjectured, but certain it is, they have been seen on the trackless ocean, when no point of land was within hundreds of miles.

On the first day of December, a long range of blue hills rose on the far horizon as if springing from the sea; we soon found it to be the coast of Sumatra. Contrary winds kept us beating about and prevented our entering the straits of Sunda, but we found ourselves surrounded by a number of ships from all nations sharing a like fate, and waiting with the same impatience for a favoring wind to blow them into Sunda Roads or to their different destinations. At last the wished for breeze sprung up, the sails swelled, and our gallant ship sailed proudly through the straits. On all sides were seen chains of blue hills and richly wooded islands rising out of the water; the long coast of Java and Sumatra covered with vegetation and groups of beautiful trees, and the thousand little green islets that studded the straits like emeralds cast at random, presented a lively picture that contrasted pleasantly with the late monotony we had endured. Huge trunks of pistangs and tops of cocoanut trees, broken off by the wind were driven about in all directions, and as they met us, awakened almost as much apprehension as would a reef of rocks. We passed many islands uninhabited, and with their impervious forests still remaining in primitive wildness, clothed in the beauty of a perpetual verdure unknown in northern regions, and soon came in sight of the white houses of the island of Java, which surrounded with lofty trees and blooming gardens, proclaimed themselves the dwellings of Europeans. From many eminences the Dutch flag was seen floating, and as we sailed along, a Java village looked out from among the tall cocoanut trees; little barks shot out from the shore and steered towards our ship, and one European boat manned with eight Javanese rowers, and bearing the flag of Holland at her stern reached us first.

A police officer, corpulent and full of importance, now came on board and handed the captain a sheet of paper on which he was desired to inscribe the name and destination of the vessel, from what port she had sailed, what burthen she carried, and other notices of

the same kind.

This finished, the Javanese barks rowed swiftly along side; these small crafts are generally made of the trunk of a tree, neatly hollowed out; they are filled with fruit, fowls, eggs, apes, parrots, shells, and such like wares, with which the owner drives a profitable trade with the ships. He sits on a little bench in the midst of his merchandize with a short, broad oar in either hand; with this he propels his fragile vessel; which is often not more than an inch or two above the water's edge. After we had exchanged our pure Spanish piastres, which is the coin they most prefer, for such things as we needed, the traffic with the sailors commenced.

Such old jackets, woolen shirts, caps and whatever other articles of clothing they could spare were bartered for eggs, cocoanuts, pine apples and other eatables. This accounts for the singular garb of the Javanese boatmen,—striped shirts, woolen caps and duck trowsers are strangely mingled with portions of the oriental dress, and a sailor's jacket with large brass buttons is considered quite ornamental. Next to clothing they prefer knives, scissors and articles of iron ware. In general the Javanese are pretty good judges of the value of these articles, and mostly contrive to make a more profitable traffic from their fruit and poultry than the European sailor with his stock of old clothes. In the evening it is often the case at this time of year that constant lightnings play round the horizon, illumining the picturesque shores of Java and Sumatra. Impenetrable darkness shrouds both earth and sea, and only by the light of the electric flash is the mariner shown how to keep off land, and with shortened sail holds on his way. On board of all vessels, on binnacle, masts and spars are hung lighted lanterns in order to avoid collision with each other, for in the thick darkness that envelopes all around, no object can be discerned at a distance of three yards. In the meantime the wind pipes shrilly through the shrouds, and lashes the waves into foam white as snow-wreaths. After a few hours all again is still, no breeze disturbs the ocean, the sails flap lazily against the mast, the waves subside to a glassy smoothness, and the rain gradually ceases as the dawn approaches. So pass the nights in this climate during the rainy season.

In the morning we found ourselves surrounded with a great number of vessels, the white sails of European ships covered the sea on all sides, contrasting strongly with the small coasters made of plaited hemp that darted gaily over the blue waves, and fishing boats of all sorts and sizes were crossing our path or following in our wake. We were seemingly enclosed in a nest of small islands, and it was a mystery to conceive how it would be possible to find our way out of such a labyrinth. Only by the high volcanic hills, with their crowns of light smoke were we able to recognize the mainland of Java, whilst the flowery coast of Sumatra faded gradually from our view, until at length it was lost on the distant horizon. But the experienced eye of our captain discerned clearly the way that lay before us; for many years he had guided his ship in safety through these dangerous seas, and attentive to his duty and his chart, he disentangled her from among this knot of islands and we found ourselves once more in a free offing. Soon the Roads of Batavia were in sight, where more than fifty large ships and an incredible number of smaller ones were lying at anchor. The French, Dutch, Austrian and English flags greeted our arrival, one ship after another welcomed us to the roads with their thundering cannon, which was regularly answered by the guard ship constantly stationed here. At last our anchor was let down and fell rattling into the deep. But, different from Sumatra and the coast of Java we had left,

nothing was to be seen at Batavia but a flat, low beach overgrown with bushes, behind which appeared some groups of green trees, and in the far distance rose a chain of blue hills from the summits of which clouds of smoke were issuing, that told of the many volcanic fires that are constantly burning in the Island of Java.

Home-Sickness of a Siberian.

Every Russian officer is permitted to choose their servants from among the soldiers, the number varying according to the rank; the under lieutenants having the right to one, the captains can demand three, and the field marshal twenty-four. These men, although freed from military duty, are still numbered as belonging to their several regiments, which they are obliged to enter, whenever their master pleases. They are better fed and clothed than their comrades, and upon the whole, live an easier and pleasanter life. Among these soldier-servants, I became acquainted with one, a Siberian, whose regiment was quartered in a small town in the government of Pultowa. He was a dragoon and servant to the Adjutant of the division, with whom I spent many hours in playing chess, and this man waited on us, bringing us tea, or whatever other refreshments we needed.

Fulfilling all his duties to his master not only with ability, but the greatest fidelity, he was treated with more friendship, and allowed indulgences denied to others of his class, the humane officer whom it was his lot to serve, knowing how to appreciate his faithfulness, and wishing to remove the deep melancholy under which he constantly labored.

This he was not able to do—for it was caused by home-sickness. He pined for his rude home in Siberia—for the ice-fields, the marshy meadows, and the barren steppes of his fatherland—he saw no beauty in the summer plains of the South, no charm in the cultivated fields, nor found pleasure in the society into which he was thrown. His sadness increased every day—he lost his flesh, and at length became incapable of effort, reduced to the borders of the grave.

In vain did his kind master endeavor to soothe him with comforting words—as vain the attempt of the garrison surgeon to cure him with varied prescriptions. His malady grew in proportion with their efforts to heal it, until it took the form of monomania. He saw no means by which he could accomplish his return to his beloved country so as to be able to remain there in safety,—did he leave his kind master and fly, it would be of no avail, for the same power that had at first compelled his forced service, would exact it anew and with greater vigor. He, therefore, took the desperate resolution to get himself banished. This he could not do except he committed the crime of murder, and an opportunity soon offered itself.[A] The victim was a young girl, a servant in the same house with himself. She was of a taunting, irritating disposition, and disputes were constantly occurring between them—he resolved she should be the sacrifice to his home-sickness, and accordingly in the next provocation he received from her, he gave her a blow which killed her. He was imprisoned, tried by military law, and his judges not knowing him to be a Siberian, and never guessing his motive for the deed which he acknowledged he had committed, passed sentence of banishment for life to Siberia.

But this decree was only to be fulfilled after a preliminary punishment had been inflicted—a punishment of which he had not thought, and which embittered, if it did not destroy, the hope of seeing his fatherland once more.

Before he commenced his journey into banishment, he was to receive seventy strokes of the knout, and the chances were that he would die under the operation, few constitutions

being able to endure its severity. But he did survive it, and the fortitude with which he bore it awoke the admiration of all. I was obliged to be one of the spectators of the execution of this bloody sentence, so I had a full opportunity of witnessing the stoical heroism with which the unhappy man bore the strokes that tore his flesh from his back and shoulders. But if I was astonished at this courageous endurance of bodily pain, I was yet more so when I saw the look of eager inquiry, that notwithstanding the terrible suffering he was undergoing, he cast from time to time on his soldier's cap that lay on the ground quite near him, into which according to the Russian custom, the spectators were dropping money, and so great was their admiration of his endurance, that it was filled to the brim with gold and silver coin, together with bank notes of larger value. Virtue and crime were so mingled in this man, that it was hard to form an opinion of him. The love of country, one of the highest of human emotions, and avarice, almost the lowest, gave the poor criminal, after receiving the seventieth stroke, strength sufficient to walk with the support of the jailor's arm to the hospital, from whence a few weeks after, his wounds being healed, he was sent with some other criminals to his beloved Siberia.

THE END

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Capital punishment is very rare in Russia, murderers escaping with sentence of banishment.

Transcriber's Note

In the first story, *Pirate Life*, there is no section numbered "IV" as originally published.