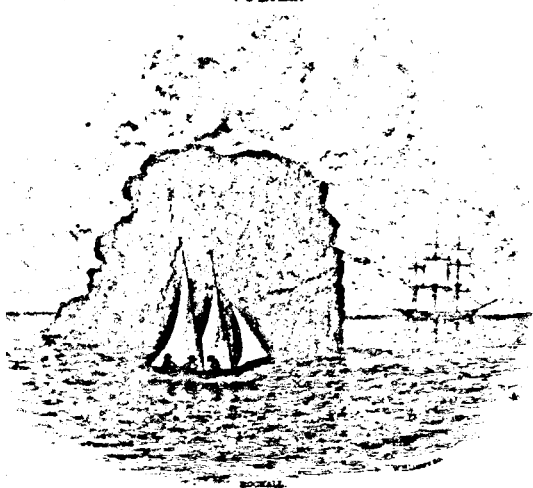


FRAGMENTS AND
SERVANTS OF
OF SOCIETY
VOYAGES & TRAVELS
POONA.
BY
CAPT. BASIL HALL.

R.N.

VOL. III.



ROCKALL

PRINTED FOR P. CADELL, EDINBURGH;
AND WHITTAKER & CO LONDON.

1831.

FRAGMENTS
OF
VOYAGES AND TRAVELS,

INCLUDING
ANECDOTES OF A NAVAL LIFE:

CHIEFLY FOR THE
USE OF YOUNG PERSONS.

BY CAPTAIN BASIL HALL, R.N.

F.R.S.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

ROBERT CADELL, EDINBURGH:

WHITTAKER, TREACHER, & CO. LONDON.

M.DCCC.XXXI.

U 825.1
A831.3

LONDON:

J. MOYES, TOOK'S COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

1165

CONTENTS OF VOL. III.

	Page
CORCUBION	1
TRIP TO THE INTERIOR OF GALICIA	29
DESTRUCTION OF CORCUBION	57
CONSEQUENCES OF FOREIGN INVASION	86
JACK'S ALLOWANCE	124
ROCKALL	163
A SEAMAN'S GRAVE	197
MADEIRA	224
A TRIP TO THE MOUNTAIN	243
THE CHASE	280

FRAGMENTS
OF
VOYAGES AND TRAVELS

CHAPTER I.

CORCUBION.

AFTER the constant state of excitement in which we had been living in Spain, even the eternal bustle of Portsmouth soon appeared tame and noiseless. For the usual period of nine days, the wonders we had seen gained us a ready audience—the battle of Corunna—the death of Sir John Moore—the enthusiasm of the Spaniards—and the dark heaven of the ladies' eyes, in that land of love and romance, were topics which insured us popularity wherever we turned. But, after a time, even we ourselves began to tire of telling the same story over and over again,

and sometimes fancied we could detect awkward symptoms on the part of our friends, as if they too were becoming a little bit wearied with extravaganzas, in which they could not share.

Travellers unfortunately are perpetually forgetting, that as the soul of good fellowship in conversation is equality, if they presume too much on their knowledge, be that ever so great, they will inevitably dispose their company not to listen to them, and they will be set down as bores, great in proportion to the extent of their wanderings. The feeling of conscious ignorance is more or less painful to all men, and is only tolerable, perhaps, when the avowal is volunteered. The pleasure we experience, therefore, on gaining new knowledge, is by no means a compensation, in all cases, for the exposure of our ignorance; and as most people receive compulsory information, as it may be called, with reluctance, it requires no small address on the traveller's part, so to arrange his stock of new materials, that he may distribute them without giving more

pain than pleasure to his company. The art seems to lie in the narrator knowing how to let out just as much, or rather, a little less, than people wish to hear. Hardly any thing should come from himself;—his knowledge should either be drawn from him, in the shape of answers to inquiries, or be left till called for by more inquisitive persons. In short, he should be like a pump, which will deliver nothing unless constantly urged by an external force—and not like a cock, which, when once turned, lets every thing gush out.

This being pretty nearly the case with us at Portsmouth, we soon fell out of favour, and sighed most anxiously to be once again abroad, for we were soon left to kick our heels in the streets of that huge naval storehouse, Portsmouth, as little noticed as if we had never worn Don Fernando the Seventh's cockade in our hats, nor ever figured at a Spanish tertulia, nor learned the deep guttural of the semi-Moorish dialect of the Peninsula. Besides which, as fresh news came pouring in from the seat of war, our story

became stale, and we longed vehemently to be once again amongst wild adventures, far from the vulgar, common-place world of home—to see strange sights and strange faces—hear new tongues—climb mountains of which we had never before heard even the names—to luxuriate in cities heretofore known only to our eyes on the maps—to bathe in rivers, such as the Tagus, with its golden sands, dear to our earliest fancy—and perhaps to visit Gibraltar and Teneriffe—or to quaff Madeira in its native vineyard—or to pluck ripe oranges from the very trees of St. Michael's. These, and a hundred other visions, all of which were, in due season, realized far beyond our hopes, now filled our young fancies, and made every day of the re-equipment of the ship an age of delay. But I find by an old letter, dated off Cape St. Vincent, it was not till March, 1809, that we were fairly adrift once more on the wide world, like a set of aquatic knights-errant, seeking adventures, either by sea or by land, as chance and our own good star—in which

we had boundless confidence—might please to direct.

To us nothing came amiss—all was new—and what was new was clear gain. It mattered not where we struck the coast, the land seemed every where on fire—for Bonaparte had roused all Spain into a moral volcano of such violence, that whenever any point was relieved from the superincumbent pressure of the French legions, straightway there burst forth a political eruption.

For some time we cruised off the coast of Portugal, calling at Lagos Bay, and other places where our curiosity, which was augmented by every fresh visit, was amply gratified. I can hardly venture to say what absurdities we might not have been guilty of, to put ourselves in the way of adventures, had not Good Fortune—the presiding deity of all men who are duly on the watch—furnished us with work enough, not only for the extra dose of enthusiasm with which we were puffed up, but with good, honest occupation for our heads and hands, in the way of true service to the cause which under-

mined Napoleon, and eventually capsised his ill-gotten throne.

The period of our cruise in the *Endymion* being nearly out, we were steering home again, and sailing slowly along the coast of Spain, when, in the beginning of April, 1809, being then nearly becalmed off Cape Finis-terre, we saw a small vessel coming towards us from the shore. The night was falling fast, but she reached us before it was dark, as we put our head towards her, immediately on perceiving that she was making for the frigate.

The Spaniards on board this vessel had been sent as a deputation from a body of insurgents, anxious to obtain assistance from any English ship on the coast. They entreated us to bring our frigate into their bay, and assured us that, with a little additional aid, the inhabitants would be enabled to expel the French from this part of the country altogether. These men were the bearers of supplicating letters from the Junta of Corcubion—a town, they told us, lying on a narrow arm of the sea, at the very top of

the bay. All the world has heard of Cape Finisterre, which, as its name implies, is the terminating angle of the Peninsula—a portion of Europe, detached alike in geographical and in moral history from the rest of the continent. How different might not the fate of this fair country have been, had some ancient convulsion of the globe broken it completely off at the neck, and interposed a strait not wider than that of the British Channel between it and the neighbouring states!

The Spanish deputation seemed a little surprised that we knew nothing whatever of Corcubion; while to our eyes, the fact of being summoned to the assistance of a place having no existence on our maps, certainly gave fresh interest to the adventure. The letters of the Junta set forth, in most moving terms, that they were in want of nothing but arms—“*Falta solamente armas!*” was the grand theme; and if their operations, said they, could only be countenanced by the presence of a British man-of-war, the success of the campaign of Corcubion was secure.

Our captain was a clear-headed, judi-

cious, and experienced officer, who, in the course of long service, had often been employed on the coasts of Spain and Italy, as well as amongst the islands and along the shores of Greece; so that he knew much better than most of us what value to attach to these high-sounding promises of great deeds of arms, to be done by peasantry against regular troops. Still, as it was clearly his duty to assist the Spaniards upon this occasion, he co-operated with them heartily, though I cannot believe that he was ever carried off his feet as we were. Perhaps, indeed, it is better on every occasion of real service, that all extra enthusiasm should be confined to the instruments with which the commander is to work, while he takes care to keep himself free to act to the best of his judgment, unbiassed by mere feelings, or wishes, or any exaggerated hopes.

Be this as it may, it was resolved that we should enter the bay of Finisterre next morning, to see what was doing, before lending the patriots, as they called themselves, such assistance as lay in our power. We stood

off and on for the night ; and I shall never forget the state of excitement in which we were kept till the day broke. The novelty of the whole affair—the prospect of an actual meeting with the enemy—the exceeding curiosity we had to see the population of a country fairly engaged in expelling a foreign invader—and the assistance we were about to lend to so holy a cause, filled us with a wild sort of joy, which set every one upon planning attacks, and achieving conquests, such as were never heard of before. The decks rung all night long with cutlasses, pistols, and muskets, which were fitted and furbished afresh for this new and unexpected service. An additional stock of ball cartridges was filled, and casks of powder got ready, for the patriot cannon. Our largest grape shot also, it was thought, might fit the small calibre of their field pieces—and the ship's tailors were employed in ripping up the signal-flags and sewing them into colours for the new regiments we were about to organize.

The anxious natives on shore had probably

descried us from the heights, for when we sailed into the bay, early next morning, the frigate was surrounded by boats, crowded with people of all ranks and classes, eager to express their gratitude for such prompt aid to their cause. Old men and young men ran about the decks hugging and kissing us, according to their custom, but in a manner so repugnant to our northern habits, that such of the sailors as had never been in the way of being so saluted before, were disposed to receive these marks of affection with any thing but good-will. The captain, who knew the Dons of old, gave orders for a distribution of tobacco amongst our visitors; and I suppose, that since the days when the Moors were expelled from the land, there was no greater joy in the Peninsula than this order produced. The dreadful disorders consequent upon the French war had so completely broken up the ordinary relations of commerce, that many districts of country, of which this was one, had been long deprived of their wonted supplies of this luxury, or, I may almost call it, in

speaking of Spaniards, this necessary of life.

Beef to John Bull, potatoes to Paddy, or grog to a sailor, furnish but faint similes to describe the delight of a Spaniard, who, after some months of privation, grasps a handful of tobacco leaves. He never thrusts them into his mouth, according to the American fashion, nor puts the tobacco into a pipe, like an Englishman; but cuts the weed carefully and economically into little fragments; and, having scattered these morsels along a slip of paper about the size of a visiting card, he folds it neatly into what he calls 'un cigarro de papel;' or, more tastefully still, inserts the pieces in a slender tube of straw, and names it a 'pajilla,' or ladies' cigar. If, however, he be very rich in this great treasure, he rolls the leaves together into larger masses, which, from being made exclusively of tobacco, he calls, par excellence—'Puros.'

When the ship was secured at her anchors, we made arrangements for landing. We could spare our new allies only a hundred and fifty muskets, and as many cutlasses; but

these, together with a due proportion of boarding pikes, and tomahawks, with plenty of powder and ball, when displayed on the quarter-deck, made a considerable show, and greatly delighted the deputies, who had been a little disappointed at first when told of our small supply.

The enthusiasm amongst the peasantry and townspeople on shore rose to a still higher pitch than any thing we had seen enacted on board. The women embraced us most cordially, with tears in their bright eyes — the children ran up and down the streets of the village squealing out, 'Viva! viva!'— while the old folks of both sexes hobbled to their doors to greet the arrival of the heaven-sent strangers. Numerous entertainments were prepared for us; and, as these good people would never be satisfied that we gave them credit for sincerity unless we partook of every dish at every feast, we were soon overstocked with provisions. A visit to the patriot camp was, of course, our first grand object; and no sooner had we hinted a wish to proceed there, than horses and mules, by the dozen, were at the door. The

muskets and swords landed from the *Endymion* were then placed in carts, and off we set to the field, in grand cavalcade, accompanied by all the younger inhabitants, and half the older ones, of this pretty village—too soon to become a terrible scene of misery and bloodshed.

Corcubion, as I have already mentioned, stands nearly at the top of a little arm of the sea, connected with the great bight or bay of Finisterre, and lies, snugly enough, in the most sheltered nook of a rich valley, formed by two chains of mountains, running, if I recollect right, nearly north and south, or parallel to the general direction of the coast of Spain at this point. Like most of the villages we saw in Galicia, it is protected from the chilling effects of the sea winds in winter, and the still more searching easterly gales of spring. The tops of most of the hills in the neighbourhood are barren, generally of a cold gray tinge, and contrasting very agreeably with the fertility which covers the greater part of the soil below. I have seldom seen a more picturesque or happier looking spot than this quiet valley,

or one into which the iron foot of war, it might be thought, had less business to intrude. So thought not the inhabitants; and as they were not content to let things alone, they had soon a bitter lesson of prudence forced upon them. For my own part, I have been sorry to find, ever since that period, that most of my Arcadian associations have been woefully disturbed. I can now hardly look at a perfectly peaceful scene—such as that of the valley of Corcubion when we first saw it—one which seems to be set apart from all the cares of the world, and in which war ought hardly to be known even by name—without having immediately called up to my fancy, the wreck and ruin which a few hours' invasion of regular troops might soon bring upon the fortunes, and even the lives of its inhabitants.

The causes and consequences of the occupation of Spain by the French, on the great scale, are already too well known to require repetition. It is only, therefore, with a few of the details that I shall pretend to meddle. The tenure by which the invaders held the country—to say nothing of its outrageous

injustice, was, in a military point of view, not a little insecure, in consequence of the universal exasperation of the inhabitants; and it required, accordingly, a very skilful mixture of forbearance and of severity, on the part of the French, to maintain even the ground upon which their troops actually stood. For soldiers and horses must have food; and as the supply of any particular district was soon swallowed up by those two-legged and four-legged locusts, which drifted in clouds over the Peninsula in those unhappy days, it became necessary for the army to collect provisions from the surrounding country, either by dint of good payment, or actual force, or through the medium of terror. It was not, I believe, much according to Napoleon's system of war, when he invaded foreign parts, to pay the natives for the board and lodging of his forces; and, as it was not always convenient to detach considerable bodies of troops to collect provisions at the edge of the sabre, the last and terrible alternative of intimidation was, after a time, very generally resorted to.

‘ He jests at scars who never felt a wound ;’ and in the same way, people are too apt to heed lightly the misery of those cruel devastations, of which they have never witnessed any example with their own eyes. And I have many a time thought, since those days, how little aware we Englishmen at home often are of the prodigious advantages we have enjoyed during the wars of the last forty years ; and how very trifling, after all, our highest sacrifices have been, when balanced against the unspeakable blessing of being exempted from the actual cautery of foreign invasion. We ought also to recollect how petty in fact is the additional load of that part of our taxation which goes to pay the interest of the money expended in securing, untouched, those institutions and manners which—in spite of every thing that can be said by croakers and reformers — not only guarantee the perpetuity of our liberties, but yield us all we can desire, or hope to possess. It is, therefore, every way just that the present generation, and all generations of our posterity, who are to reap the

full advantage of the great struggles alluded to, should contribute their share of payment. To murmur at defraying the interest of capital employed in securing the national independence, and keeping far from our shores the inroads of foreign armies, must appear to every one who has seen much of the rest of the world, the most unreasonable thing imaginable.

The French, as I have already described, having, for a time, and by sheer force, thrust the English allies out of Spain, now had it all their own way; and the poor Spaniards were left to contend, single-handed, with the whole power of Bonaparte.

“ Alone the noble nation stood,
 When from Corunna, in the main,
 The star of England set in blood.
 Ere long, on Talavera’s plain
 That star resplendent rose again,
 And though that day was doomed to be
 A day of frustrate victory,
 Not vainly bled the brave!”*

In the meanwhile, before the tide of war was made to turn, the French ruled the country,

* Southey’s *Carmen Triumphale*.

and, perhaps, were compelled to rule it, as their only resource, literally with a rod of iron. The head-quarters of their army in Galicia were at Santiago de Compostella; from which point they sent out small or large divisions, according to circumstances, to keep the surrounding country in subjection. At the same time, compact bodies of cavalry scoured the country, and by threats of severe vengeance laid the villages under contribution for the supply of corn and provisions of all kinds. As these marauding parties frequently consisted of only a few men in each, it is not to be supposed they were every where tamely allowed to rob and pillage at their pleasure. Many places, in fact, resisted; for example, the village of Muros, not many leagues south of Corcubion. Three dragoons called there some weeks before our arrival on the coast, with a requisition for corn and wine. The inhabitants refused, and drove the party off. The French, however, returned in a few days with a whole troop of horse, quite sufficient, had there been any further resistance, to have sacked and burned the town.

The people of Corcubion had been several times visited by these unpleasant guests, to whose demands they had yielded with no very good grace. This the French cared little about, provided they got the provisions of which they were in search. At length, the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood becoming tired of these insulting and ruinous drains on their wealth, resolved to resist. The peasantry, who were soon called together by the leading men of the place, to the number of two or three thousand, formed themselves into a patriotic army, capable, as they imagined, not only of refusing with impunity these troublesome requisitions of the French troops in their own province, but of driving the invaders back again, helter-skelter, across the Pyrenees. In fact, their greatest apprehension seemed to be, that the proverbial nimbleness of their enemy might enable him to skip out of the country unhurt; and accordingly, the favourite project amongst the Spaniards always was, to surround him, and thus, by getting between the invaders

and their own country, take them all prisoners !

Meanwhile, we were assured by the redoubtable Junta of Corcubion, that nothing further was wanting to complete the liberation of Spain, but arms. " If you English will only manage to arm the peasantry assembled here and elsewhere," said the Junta, " you shall see how speedily these French will scamper off ! "

I can recall at this distance of time, with perfect distinctness, the quiet expression of humour in our experienced captain's countenance while he listened to these pompous assurances of the enthusiastic Dons, on our way to the patriot camp. I remember also being rather provoked at his calmness ; for although there was nothing in the least degree uncourteous in his manner, nor any thing that, in the eyes of the Spaniards, could be construed into distrust, we, who knew him well, could read in his looks the total absence of confidence in such extravagant hopes. Long afterwards, I was amused by hearing an officer of still greater expe-

rience say, "Whenever you hear a Spaniard declare for Liberty or Death, by shouting 'Libertad o Muerte!' be quite sure he is in the very act of turning to the right about."

The captain spoke no Spanish, though there was reason to suspect he understood it pretty well when he heard it spoken. This probably enabled him to get on better, upon the whole, with the Junta, than if he had been able to enter personally into discussions with them. It would have been different, of course, if these Spaniards had been men of sense and experience, or if there had been any real service to be executed in concert with the insurgents; but, as it was, I believe nothing could have been better. He was fortunate, also, in having a very good supporter, while his own professed ignorance of the language afforded him leisure to reflect before he was called upon to reply. I allude to our grand interpreter, and the main-spring of all our operations, the second lieutenant, now Captain Charles Thruston, an officer who had seen much active service, both afloat and on shore, and who, to

the important advantages of experience in this peculiar line of warfare, added a knowledge of the Spanish language, and a heartiness of address peculiarly suited to win the confidence of the people we were amongst. To give efficacy to these qualifications, he was gifted with talents and resources which it is a thousand pities should not have found higher exercise in the service of his country, than in this inglorious campaign of Corcubion. It was of the greatest importance, however, to the cause to have one man amongst us whom all parties esteemed and were quite willing to follow; and who likewise understood the language and habits of the natives so thoroughly, that no misapprehension of their meaning was ever likely to arise.

Before these patriotic bands had called us in to assist them, they had been sorely distracted amongst themselves as to the nomination of a commander-in-chief. About two thousand men, the Junta informed us, were assembled at a place called Bernun, at the distance of a league or so from Corcubion,

further up the valley, to the north. Only a few of these were properly armed with firelocks, while some carried pikes or swords, and the rest brought nothing to the cause but boundless zeal and much talk. Amongst these people were several old soldiers, who, having seen a little service in their day, knew the value of discipline; and had learned in the course of their campaigning, that the chief element of good order is a well-grounded reliance on the skill of the commander. These men naturally wished to appoint as their chief a person named Camaño, who, from having served twelve years in the regular army, it was reasonable to think, knew something of military matters. The Priest of the parish, however, had the voice of the peasantry with him. This worthy and gallant pastor, whose name was Lapido, possessed the entire confidence of the villagers and neighbours who formed his congregation, and who were naturally prompted to nominate him their leader by the very same motives which induced the soldiers to call out for Camaño.

Violent disputes, it appeared, had taken place at Corcubion upon this knotty point before our arrival; but, fortunately, the mighty question was settled by the time we mingled in these transactions. It would have been a troublesome addition to our responsibilities, to have been called upon to decide between the rival pretensions of the sword and the gown. The proverb carried the day, however, and the soldier yielded to the churchman. The good sense and experience of the veteran, indeed, shewed him, that he might be more useful as a second, acting under one whom the great mass of the people cheerfully obeyed, than he could possibly be as commander-in-chief, with the church secretly, if not avowedly, against him, and, of course, the body of the congregation jealous of his authority. Camañó, also, by his influence succeeded in prevailing upon the whole of his own party to adopt the same course; wisely remarking, that since, in such times, unanimity is the life and soul of enterprise, it would ill become old soldiers to be wrangling about

precedence, when the enemy was at their gates.

Things being thus amicably adjusted, the reconciled rivals set about their task of disciplining their troops. The worthy Padre, however, having heretofore taken charge only of the souls of his flock, was entirely adrift when he came to the details of arranging their external operations; and Camañó, whose knowledge of the art of war was confined pretty much to the handling of a musket, was equally thrown out when busied with the intricacies of discipline, and the troublesome details of classifying the officers according to their respective merits and pretensions. Upon one point, however, the two chiefs were quite agreed—that it was hopeless to think of making any effectual stand against the disciplined troops of France with a body of unarmed peasantry. The ruling Junta of Corcubion, consisting of the mayor and corporation, were accordingly appealed to; and they, in like manner, after due deliberation, having seen matters in the same light, agreed that, before declaring war,

or even acting on the defensive, it would be advisable to seek assistance from the English.

A small vessel was accordingly equipped, and despatched to sea, with orders to cruise about till she fell in with some one of the numerous British men-of-war reported to be roving along the coast, by order of the English government, for the express purpose of assisting the patriotic cause. On the first day of their cruise they met with us, and we, of course, yielded to their supplications, by entering Finisterre bay. We hesitated, however, about running the ship into the narrow harbour of Corcubion, as the Spaniards wished us to do. In the first place, until we had surveyed it carefully in our own boats, we could not be sure that it was safe for so large a ship as the *Endymion* to enter; and, in the next place, we were by no means satisfied that we could be of any further use to the cause by taking such a step, while it was obvious that, under some circumstances, it would give the enemy great advantages over us. In the end, as will be seen, we departed from this cautious line of

reasoning, and had very nearly paid a high forfeit for our indiscretion.

But it is time to tell about the camp, to which we rode out in such grand style, surrounded by the villagers, shouting 'Viva! viva!' and filling the valley with cries of vengeance against the French. At every step, as we rolled along, the crowd gained fresh numbers, till, by the time we reached Bernun, our cavalcade made a very respectable army of itself—as armies then went—and we began to think we really were destined to be the liberators of Spain!

A little circumstance struck us during this memorable day's trip, which marked strongly enough the degree of enthusiasm in the patriot cause. The ploughs in most of the fields along which we passed on our way to the camp of the insurgents, were guided by women, whose husbands or sons, they assured us, had been sent to join the forces assembled to repel the invasion. Whenever we stopped to compliment them on their public spirit, they shouted like the rest of the crowd, and evinced no less animation or

confidence of success than was shewn by the men.

In looking back to those times, it is difficult to say whether we ought to admire this exaggerated sort of show, or to laugh at it. It undoubtedly tended to keep up the enthusiasm which, in the long run, contributed essentially to the expulsion of the French: and if the men, thus released from their natural occupation of tilling the ground, had behaved, when brought in contact with the enemy, any better than these patriotic matrons would have done, the incident of the deserted ploughs might furnish matter for applause. But if the male part of the population flocked to the camp merely for the sake of bravado, and invariably ran away the moment the flash of a pan or the glitter of a bayonet was seen, it may be asked of what real use was it to the cause that they should leave their farms to be cultivated by the women?

CHAPTER II.

TRIP TO THE INTERIOR OF GALICIA.

It is clear enough, after all is said and done, that unless there had existed some very general and deep-seated feeling of hostility in Spain, the French must soon have gained the day in that country, instead of being eventually cut to pieces. It would be hardly fair not to concede to the Spaniards the merit of sincerity in their bitter antipathy to the French, or to deny that they were willing to make, and that they really did make, very great sacrifices to get rid of the invaders. Unfortunately, however, that nation has shewn at all times, and under all political or military circumstances, a sort of innate jealousy of foreign interference of every kind. Even when it comes in the shape of hearty

alliance, and when other countries are willing to make common cause with them, they seem incapable of shaking off that Chinese-like repugnance to external contact, which forms so remarkable a feature of their character.

They were always willing to take from our hands as many muskets and dollars as we chose to send them; but they as uniformly repelled every attempt on our part to teach them how to use these weapons. There can be no doubt that even the ploughmen, whose places we saw taken by the women of Corcubion, if properly trained and properly led, would have fought as well as any other troops. But, mismanaged as they were, their patriotism was wasted, and often worse than wasted, being perverted to the enemy's purposes. The baneful operation of these national jealousies often makes a Spaniard fancy it less dishonourable to be beaten by his enemy, than to submit to be disciplined and led on by foreign officers to certain victory.

I have thought it right to mention these peculiarities here, in order that what follows may be better understood, and also to shew

what a strange mixture there is in the Spanish character; a mixture, be it remembered, which, while it very often provokes us to be angry with these stately Dons, has always in it something which prevents the possibility of our despising them. We seldom see any thing shabby about a Spaniard—nothing mean or tricky. He may certainly be roused to great ferocity, and become a very tiger in his way—or he may turn about, when he ought to stand firm, and run off like a sheep before a wolf; but he will rarely, under any circumstances, prove a traitor to his native land.

On reaching the camp at Bernun, we found the patriot army exercising by divisions, under the immediate directions of old Lapido, the commander-in-chief, the priest of the village, who buckled over his cassock a huge, rusty sabre, taken by the guerillas, he told us, from a French dragoon in the mountain passes. When we approached, a general halt was ordered, and those who had muskets presented them, as well as they might; while those who had none

went through the motions equally well with their pikes or staves, formed out of scythes and reaping-hooks, by which these redoubtable warriors were, according to their own account, so speedily to eject the French from their country.

As soon as the first salutations were over, the captain of the *Endymion*, with a gravity which shewed how far the sense of duty can overcome a feeling of ridicule, made the patriots a speech, interpreted, sentence for sentence, by Lieutenant Thruston. He complimented the patriots upon their appearance, their military zeal, and their generous devotion; saying, that as nothing could be more suitable to the times, than such public-spirited demonstrations of hostility to the merciless invaders of their magnificent country, so they might reckon with confidence on the hearty co-operation of England in so just a cause. A pair of colours (made, as I before mentioned, by the tailors of the *Endymion*) were then presented to the Reverend Don Pedro Lapido, Commander of the Forces, and an elegant sword to Lieutenant-General

Camaño, the military mover in these grand proceedings.

I need hardly say that the air was rent with Vivas; and I am sure any one ignorant of Spain, who had seen the manner in which we were pulled about, and the very hems of our garments kissed—or heard the words ‘Vivan los Ingleses!’ bawled into our ears, would have declared all the reproaches uttered against the national jealousy of the Spaniards a scandalous libel. They offered to be guided by us in every thing—wished us to lead them instantly against the enemy, lest he should escape. Even the privates in this enthusiastic army, forgetting all order, left their ranks, to come crowding round us. We should have been worse than the mules on whose backs we were swayed about in the crowd, like a ship in the trough of the sea, if we could have remained insensible to this adulation; and though we knew and said to one another that the greater part of it was ‘all my eye,’ or mere words, still, enough of the unction entered our minds to make us fancy the hour

was at last come when we were to be of some splendid use to mankind.

But in saying this, perhaps I ought to answer only for us juniors, when I speak of heads being turned. Our sagacious commander, I suspect, was never taken in; and my brother-officer Thruston, as interpreter-general, had so much to do, and was consulted about so many things of real importance, that he had less leisure to be carried away by the excitements of the moment, than some of the rest of our party.

In one of my letters, written during the early days of our intercourse with the patriots, I find these words: "I know something of the language now, though I speak it with difficulty; and as there is much to do, I have seldom a moment to spare. This, you may well conceive, is very delightful; indeed, the whole thing is so novel—so unexpected—so grand, and so bewitching, that it really appears like a fairy dream. Only fancy our being sent as ambassadors to an army of patriotic peasants, on some mission about new levies—or arms—or ammuni-

tion — and three thousand men presenting arms (such as they are), and shouting, ‘Viva! viva!’”

To some this will appear very boyish and ridiculous; but to those who remember how ardent the enthusiasm respecting the Spanish insurrection became, even in England, at such a distance from the scene, the fact of our being sucked into the vortex, on the spot, will not appear surprising.

After the review was over, the speeches made, the colours presented, and the new sword buckled on, one of our most shewy drums, brought from the ship, was bestowed upon the army, to their unspeakable delight. A youth, who had been a drummer in the Spanish army, was soon found; and the sylvan shades of the pretty valley of Corcubion rung, probably for the first time since the flood, with the rattle of warlike music.

We then left the troops to enjoy the sight of their newly-acquired treasures; for I ought to have mentioned before, that, along with the colours, all the muskets, cutlasses, boarding-pikes, and other munitions of war, which

we could spare, were delivered over to the proper authorities for distribution to a select body of soldiers. This ceremony was, of course, deferred to the following morning—for it appears to be an invariable rule amongst Spaniards, never to do any thing to-day that can by any means be delayed till to-morrow. 'Mañana' (pronounced man-yana) is, accordingly, the most frequently used word by that easy-going nation; and I am sure it must be well engraved on the ears of every one who has had any business to do with people who really seem to love procrastination on its own account.

But as eating and drinking are operations which nature will not allow even the Spaniards to put off to mañana, our friend, the worthy old priest Lapido, begged us to accompany himself, Camaño, and the rest of the officers, to a grand entertainment prepared in a farm-house not far from the camp at Bernun.

The feast consisted of an immense kid roasted whole, and four or five minor dishes, of whose quality no particular mention is

made in my notes. It is a standing order in sea-cookery, I may remark, never to ask of what any eatable is composed—a rule which we found it useful to adopt whenever we landed in Spain. After dinner, coffee was served up in large bowls, followed by a comfortable allowance of hot punch; and a brisk fire of cigars closed the entertainment. Through the tobacco smoke, the warriors conversed of deeds done, and to be done—the rascality of the French invasion—the noble enthusiasm of the Spaniards—the mustering of numerous armies of patriots—the successes of the native troops—and the drooping fortunes of the invaders. Only one thing appeared to damp the general ardour—the want of arms; and the words ‘*Falta solamente armas*’ rung from end to end of the barn. I find it set down in my memorandums of that day, “that it was quite distressing to see so many men, willing and able to serve their country, rendered totally useless for want of arms—at a moment when the true spirit of patriotism seemed fairly to have been raised.”

I had yet to learn, that the mere act of putting weapons into men's hands, and even forming them into corps, and calling them troops, will no more convert undisciplined men into true soldiers, than bestowing the forms of a constitutional government upon nations politically degraded will transmute slaves into freemen. Both the one and the other of these manifest fallacies, however, is so fascinating, that the world, I have no doubt, will go on to the end of time indulging in them, whenever a people is roused up against invaders, or a successful rebellion enables the citizens to remodel their form of government. The wise course to follow in both cases, though by no means obvious, is, perhaps, not beyond the range of our inquiries. Indeed, there are few discussions which, if conducted in a simple and intelligible manner, might contribute, in the long run, more essentially to narrow the circle of prejudice and error on this highly exciting topic, or one which might lead more directly to the practical happiness of mankind. I need hardly say, however, that such specu-

lations were not even dreamed of by us at Corcubion.

Under our auspices, the peasantry continued to flock in from the adjacent country; and although we could supply scarcely a twentieth part of these patriots with arms, we aided the good cause, as far as lay in our power, by putting their forts and outposts in order, and giving them such advice as we could, respecting their commissariat and other arrangements of the troops. Fortunately, in all these matters Mr. Thruston had considerable experience, from having frequently before acted with military forces. He soon acquired, also, an influence in the camp, which, if the materials he had to deal with had been more energetic, might have saved these poor troops from great disasters. His first object was, if possible, to place the men in a situation of security against any sudden attack of the enemy, which he had too much reason to fear might upset the whole of their plans.

In truth, however, it was not easy to make out what really were the plans and objects

of our patriotic protégés, unanimously agreed only on two points—a bitter hatred to the French, and a perfect reliance on themselves. The mischief of this unbounded confidence was, that it took the place of all those precautions upon which alone men of experience in war ground their hopes. There was no way, at least that we could discover, to rouse our Spanish friends to the smallest apprehension of their enemy, or to induce them to take any steps to guard against the military vengeance which, in all other parts of the country, the French had not been slow to inflict in similar cases of revolt.

I ought to have mentioned, that just before we anchored in Finisterre bay, the French had sent to Corcubion a fresh demand for corn and wine. To which requisition the Junta sent for answer—"Let the French come and take it." To all previous demands of a similar nature they had yielded—not without murmuring, though without any positive shew of resistance; but they were now determined to make a stand.

This imprudent Junta met in council every

day at Corcubion, and, at their desire, one of us always attended as a sort of honorary member. These worthy village politicians had not the smallest conception of their total incapacity for military matters, and went on from day to day laying down plans for the future campaign—sending off expresses to the camp—recapitulating to us the numbers of their troops—albeit not one-twentieth part of them were armed. And that small fraction not being supplied with officers, or disciplined, or organized in any way, it was really like children ‘playing at soldiers.’ The whole affair, indeed, would have been merely ludicrous, if there had not been another party, close to us, playing the same game, but in deep and scornful earnest.

It was our constant entreaty, that the patriots should have confidential scouts posted along the road all the way from Santiago, or wherever the French might be, in order that we might be apprised of their movements and of their force, so as to have it in our power to prepare for their coming, if they were not too strong, or to withdraw, if

they were likely to overpower us. But the self-satisfied, soporific Junta solemnly assured us, that these precautions were carefully taken, and that they received daily, indeed almost hourly, the most exact information of all the enemy were doing. Yet it so happened that they would never let us see any of these accredited agents of theirs, either before they set out, or when they returned; and it soon became but too manifest, that the only sources of this boasted information were the popular rumours of the peasantry. As the Junta comforted themselves by believing those stories only which told in the way they wished, there was hardly a chance of their being correctly informed. Thus, in a short time the natives ceased to talk of their enemies, except to scoff at them; and it might have been supposed, that the mere goodwill and pleasure of the Junta of Corcubion, without a warlike deed of any kind, was more than a match for the activity and genius of Napoleon and all his legions.

Under these circumstances, we felt much at a loss not only what to advise, but what

to do ourselves. The Junta and their army, who professed the greatest confidence in us, earnestly solicited our counsel, but never shewed the slightest disposition to profit by it. We recommended them, as one step of consequence, to open communications with the Spanish general, the Marquess of Romana, who was said to be in force in some part of Galicia, and to beg him to send them officers to train their rapidly accumulating body of insurgents — or to say whether it would not be advisable that detachments should be sent from our camp, where they were idle and useless, to that of Romana, where their services might be turned to some account. But we never once succeeded in getting the Junta to budge an inch out of their own way. And thus they went on from day to day, exercising between two and three thousand unarmed peasants, and telling us, in the grandest terms which their sounding language could afford, all the great things they were to do, and had already done; for they still indulged themselves in the vain fancy that the French had actually

fallen back from Santiago, in consequence of this formidable demonstration, as they called it, at Corcubion.

The fact was, that the enemy, from some other cause, very different, unquestionably, from any thing like our proceedings, had retired a little, and withdrawn those outposts which, at our first arrival, had threatened that part of the country. But we could never prevail upon the Junta, or their reverend commander-in-chief, Lapido, nor even upon our only military authority, Camaño, to take a single business-like step to ascertain what the French really were about. In this dilemma we endeavoured to gain information for ourselves, by hiring scouts of our own, and the result of our inquiries certainly shewed that the enemy had withdrawn most of their troops to Santiago, as if they had suffered reverses elsewhere; and the inference was, that they were less likely to disturb our friends at Corcubion.

The nearest French station of any importance was Camariñas, a fort some six or eight leagues to the north of us; and in order to

ascertain correctly whether the enemy had abandoned that place or not, Lieut. Thruston was sent across the country with a party of marines from the ship. The *Endymion's* launch, well armed, was at the same time sent along shore, under another officer, with orders to enter the harbour, make the necessary reconnoissance, and co-operate with the party on land. This delicate and difficult service Mr. Thruston executed with much address. A small force only, it turned out, had been left in that neighbourhood, not sufficient to prevent our party cutting out and making prize of a French ship lying at anchor under the batteries. This success gave the patriots at Corcubion such prodigious spirits, that they were with difficulty restrained from marching off in a tumultuous body to the enemy's head-quarters, to expel them forcibly from the province. But as these good folks were nearly all unarmed, we prevailed upon them to wait a little, in the expectation that some of the numerous English ships which we knew were

cruising along the coast, with a view of giving assistance to the cause, might touch at this bay.

In the meantime, we reiterated our advice to the Junta, that they would take some more systematic precautions than any they had yet adopted against a sudden incursion of the enemy's troops. They replied, that they had secretly done so, and that every pass was watched and guarded, except one, which, they said, it was out of their power to put in a proper state of defence without our help. The captain begged to know what kind of assistance they required; for he was not much disposed to allow his marines to act in such company. He was not a little relieved, therefore, by their saying, that what they wanted was not soldiers or sailors, but a couple of the frigate's quarter-deck guns, to plant in one of the passes of the mountains. They described this pass as being so narrow, that, if it were once fortified in this way, the whole strength of the French might be kept

in check, until the necessary measures could be taken to bring up the patriot forces from Corcubion to complete the victory.

The captain again assured the Spaniards of his willingness to give them any number of guns, or any thing else he had on board, provided it were shewn to be necessary to the common cause; but that he could not dismantle his ship without first ascertaining this point. I was accordingly despatched to the pass in the mountains, spoken of by the Junta, with orders to make a survey of the ground, and to report my opinion as to the practicability of its being effectually defended against the French army, by a couple of two-and-thirty pound carronades.

The place pointed out lay about fifteen miles from Corcubion; and I set off under the guidance of peasants provided by the Junta, with an escort of half-a-dozen soldiers from the camp, the whole party being very respectably mounted on mules. This was on the 8th of April, and we reached our destination in the course of the day. My imagination had pictured to itself a narrow

gorge, or cleft in the hills, like one of those Swiss passes in which the Burgundian invaders were demolished by the rocks and trunks of trees rolled down upon them by the natives. As we jogged along, therefore, I turned over in my mind the various sentences of my future official report, in which was to be described the effect which cannon, placed at the end of the pass, would have upon the advancing enemy, and had worked myself up to a high pitch of military enthusiasm, in which I was well seconded by the guides and escort.

Much was my disappointment, therefore, when I came to the spot designated by this most precious of Juntas as one capable of being defended by a couple of guns against ten thousand French troops. It was an open, cultivated valley, at least a league wide, formed by ranges of hills, not rugged and inaccessible, but quite smooth, and easily to be traversed by any description of troops, artillery inclusive.

I was doubly provoked; first, at finding there was not the slightest chance of stop-

ping the enemy, should he be inclined to advance by the high road which passed along the valley; and secondly, at my own folly in having given any credit to the assertions of the Junta, after the innumerable proofs we had had of their loose and large way of speaking. My sagacious and experienced captain knew them better; for, just as I was starting, he said—

“ You are going on this expedition, remember, at the request of the local authorities here; but I venture to prophesy that you will find their narrow pass so wide, that instead of our being able to defend it by two or three guns, it will turn out a full gun-shot in width.” And so it literally proved; for, in fact, not one of the Junta could ever have seen it.

The trip itself was extremely amusing, and the reception I met with from the inhabitants most kind, although not in all respects precisely of the description I could have liked. As the evening fell, we repaired to the nearest village, where the Curate, upon being informed of my mission, invited

me to his house, apologising at the same time for his want of better accommodation. Supper is a great meal with the Spaniards; but I had not yet acquired a taste for the loads of odious garlic with which every thing, bread inclusive, was saturated; and finding that the honest Cura made a point of my eating of every dish on his well-spread table, I was glad to plead extreme weariness in excuse for my want of appetite, and so escaped the garlic. I comforted myself, however, with the prospect of something better in the morning; for I was not more tired than hungry.

I was then shewn to a great lobby, or barrack room, on the mud floor of which were spread mats for the escort by which I had been accompanied from the coast, and here and there stood a sort of truckle bed. On one of these I was fain to lie down 'all standing,' as we call it at sea, 'like a trooper's horse,' merely wrapping myself well in my boat cloak, in the midst of a famous party of snorers, scattered about on the mats round me. I soon fell asleep, but only to dream of

delicious suppers and breakfasts I was never doomed to taste—at least on that expedition. During one of these visions, I fancied there was placed before me a huge bowl of tea and a pyramid of rolls worthy of Hatchett's coffee-house. I eagerly stretched forth my hand to clutch the feast, but was instantly awaked by a voice calling out in Spanish,

“What the devil do you want, Senor Ingles, with my night-cap?”

“Something to eat,” I said, half asleep.

“Something to eat!” cried the voice. “You would eat nothing at supper, and now do you expect to find victuals in bed?”

On rubbing my eyes, and sitting up, I observed, by the flickering light of two or three lamps, that the hall was quite full of company, some asleep, and some only then lying down. The number of the Curate's guests was so great, and the accommodation so scanty, that a couple of great lumbering Spaniards, rolled up in their half-wet capotes, had stretched themselves on the bed I had never doubted was intended for me alone.

My first impulse was to resign the whole couch to the natives, and seek for a less crowded birth on the ground. But the night was cold, the mud floor damp, and I had the advantage of priority; so I only pulled my cloak the tighter round me, and made the most of my queer predicament till the day broke.

At sunrise the servant brought each of the party a very small cup of chocolate, and one sweet cake. I could easily have swallowed a dozen such; but as I thought this mouthful was merely preparatory to breakfast—a sort of whet—I asked for no more.

I lost no time in repairing to the Curate's room, expecting to find a pleasant hot meal smoking on the venerable pastor's board. But nothing of the kind saluted my eyes. Abstinence, indeed, had so far modified the delicacy of my tastes, that I should now most gladly have hailed those perfumes which drove me from supper the evening before. Every time the door opened, I looked for the entry of a dish of stewed kid, or hashed fowls, or some remains of the olla podrida which

I had despised over night. Not a morsel of any thing eatable made its appearance; and the Spaniards sat on, prozing, and smoking, and fighting the French in battles as substantial as the fumes of their tobacco. At length, losing patience, I said to my neighbour, —

“ At what hour does our worthy host breakfast ? ”

“ Breakfast ! ” cried the Curate, overhearing the question ; “ have you not had breakfast ? ” and calling to the boy at the door, made him fetch me just such another thimble-full of chocolate as had been given to us a couple of hours before. The horrible conviction now flashed upon me, that as these folks eat a prodigious supper late at night, and dine next day at noon no less copiously, they are careless about the best meal in the day ; and I learnt, practically, and for the first time, the value of Major Dalgetty’s praiseworthy maxim on the score of ‘ Provent,’ which enjoins the soldier to lose no opportunity of laying in a complete day’s provisions, no matter what the hour may be.

But as I had still much hard work to go through, I could not let things pass at this rate, and therefore, in as good Spanish as I could muster, explained to the old Cura, that our English habits required us to prepare for the day's labour by making a hearty meal in the morning—that, in short, I should be very glad if he could let me have something to eat.

A search for food was accordingly made by the domestics ; but the unusual number of guests, and especially my ' tail,' which, for the honour and glory of having an escort, and for no earthly use, I had brought with me from the camp, had swallowed up every vestige of meat in the house. In about an hour, after much hunting, two eggs, boiled to a stone, and a dry crust of stale, sour bread, were placed before me ; and I began to think the life of a soldier not half so agreeable as that of a sailor.

It is a happy arrangement of nature, by which most people, upon the whole, are content to remain as they are ; or, which comes nearly to the same thing, would not ex-

change with any other person. I suppose few soldiers would like to change lives with a sailor; and yet it would, perhaps, be easy to shew how much better off we are than they, when both parties come to real service. It is a comfortable thing, for example, to know that each one shall have a bed to himself, though the width allowed be only a foot and a half; instead of being packed like red herrings in a barrel, as we were at the Spanish curate's on the first night of my soldiership. In the next place, we carry, not only our provisions with us, but our cooks and kitchens. A clove of garlic dare no more shew its head in the galley of a man-of-war, than at a ball-supper prepared by Mr. Gunter.

In more serious matters, too, we have often the advantage over the army. In action, for instance, if a soldier is wounded, he may lie on the field for days; on board ship, he is under the surgeon's hands in twenty seconds after he is struck, and is then placed in a snug bed, under cover, carefully nursed and protected. Alas! for the wounded soldier

in a field that has been well fought, but is afterwards abandoned to the enemy, or to the tender mercies of the peasantry, hardened into marauders by the destruction of their flocks, and herds, and crops, and houses, and the dispersion of their families. The retreat of an army is always so bitter a sacrifice, that its evils are proverbial. Hardly any naval service can be named which is so trying, or so full of hardships. I speak chiefly of the relative comforts of the two services; and in this matter, I think, there can be little question about which has the advantage. It might be instructive, perhaps, to extend this comparison between the two services; but I must resist the temptation to speculate on this topic at present, and return to the poor patriots at Corcubion, over whose unconscious heads the thunder-cloud of war was just about to burst. I have inverted the theatrical order in these matters, and have shewn the farce first—the curtain must now draw up to exhibit the tragedy.

CHAPTER III.

DESTRUCTION OF CORCUBION.

ON returning from the interior on the 9th of April, I found the *Endymion* still lying in Finisterre bay, where she had been joined by His Majesty's ship *Loire*, a frigate despatched from England, with a supply of arms and ammunition expressly for the insurgents of Spain. Her orders had been, to sail along the coast, and wherever she found the patriots in force, and willing to receive the proffered assistance, to furnish the inhabitants, as far as might be possible, with the means of annoying the French. When the *Loire* came off Cape Finisterre, she saw our mast-heads, close in with the land. She immediately tacked, and stood in till near enough to shew her number, and

telegraph the object of her mission; upon which, she was ordered into the bay, as we were the senior officer.

The whole world at Corcubion were thrown into extravagant joy by this unlooked-for piece of good fortune; and nothing certainly could have been more seasonable than a supply of several thousand muskets, being nearly one for every unarmed peasant at our camp—of those at least who were in some degree organized and drilled. But as there were still upwards of a thousand peasants over and above those formed into corps, and many others were crowding in from the country, it was thought right to despatch the Loire to England for a fresh supply.

The arms and ammunition being landed in the evening, were placed in a storehouse, ready to be distributed next morning to the troops; and, of course, as there was no longer any cry of 'falta solamente armas,' nothing was talked of but drubbing the French at all points—recapturing Santiago—and finally, tossing the few invaders who should remain, neck and heels over the Pyrenees!

Early next day, we proceeded to the shore in great glee, to be present at the grand distribution of arms to the patriots in their camp. The Junta had promised to have every thing ready; and from the enthusiasm manifested not only by the troops, but by all other classes, we began to think a new leaf was to be turned over, and that the Spaniards would redeem their waning character—shewing the world, after all, of what genuine stuff they were made.

On reaching the council room, however, where we had reason to expect the Junta in full cavalcade, ready to escort us to the camp, we learned, to our utter astonishment, that the patriotic army, as they were pleased to term it, had broken up that morning at two o'clock, from the camp at Bernun, which lay near to Corcubion, and marched to a place called Paisas, twenty miles further off!

“Well,” we exclaimed, “but they have surely taken the new supply of arms with them?”

“No,” said a member of the Junta, “there

they lie still in their cases, all except a few hundred stand, which they took before marching to Paisas."

"But why, on earth, have they gone from the camp at all? and wherefore unarmed? Where could they have been so advantageously posted as at Bernun?" were some of the numerous questions showered by us on the perfectly unmoved, stately president of the Junta, who listened to all we had to say quite patiently.

When we had done, he took his cigar from his mouth, and, looking exceedingly wise, answered, diplomatically, with a slow shrug of his shoulders, "Quien sabe?" which, being interpreted, means, "Who can tell?" Then, resuming his cigar, and offering us his bunch to choose from, he began to converse about the future campaign, as if he and his precious set of colleagues were fit to bear the weight of mightiest monarchies on their shoulders.

Nothing is so utterly hopeless as the task of making a Spaniard move quickly. It was in vain, therefore, to urge the Junta to send

off immediate orders to recall, or, at least, to arrest the troops, till they had arms put in their hands, their cartouch boxes filled, and their arrangements got into some kind of trim to meet the enemy, should he think of coming down upon them. All we could extract from the Junta was, that as their orders had been given upon solid grounds, they could not be rescinded. Our further efforts, therefore, were directed to precautionary measures ; and as the town, which was defenceless in itself, was now left completely open by the removal of the patriots, we entreated the Junta to send out spies and scouts, of their most confidential people, along the road leading from the French head-quarters, that we might have some warning of the enemy's approach. Either to please us, or to get rid of our importunity, they promised to do something of this kind, but never moved another step in the matter.

As the Junta had taken no measures to keep open the communication between the town and their forces, Lieutenant Thruston was sent off to the insurgent head-quarters

at Paisas, to render any service to the cause, which his talents and activity might bring to bear upon the sadly misdirected fortunes of these poor Spaniards. At all events, it was desirable that some correspondence upon which we could depend, should be kept up with the ship; for no reliance whatever, we found, was to be placed on the Spanish accounts sent us daily from the camp. In the mean time, we assisted the fishermen, and more stirring part of the townspeople, in the completing the equipment of several gun-boats, which, in the absence of better means, it was thought might keep the enemy at bay, should they come near the town, as the fire from these vessels commanded the main road for a considerable distance.

These, and all the other precautions we could think of, became every hour more necessary; for reports poured rapidly in from the country, stating that the French had actually moved from Santiago in two divisions—the first of a thousand men, the other of six hundred—and that one of these corps had been seen in full march towards

the coast. Still, even when we knew that the enemy was bearing down upon us, we could fall upon no means of rousing the imperturbable Junta to any thing like action, or even precaution. They had good mules, and willing men, in abundance, at their command, and yet not one courier could we prevail upon these snail-like statesmen to send out to ascertain the truth of these alarming reports. The oracular Junta declared, that as it was impossible so small a body of French would dare to place themselves between the sea and Paisas, where their patriotic army were now stationed, it was obviously useless to take any measures to ascertain the facts of the case. The whole of these reports were spread, they assured us, by the disaffected, merely to create alarm amongst the inhabitants, and so to lessen their efforts in establishing a force destined very speedily to expel the enemy from their country. In the midst of much doubt as to other points in this history, one thing was quite clear to us—that if the Junta of Corcubion had been the veriest traitors that ever

lived, instead of being merely the most sincere, but the most thickskulled and pig-headed of patriots, they could hardly have played the enemy's game for him more completely than they did.

In the mean time, as these local authorities would not act, we took such measures as we could, without directly offending their very touchy pride, and secretly hired men to go along the roads to gain information of the actual state of affairs. Some of our messengers came back to us early next morning, to say that, although they had not seen the French, they were undoubtedly in motion, as the peasantry were flying in all directions, and the smoke of many burning villages could be distinguished far up the valleys,—a sure indication, they said, of the enemy's approach. This, we afterwards found, was in some respects a piece of exaggeration on the part of our scouts; for we had ample ocular proof that the French knew better what they were about, than to lay a country waste on the advance, over which they meant again to retire. It was only on

their return that they spared nothing, carrying fire and sword into every corner.

The captain of the *Endymion* now became seriously alarmed for the fate of the town he had been called upon to protect. But all he could possibly do, was to send a fresh supply of ammunition for the gun-boats, and a message to the Junta—of which I was the bearer—to say, that, if they wished it, the frigate should instantly be warped close to Corcubion to cover the escape of the inhabitants, since, from all he could learn, the enemy were coming in such force as to break through and overwhelm the half-armed peasantry at Paisas.

We rowed smartly up the bay, but had scarcely doubled the point of land at the entrance of the harbour, when we observed a smart cannonading open from the gun-boats stationed near the Santiago road. This fire was promptly returned from the neighbouring heights by a continued discharge of musketry. The enemy, in fact, had pounced, unseen, on their prey; for we could now distinguish the French soldiers

pouring into the wretched town from both sides of the valley. Many of the inhabitants rushed to the fishing-boats on the beach, and leaping into them, indiscriminately, pushed into the stream. As we rowed up the harbour, we met hundreds of these poor people, half dressed, screaming, and struggling hard to get beyond the reach of shot. Others fled along the sides of the hills towards the bay, hoping to be picked off the shore by the boats, or, if they failed in this, to conceal themselves in caves amongst the rocks. Of these fugitives, great numbers were brought down, like hunted deer, or like game in a 'battu,' by the fire of the enemy, whose cruel measures had been taken with so much skill that the devoted town was nearly surrounded before the day broke. The whole face of the little harbour was soon covered with boats flying from this scene of destruction, and happy were those who escaped with their lives. The adjacent banks, too, were crowded with groups of men, women, and children, shrieking in a most touching manner, and entreating their friends

to take them into the boats—already overcrowded. So completely hemmed in, however, were these wretched people, that escape was almost impossible. The horror and confusion of this frightful spectacle were increased by the conflagration of the town, in the streets of which deeds of still greater atrocity were going on.

Of course, we could be of no use to such multitudes—fifty such boats as I was in would not have held half the people, and long before the frigate could have entered the harbour, all was over. It was too late, of course, to be carrying messages to the Junta, who, by this time, were mixed up with the rest of the sufferers in this common calamity. From being, heretofore, the objects of our contempt and ridicule, they now came to share in our compassion, which was all we had to offer to this unhappy spot.

As it was useless to land, I rowed past the flaming town towards the headmost gun-boats, to supply them with ammunition. The sailors were fighting as gallantly as possible—a circumstance which, by the way,

offers a curious distinction between these Spanish gun-boatmen and the patriotic troops on shore. The gallantry and steadiness of these people arose, possibly, from their great experience, during the war with England, in the gun-boat service in the Gut of Gibraltar. Not only our merchant ships, but even large men-of-war, when becalmed in the Straits, were often much harassed by these musquito fleets; and it is probable, the greater part of these sailors, who behaved so well at Corcubion, may have served their time at Algeziras, in Gibraltar Bay.

Be the cause what it may, the gun-boats were serving it out very handsomely to the French soldiers as they came round the corner. Unfortunately, the two headmost boats got entangled somehow or other, and the second in the line, not being able to distinguish her consort in the smoke, fired a shot right into the magazine of the vessel a-head of her. In one moment the boat and most of her crew were blown high into the air. We were so near at the instant of this catastrophe, that the fragments fell on board of us; indeed,

had we arrived twenty seconds sooner, we must have shared the same fate. We lost no time in distributing the powder with which we were loaded to the other boats, and then busied ourselves in saving such of the blown-up seamen as were swimming about. These poor fellows we carried on board the frigate, and though most of them were in a shocking condition, they all recovered.

Meanwhile, the French made such quick work of their task of destruction, that, as we rowed down the harbour again, they were retiring from the town and re-forming on the road beyond the bend or turn opposite to which the gun-boats were stationed. Though Corcubion was now in flames from one end to the other, it was easy, amongst the other burning houses, to make out the storehouse, near the beach, in which we had recently deposited about half a million of ball cartridges, landed from the Loire along with the muskets. The powder was in barrels, to be sure, but we had no idea that this would afford an effectual protection to it against the burning timbers of the roof when it fell in. We ob-

served, at the same time, a body of some eighty or a hundred French soldiers close to the magazine, busily employed in building up our newly arrived muskets into a great pile, along with doors, window-frames, and other combustibles. When all was completed, the heap was set fire to, amidst the exulting shouts of the invaders, who were seen dancing round it like a parcel of wild Indians after sacking a village. I trust there was nothing unpardonably uncharitable in our devoutly hoping that some happy spark might fall amongst the cartridges in their vicinity, and send this party somewhat faster out of the village than they came into it. We could hardly doubt, indeed, that such would speedily be their fate; for the flaming roof of the magazine had by this time fallen in upon the powder barrels, and we lay on our oars to enjoy the scatter, which we imagined must take place ere long.

Such are the bitter feelings which this brutal kind of warfare is sure to excite; and I beg to refer any one, who finds fault with the word 'enjoy,' in the above sentence, to

the books on the Peninsular war, describing hundreds of scenes not less horrible than this too common-place massacre at Corcubion; and if he can then say that he would not, in such a case, have been pleased to see the whole of this group blown into the air, in the midst of their unhallowed—unsoldier-like—unnecessary scene of butchery, I wish such reader joy of his charity. The sailors in the *Endymion's* jolly-boat, at all events, had none of this milk of human kindness to spare on the occasion; for as we gave way again past the town, one of the men shook his fist at the troops near the magazine, and exclaimed, with more truth in his figurative language than generally belongs to one of the coarsest of those epithets which sailors are so fond of using—

“ You bloody rascals!—I only wish the officer would let me land, just to put a match amongst the cartridges close aboard of you—and then—how you would spin into the air!”

By this time the shores of the harbour were quite deserted; for such of the inhabitants

as had not been put to death had stowed themselves away in holes in the rocks, or were hid in the ravines. With the exception, indeed, of numerous dead bodies, which lay scattered along the banks near the town, no trace of the native population was now to be seen; and I returned on board, with no very agreeable story to tell.

While these proceedings were going on, the army of peasants at Paisas got intelligence of the enemy having passed the bridge of Olviera, on their way to Corcubion. In fact, their absurd march from Bernun had left the road as open as any Frenchman could have desired. Whether, if the Spaniards had staid at Bernun, where they were first stationed, they would, or could, have opposed any effectual resistance to the incursion of the enemy, is very questionable; but nothing was more clear, than that, by thus stepping several leagues directly out of the way, they almost invited the French to enter the village. Had our opinion of their wisdom not sunk so very low, we might have suspected them of treachery; but this com-

pliment to their understanding, at the expense of their patriotism, we found it difficult conscientiously to pay the natives.

As the insurgent troops at Paisas had in this way allowed the French to slip past them, their next bright thought was, to make what I believe military men call a flank movement, and thus, by gaining the high road to Santiago, cut off the enemy's retreat, and seize all the troops which had been destroying Corcubion.

“ They seize that Dervise!—seize on Zatanai!”

says the Corsair; and the task in this instance was about as easy.

I have already mentioned that Lieutenant Thruston, on the evening before the attack was made, had been despatched to the headquarters of the patriots to keep up our communications, and, as far as he could, to induce the Spaniards to act with something like system or sense. He had a very difficult, as well as a delicate game to play, and acquitted himself with great discretion in circumstances of no small intricacy as well as danger.

He reached Paisas at three o'clock in the morning, after having narrowly escaped being taken prisoner by a party of French dragoons. These troops formed a part of the force sent to destroy Corcubion; and as the whole surrounding country was now aware of the advance of the enemy, Mr. Thruston naturally expected to find the patriots at Paisas under arms, and in great numbers. Instead, however, of the thousands they had been in the habit of talking of, all ready to take the field the instant the French appeared, only forty men could be mustered! All the others had dispersed amongst the neighbouring valleys. Of course, Mr. Thruston urged Lapido the priest, and Camaño the soldier, to collect as many armed men together as they possibly could, and to march instantly to the defence of the town, which he had too good reason to believe would ere long be in flames. He succeeded much better than was usually the case with these slow-moving gentlemen, and, in the course of a few hours' march, his force was augmented to four or five hundred men, nearly all with muskets.

in their hands. It need hardly be mentioned that the division of our grand army, usually the most busy in spouting patriotism at the camp, with only pikes, scythes, and ploughshares in their hands, were all gone, never to form again.

By dint of hard marching, Lieutenant Thruston managed to bring the insurgent forces to the top of the high ground which overlooks Corcubion, about the time when the French, fatigued with burning, murdering, and plundering, were drawing off from the town. When the enemy's troops reached the foot of the hill, from the top of which the Spaniards were contemplating the destruction of their homes, the French infantry very coolly sat down on the grass to rest from their labours; the cavalry dismounted quite at their ease, as if in perfect security, though it was clear they must have seen the ridge of the hill covered with armed patriots.

Now was the moment, thought Mr. Thruston, to make a rush down upon the wearied invaders, for the position gave the Spaniards

every possible advantage over their enemies ; and if the patriots had possessed any degree of firmness or good discipline, the French, who were not one quarter so numerous, might certainly have been overthrown, and, possibly, taken prisoners. The zealous Lapido thought so too ; and, being heartily seconded by Camaño, the patriots were ordered to advance to the attack, but not to waste their fire till they came quite close to the enemy, and, indeed, rather to trust to the effect of the rush down hill, and to the vigour of their arms in the use of the bayonet, than to the fire of their musketry.

There was a great cheering of Viva ! viva ! upon these orders being given, and the Spaniards moved on to the charge in a style worthy of the days of their own Cid Campeador. But this lasted only till they came within about a couple of gun-shots of the French troops, upon which, in spite of all the officers could do, the patriots halted, and commenced a brisk fire directed towards the enemy, who took no more notice of the circumstance than a great mastiff or New-

foundlander does of the harmless yelping of a dozen puppy dogs, ready to turn tail the instant they see their antagonist prick up his ears.

I am ashamed to say, this humiliating figure too well describes the proceedings of our patriotic allies—good men and true, I doubt not, if properly disciplined, and commanded by officers they had long known, and learned to confide in; but, when brought together in this way by mere alarm, they were fit for none of the purposes of real war. Accordingly, it was now observable that more than half their number had gone off to the rear, under the pretence of their ammunition being expended, while those who remained merely loaded and fired off their pieces in the direction of the distant enemy, to the great waste of powder and ball, but without working the smallest mischief on their foes. The manner in which they made their own personal assurance doubly sure in this matter was described as being ludicrous enough. They first ran to the brow of the hill, from whence they got a glimpse of the

enemy, sitting at his ease in a field a quarter of a mile off, and then having fired, ran back again a hundred yards to reload in security!

This sham fighting lasted for nearly half an hour, when the French, who by this time had taken sufficient rest, and drawn together their scattered forces, rose from the ground, buckled on their greatcoats and knapsacks, but, without any fuss, or seeming to care one straw about the Spaniards, advanced slowly up the hill, directly in the face of the patriots' fire. At the first symptom of a movement on the part of the enemy, one half of the few Spaniards who still remained on the top of the hill turned to the right about, and fled to the mountains, notwithstanding the commands and entreaties of their officers, whom Mr. Thurston described as having stood gallantly enough. When the French came within musket-shot, they threw forward some sharpshooters, who commenced firing on the Spaniards. I need hardly add, that the greater number of the sadly reduced forces of the patriots now took to their heels. About

this time several of the natives were struck down, upon which the rout became general, that the two chiefs and the British officer soon found themselves quite alone on the top of the ridge, with not a single man of all their grand army in sight!

There was now, of course, nothing left for it but 'sauve qui peut;' so the old priest, accompanied by his brave fellow-soldier, and followed by the British lieutenant, turned about their horses, and galloped off likewise. Fortunately for them, the French cavalry were either so much fagged by the night's march, or sated with the work of destruction in the morning, that they considered it not worth while to engage in the pursuit. Be the cause what it may, the French made no attempt to catch the fugitives, but, turning into the main road, went off towards Santiago, from whence they came. Lieut. Thruston, after encountering great hardships, and making some hairbreadth escapes, contrived to reach the coast, and eventually to get on board his own ship.

Thus ended the renowned battle of Cor-

cubion, which the no less renowned Junta of that city ever afterwards spoke of as a victory.

Throughout the whole affair which has just been described, the French, it will be observed, treated the peasantry with a degree of contempt, which shewed how much better these veteran invaders were aware of the utter insignificance of such loosely organized forces than we strangers had been. I suspect, it is only behind walls, amidst the mountains, or in the fastnesses of a forest, that mere peasantry can ever act with any hope of advantage against regulars; and the reason is very obvious. To impart to bodies of men what is called military strength, there must be order of some sort. Discipline, or, in other words, systematic habits of prompt, unreflecting obedience, confirmed by long-continued practice, producing confidence in one another and in their chiefs, can alone give that efficient description of order which belongs to regular troops. With thoroughbred soldiers this system is found to be equally efficacious in a plain as in a closed fortifica-

tion—in the exultation of advance, or in the despondency of a retreat. On the other hand, irregularly organized bodies of men, who have little confidence in their companions, still less in themselves, and not much more in their officers, and who have had no experience either of the dangers of war, or of the chances of escape, require something extrinsic to produce that degree of exact order, which appears to be quite essential to military strength.

The darkness and intricacy of the cork forests of Spain, or the height and rugged nature of their snowy sierras, gave unbounded confidence to the guerillas, while the talents and enterprise of various distinguished leaders inspired respect for them amongst their followers. Many rude combinations were afterwards established by these chiefs, which, although they fell far short of the systematic organization of regular war, came, more or less, within the definition of order; and the result, we all know, was of the highest importance in the great Peninsular contest.

But the most striking examples of the efficacy of mere order, considered both in its mechanical and in its moral sense, are furnished by those cases where the Spaniards established themselves behind walls, or barricaded themselves in streets, as at Saragossa. The simple circumstance of having a visible line chalked out to the whole body, along which it becomes each man's individual, as well as collective duty, to stand firm, gives the semblance, and indeed the reality of system. To such an extent will this take place, that if there be only superadded some few advantageous circumstances, a body of totally undisciplined men will often act as efficiently as if they had been trained to the highest degree of discipline. But in open plains, where the whole scheme of military order is of a moral description, and where there is no definite course of action obvious to the sense of every person, the very same men who behind a wall had never flinched, would probably not stand for an instant against regular troops.

The American militia, at New Orleans,

when placed behind a very insignificant breast-work, which afforded them little or no protection, and a ditch of only a few feet in width, stood firm to a man, and gallantly repulsed an attack made by highly disciplined troops. But the result might have proved very different, if the sagacity of the accomplished general who commanded the Americans, had not been proof against the solicitations of his successful, but unorganized militia, who eagerly desired to be led forward into the open fields, where the English regulars were drawn up in order.

In short, all experience shews, that it is idle to talk of the bravery of irregular troops. The moral courage, indeed, of an officer, or of any other gentleman, being derived from principle and from the habits belonging to intellectual cultivation, is a different affair entirely from what is meant when the word is applied to masses of uneducated, or low-bred men. If it be of the true stamp, it is liable to none of the ebbs and flows just alluded to, and, consequently, endures through every change of circumstance.

The French, after the skirmish of the morning near Corcubion—if a contest deserve that name, where all the fighting was on one side—retired about three leagues to a place called Hopital, where they regaled themselves at the expense of the wealthier inhabitants. They slept there, and in the morning, in testimony of their gratitude for the night's lodging, or, as they said, to punish the inhabitants for flying away from them, burned down the houses. Some of the people, indeed, who had been fool-hardy enough to remain, the day before, on the approach of the enemy, were cut down at their own doors. In this reckless manner the division of troops returned to Santiago, quite unmolested, burning every village on their way back, and laying waste the country in every possible manner. There were no fewer than five priests of different parishes, and several hundreds of peasants, both male and female, put to death on this unfortunate occasion; and, amongst the number, my worthy friend the Curate, at whose house I slept when sent to explore the passes of the

mountains. In short, they spared nobody they could lay their swords upon—their object being, to strike terror into the souls of the inhabitants of the surrounding country, and, by the fearful example of poor Corcubion, to teach the inhabitants of the adjacent districts no longer to trifle with their requisitions.

CHAPTER IV.

CONSEQUENCES OF FOREIGN INVASION.

EARLY on the day after Corcubion was sacked, we sent boats to assist those inhabitants who had escaped the slaughter, and to ascertain what had become of the powder we had left there, which had evidently not been reached by the flames, otherwise we must have heard the explosion. On landing at the wharf, near which the magazine was situated, we observed that the roof had fallen in. As the beams were still smoking, it became a matter of no small difficulty to determine what should be done in order to withdraw the powder, for it was no joke to be stepping about amongst burning timbers, on the tops of barrels filled with ball cartridges!

Whilst we were consulting together upon this matter, some of the sailors, unseen by us, had forced the door, and, with that reckless sort of sang froid which makes all kinds of danger equally indifferent to them, commenced pitching the scorched beams out of the windows. Perhaps these proceedings ought to have stopped, for a single spark communicating by a crevice to the powder in any one of the barrels would have blown the whole party, sailors, officers, boats and all, into the air. The service, however, was entered upon, and we let it continue, till the whole platform was cleared of the half-extinguished rafters. The barrels were then carefully removed; and, what was very odd, and sufficiently startling, several of them were actually smoking, and so much charred on the upper side, that a slight degree of pressure of the finger made the wood crumble down amongst the cartridges. One of these barrels, I remember, was kept by the captain, for a long time afterwards, as a curiosity. The number of musket-ball cartridges in this storehouse was upwards of

three hundred thousand, so that the scatter which an explosion must have caused would have been somewhat serious.

The town itself presented a most melancholy spectacle; but it was a scene which description can but feebly paint. Such of the wretched inhabitants as had not been put to death, were gradually returning to their homes—that is, to the bare walls of their houses. Nothing was heard but weeping and wailing in every quarter. Numerous families who, up to this time, had been in flourishing circumstances, but whose numbers were thinned by the massacre of the preceding day, and who were now totally ruined, seated themselves in silence near the smoking embers of their former dwelling-places. A drizzling rain was falling, which added to the discomfort of these houseless and miserable people. It was quite calm, and, as few persons were stirring about, the ear could catch the sound of a general moan along the streets, from many parts of which the smoke was still rising, in straight columns, high into the air.

My orders were, to offer the inhabitants every assistance in the way of clothing and provisions that the ship could afford ; and I was just mentioning to some one that we could also lend medical aid, if it were required, when a poor woman, catching indistinctly at the words I had spoken, ran eagerly up to me, and falling on her knees, pressed my hand to her lips, and wept over it bitterly. She was strangely dressed, her clothes being merely thrown over her shoulders, and knotted in front ; while her hair, left to fly loose, fell over her neck in great disorder. She wore no shoes or stockings ; and her countenance, as well as manner, and her language too, conspired to give an idea of insanity, which I thought it by no means improbable this horrible scene of butchery might have produced. She spoke so quickly and incoherently, that for some time I could not discover what she wished me to do. At length, when the first torrent of her grief was over, and she seemed quite exhausted, I entreated her to speak a little slower, and promised to assist her to the utmost of my power. This

she tried to do, and I at last made out that her daughter had either been killed by the French, or now lay wounded at her house. In order to see if my conjecture were right, I offered to accompany her to where her daughter lay. I had no sooner spoken than she started up, expressed her joy at having fallen in with me, and away she dragged me, over the ruins, and through crowds of weeping natives, to the only house that remained unburned in that street. The door was open, and she hurried me up stairs into a large darkened apartment, round which were seated eight or ten persons, all silent, and most of them in tears.

While I was wondering where this strange adventure was to end, she drew me to a small recess in the corner, in which lay a female figure stretched on a low bed, saying, as she presented me—

“ My daughter, here is the English doctor come to visit you !”

The cause of the poor old lady's joy and agitation was now apparent ; she had set out in quest of medical assistance, and fancying,

from what I had let fall, that I was the surgeon of the frigate, had hurried me off without giving me time to explain that I could be of no use to her.

The poor daughter, a pretty young woman of sixteen or eighteen, seemed to guess the truth, for she looked up from her deathbed in my face, and shook her head; saying, with a smile, that it was very good in me to take so much trouble.

I may here observe, that I hardly remember to have seen a Spaniard, to whatever extremity reduced, forget what was due to good breeding. I do not mean to speak of that artificial politeness which deals in mere forms, and goes no deeper than the external surface of character; but to that genuine affability, or wish to please and to be pleased, which, from being cultivated on principle, and practised as a duty at all times, becomes a part of the character, and so far from being strained, really affords the most easy and natural form of expression that can be used. This habitual recollection of the feelings of

others, which distinguishes the Spaniards, certainly covers a multitude of their sins.

I was a little perplexed at first what to say or do, but thought there could be no harm in begging to know how the case stood. The girl described to me, "that a soldier had fired at her, and shot her in such a way that the ball passed completely through both legs, thus forming four different external wounds!" The mother stood by the bedside, with her hands clasped, watching for the effect which this communication was to make upon the person she supposed to be the doctor. When I declared that such a case was far beyond my skill, and that, in fact, I was not the English surgeon, the poor woman gave a faint cry, and fell back in a chair, completely broken-hearted. All I could say would not comfort her in the least; and therefore, after telling her friends, and the wounded girl herself, that the doctor should be sent for instantly, I left the house—but only to witness scenes of still greater horror. Very few of these things, it will

easily be understood, are fit for description ; for in every quarter of the town the dead and the dying were scattered about, and mixed indiscriminately with the pigs, cows, and poultry, all of which had been shot by the soldiers, apparently in mere wantonness.

I sent on board the *Endymion* for one of the medical men, who landed shortly afterwards ; but the poor girl died while he was examining her wounds.

Six or eight buildings only out of several hundred were left undestroyed in all the town ; but before any attempt was made to restore their dwellings, the first care of the Spaniards, after the departure of the French, was to collect, and expose in the church, the bodies of the unfortunate victims to the barbarity of their enemy. By some strange chance—it could hardly, I fear, be from any scruple—this church was one of the few buildings left untouched.

Besides the bodies collected in the town, many more were brought in carts from the adjacent country, and placed by the side of the others. The object of this terrible spec-

tacle was, to enable the friends of the deceased the better to recognise the features of their relatives. The search which was made during the whole of this day and the next, amongst these mangled remains, by the surviving husbands and wives, parents and children, was the most afflicting example of the miseries of war that can well be imagined. The uncertainty which prevailed amongst the returning inhabitants as to the fate of their companions, from whom they had been separated by this sudden inroad of the enemy, was not the least painful part of this scene; and I am not sure that their grief was greater when the fatal issue was fully ascertained, than whilst the mournful search was going on. At all events, it made less show in the expression; for the Spaniards, above most people I have seen, are dignified in their sorrow when the worst is known.

I remember being much struck with one circumstance of this sad exhibition, which told its story but too well. Most, if not all of the bodies exposed in the church, were either stabbed or deeply cut across their

fingers and wrists; indicating, apparently, that, when in the act of supplication, they had been sabred or bayoneted by the invaders. Their wretched hands, being naturally held up to defend their heads, were the first to receive the blows aimed at more vital parts.

I need scarcely say that this scene of bloodshed and license presented many other examples of horror which it would answer no purpose to relate. Enough, however, has probably been detailed to shew how different an affair the actual presence of war is, from what it seems when viewed through the brilliant medium of a Gazette. In that case, a battle, or the sacking of a town, has something of a picturesque effect—wild indeed, and confused, like that curious variety of the mirage called the *Fata Morgana*, in which towers and temples, shipping and green fields, are made to fill the air, along with fragments of trees, and portions of the sky. In like manner, the false conceptions which we form, at a distance, of any military exploit, are produced by something of the same kind,

—the varied nature of the medium through which the facts reach us. The truth is, that those persons who are actually engaged in battles or sieges, are too much taken up with the details of their own duty to have any general conception of what is going on ; while those who superintend the whole must not allow themselves to be distracted by particular incidents, however striking. And as amateurs are seldom to be found on such occasions with leisure to record those minute circumstances which might assist the imagination, or to combine them by aid of such general views as would prevent things running into confusion, we are left very much to the fancy of poets, or the skill of panorama painters, whose sole object is to produce what they call effect.

When I entered the church at Corcubion, the whole floor of which was paved with this frightful mosaic of dead bodies, while its roofs were ringing with the groans and shrieks of the survivors, I came to new conceptions of such matters ; and could not help thinking how salutary a lesson it might prove,

if witnessed by those more fortunate people from whose doors all the greater evils and sacrifices of war have been for ages removed.

That our contributions of this description in England have been heavy, cannot be denied, or that their pressure exists still, when the war is over. But, even if they were much more burdensome, they ought to be considered a cheap alternative for the bitter miseries, which the actual presence of fire and sword would have brought in their train; and the reversion of security which we are now enjoying, when so many other countries are distracted, and some of them ruined, may surely be looked upon as well worth the money we are paying for it.

The advantages which sprung out of the successful war against Bonaparte may be estimated, by conceiving, for a moment, what must have been our fate had he succeeded. In the mean time, our national independence, and the numberless other blessings which could not exist without that independence, are as entire now as ever they were, or perhaps more so; and since these

inestimable benefits are not only enjoyed by the present generation, but will descend, and be equally enjoyed by many generations yet to come, both we and they are justly called upon to contribute a fair proportion of the purchase-money. Our great political Estate, as it may be called, has been secured to the national family by means of a vast outlay of capital in times past; and shall we, the present heirs of entail, who are in the entire exercise of all the rights and privileges, and of the uninterrupted enjoyment of the benefits so purchased, think it hard that we should pay the interest of a debt contracted to secure such objects in perpetuity? If, in addition to this obvious position, it could be shewn—as I am strongly inclined to believe it may be shewn, however paradoxical it will appear to some people—that this very national debt contributes not only to the stability of our institutions, but to the virtue, strength, and happiness, of the people at large,—a material step would be made in reconciling us to the evils by which the collection of the revenue is attended. This,

however, is perhaps not the fittest place for such a discussion, though it may be one suitable enough for reminding the people of this country, that of all the nations engaged in the late arduous struggle, England has been the greatest gainer by the successful result, and her inhabitants by far the most inconsiderable sufferers during the contest.

As the army of Corcubion was now completely dispersed—the town itself, with most of the neighbouring villages destroyed—and many of the principal inhabitants, as well as great numbers of the lower classes, put to the sword—it was natural to conclude, that this unfortunate district would at length submit quietly to the French. But those who reason thus know little of the indomitable spirit of the Spaniard, who is a person not easily crushed, and who, though he may move out of the way of immediate danger, when untrained to stand fire, cannot be cowed by mere threats, or permanently intimidated by acts of vengeance wreaked on his friends. There is a point, indeed, as we afterwards found, at which even his noble spirit will bend, if it do

not absolutely break ; but this was not yet reached in the instance before us, for the invaders had not left the smoking town above four-and-twenty hours, before most of our opinionated old friends, the Junta, re-assembled, under a temporary shed, and went to work again with wars and rumours of war, projects of future campaigns, and of present revenge, just as if nothing had happened to disturb their councils, and entirely to overturn their combinations !

Had the talents and experience of these inimitable Dons borne any tolerable proportion to their perseverance, and their unsubdued pride, Bonaparte and his 'legions of devils incarnate,' as the vindictive ladies of Corcubion always called the invaders, might have been subdued much sooner than they were. But even this self-confidence of the Spaniards, or national arrogance, or whatever name it deserve, was certainly the eventual cause of the expulsion of the French ; and it would inevitably have led, sooner or later, to that consummation, even had they not been assisted by us. It might possibly

have cost them half a century; or the war have taken the hereditary character of the old Moorish contest; but Spain would never, I believe, under any circumstances, have yielded completely to a foreign yoke. Like the volcano of their own Teneriffe, the actual eruptions might have intermitted for long periods; but the nation would never have entirely lost its explosive character.

In the mean time, some division took place in the councils of these redoubtable statesmen at Corcubion. There were two parties—one of which had lost every thing by the late visit of the French—the other, which had still some property to lose, and could count some relatives unmurdered. Those who had lost all, were hot for war; and so, in fact, were the others, but with this difference. The ruined citizens were for beginning again instantly, and with most unwonted energy; the Junta actually prepared a proclamation, calling together those peasants who had saved their arms, to avenge the insults and wrongs put upon them by the enemy. The other party merely wished to pause a little; 'ma-

ñana' was their word; 'poco a poco'— little by little; "let us wait till the French meet with some reverse elsewhere, and are obliged to withdraw their head-quarters further off, then we can hope to harass them on their retreat, and, by taking them at an advantage, outmatch their discipline by numbers; or, by a more intimate knowledge of the passes, waylay and punish them in detail."

We were not invited, as far as I recollect, to take any share in these deliberations; indeed, it would have been a tolerable puzzle what to have advised. I think we should have taken the side of those who recommended delay, considering the sound drubbing the cause had met with, under circumstances much more advantageous than any we could hope soon to see again.

The Spaniards, as they generally do at moments when advice might be most useful, took their own line; and, before night, the warlike proclamation was issued, calling upon the troops scattered in the late 'victory' to re-assemble in the market-place of Corcubion.

But, for all this, during the whole of the next day not one man appeared; and the object of the French, in striking terror into the district, seemed to be answered.

The warlike part of the Junta who had gained the day in the discussion, aided by Camaño, the only real soldier amongst them, now made an application to the captain of the *Endymion*; and, taking advantage of the offer he had incautiously, but very naturally, made, at the moment of their greatest extremity, they claimed the fulfilment of his promise to bring the frigate into the inner harbour, abreast of the town. This step, they assured him, must restore confidence to the inhabitants, who would then speedily re-assemble, while an apprehension of the ship's broadside might keep the enemy at a distance.

The position in which the captain was now placed became extremely awkward; for the appeal of the Spaniards, whose revolt he had been in some degree instrumental in sustaining, could not be lightly dealt with; yet he well knew that his co-operation

would avail nothing against the French, if they chose to return in force. Such, indeed, was the nature of the ground, being everywhere high and bold, that troops might easily form close at hand, without being exposed to the fire of the ship. Besides which, as the town was already destroyed, or nearly so, it was really of little use to defend it further. But this last difficulty the Spaniards obviated by saying, they meant to build it up again as soon as they were assured of the protection of their allies.

The most serious objection, however, to the measure which the Spaniards urged upon us was the extreme danger to which His Majesty's ship must be exposed by entering a narrow harbour, completely commanded by heights, to which she could not elevate her guns, but where an enemy, not resisted by military, might take up a position at any moment, and thence by means of artillery knock a ship to pieces at their leisure. Added to this, there was a powerful battery at the entrance of the harbour, sufficient of itself to stop a much larger ship than the *Endymion*,

wishing to sail out. Of course, the Spaniards undertook to garrison this fort; but we had seen too much of the distinction which these warriors made between promise and performance, to think of relying upon such an engagement.

Nevertheless, as there would have been some indelicacy in making difficulties dependent upon our own chance of danger, and as it appeared to be an object of some consequence to shew how truly the English were in earnest in the common cause, it was determined to run the hazard of bringing the ship into harbour. On the 17th of April, accordingly, we sailed in, and moored close off the town. On that very day the wind chopped round to the southward, and in the evening it blew very hard — so much so, that had we been then assailed by a skilful enemy, possessed of the heights, and furnished with guns, and troops enough to prevent our landing, we must either have been sunk at our anchors, or have surrendered at discretion, after the greater number of the crew had been killed. To have beat

out against such a breeze would have been totally impossible. The critical nature of our situation now became so apparent to every one on board, that the news which heretofore flew about, unheeded, began to possess a wonderfully enlarged importance in our eyes. Our duties, also, necessarily assumed a character of earnestness which it was scarcely possible to give them before. In fact, with the exception of the burning of the town, and its attendant misery, all the rest of the campaign had seemed to us more like playing at war than real fighting.

Now, however, that we had brought our ship within range of the enemy's shot, it became of consequence to establish for ourselves something like a proper system on shore ; and for this purpose Lieutenant Thruston, who enjoyed as much of the confidence of the Spaniards as any foreigner can ever hope to gain, and who had by this time become personally acquainted with the useful men amongst them, endeavoured to rally their forces, and once more to muster them in strength.

I ought to have mentioned, that before entering the harbour we took the liberty of disarming the battery at the entrance, by pitching its guns into the sea—some eight or ten long 24-pounders—a proceeding to which the Spaniards reluctantly consented;—but it was evident the ship could not otherwise have been safe one hour—for the fort was assailable from the land side, and must have yielded to the French in a moment.

On the second day after the proclamation was circulated, not fewer than a hundred armed peasants assembled in the market-place, full of vivas! and ardour, and declaring that the rest of their companions in arms were hastening to the re-erected standard of glory, and so forth.

Contrary to expectation, these shouts were coldly received by the inhabitants. The citizens of Corcubion said little, shrugged their shoulders, tossed their cloaks over their left shoulders, smoked their cigars, and only muttered ‘paciencia!’ But the women—perhaps the only sensible people

amongst them—soon became so clamorous against any farther shew of military resistance, that the troops were removed by Camaño to a strong position about two miles distant, where it was said the rest of the army would speedily assemble. Meanwhile, the anti-military tumult got up by the women, increased to such a degree in the town, that in the course of the evening the Junta were obliged to take down their warlike address. A deputation, it seems, of the principal inhabitants, stimulated chiefly by the females, had waited upon the Junta, to say, that unless every shew of resistance to the French were, for the present, abandoned, the whole of the said Junta would certainly be put to death in the course of the night. The corporate body in charge of the public affairs knew their countrymen too well to trifle with such a formal communication, so down came the address.

We were, of course, very much provoked with the Junta for yielding so pusilanimously to what we then called mere clamour. But certainly nothing could be more judicious

than the conduct of the ladies. And what can shew more completely how the enthusiasm of the moment may blind the judgment to the most obvious truths, than the fact of our thinking these people unreasonable for not again resisting by force of arms an enemy who had proved himself many hundred fold too powerful for them?

Whatever the Junta thought, we could not doubt that the French, by means of their spies, would soon gain intelligence of the frigate being in the inner harbour; and as we knew too well by this time that there was nothing to check their proceedings, we had only to keep a sharp lookout, and be ready to give them a warm reception, if they took the low road, or to get out of their way as fast as possible if they came round by the heights. In any view, it was clear that the ship was in a most awkward scrape; for it appeared quite obvious that, without some force on shore to act in concert with us, we could do the patriot cause no good, still less be of service to the poor inhabitants, already well nigh

ruined. Indeed, our presence seemed calculated only to draw down fresh vengeance on them. Neither could we, with any decency, retire from the harbour, without some ostensible cause, though it was impossible not to feel out of our element, jammed up in this fashion, at the top of a harbour where we could not act, and where our influence, once paramount, appeared to be now totally gone.

On the morning of the 18th of April, just as the day broke, the first scene of the recent tragedy was acted over again—the whole harbour was once more covered with boats, crowded with the inhabitants flying from the town, while all the roads were choked with fugitives as before. As no enemy was in sight, we felt disposed to ascribe this to some panic; but, on sending a boat to inquire, we learned that a peasant had arrived with news of a large French force being again near the town, accompanied by a train of heavy cannon. This sounded disagreeably enough; but still no troops could be seen from the ship; and the inference was,

that the French were making a sweep round the hill, in order to gain the heights lying between the frigate and the harbour's mouth, from which their guns might command the passage, and cut off all retreat.

The incomparable Junta, however, who were still at their post, smoking their cigars, declared positively, that having examined the people who spread the alarm, they had ascertained there was not a word of truth in these reports. They had deceived us and their townsfolks so completely, once before, that little or no reliance could be placed upon these worthies now. But at this moment Camaño came on board, to say that he had himself looked along the Santiago road from a commanding station, and that no troops were to be seen. This assurance, coming from an old soldier, and a man of business in whom we had all confidence, served to dissipate any idea of the frigate being engaged in such a hopeless contest. Had the French artillery once gained the grounds above us, and near the entrance, our fate must have been sealed.

Just as the conclusion had been come to, that there was no enemy likely to take us unawares, a cannon-shot, fired from the shore, whistled over the heads of the officers, and, passing between the masts, fell beyond the ship. Before the glasses could be turned to the spot from whence the shot came, another well-directed gun was fired; but, fortunately for us, not from the heights. In the next minute the whole ridge was bristling and alive with French infantry, marching, at double-quick time, to gain the cliffs overhanging the narrowest part of the harbour, from which position they might have fired on the ship's decks with their musketry as she passed. A similar body of men were proceeding with equal celerity along the opposite or eastern side of the harbour, accompanied by artillery, which were galloping furiously forwards, some to gain the dismantled battery at the entrance, and others to perch themselves on the most commanding cliffs and other points, least within range of the ship's guns.

All the enemy's measures, up to a certain

point, had been so well taken, that, but for their impatience, it is hard to say how the frigate could have escaped capture, or entire destruction. Had the French only kept out of sight, and refrained from firing at all, till their heavy guns were brought round to the proper situations for attacking us, and if the infantry had been kept behind the ridge till the ship, in leaving the harbour, approached close to the shore, they might have nabbed us. For their musketry, fired from the high banks, and from behind walls, could easily have picked off every one who shewed his head above the bulwark; while it would have been almost impossible for our marines to have struck a man of theirs, hid as they might have been amongst the rocks. None of our great guns could have been elevated, at the same time, to reach their artillery.

But it seemed as if the officer in command of that detachment of guns sent to the eastern side of the harbour, could not resist the temptation of a shot, when he first came in sight of the *Endymion*, which ship, as we

afterwards learned from a prisoner, they already considered their prize. If musketry only had been fired at the town or at the gun-boats, we must, according to our promise, have remained to assist the inhabitants; and in this way the French could have occupied our attention, until their guns were so placed that our escape might have been rendered well nigh impossible.

Whatever was the cause, however, whether it were bad generalship, which is not likely, or merely impatience on the part of the officer, which is more probable, these indiscreetly managed shot, by giving us timely warning, saved our good frigate from being pounded to pieces.

The gun-boats, stationed off the beach, were soon driven back by the fire of several hundred men, also accompanied by field pieces. The troops then entered the ruined town, but the unfortunate inhabitants had already escaped over the hills or in boats. There was nothing left, therefore, for the ship to protect; and, of course, she made sail out of the harbour as fast as possible. Had the

wind blown from the southward, as hard as the day before, the French might have taken their position and demolished us at leisure; but, fortunately, the wind was fair, and their utmost speed was insufficient to gain the narrows before the ship reached the entrance. She then sailed past, unmolested, except by the distant artillery, which were fired briskly; in hopes, no doubt, of bringing down a mast or a yard, and so retarding our progress till the great body of the troops came near enough to act with effect.

It is difficult, at this distance of time, to understand how we could ever have consented to place ourselves in a situation where every thing was to be lost, and nothing gained — and where, without efficient co-operation on shore, it was utterly impossible we could maintain ourselves an hour against a force which we knew the French had at command. Certain it is, however, that being infected with the enthusiasm of the day, we were willing — and perhaps it was our duty — to risk a good deal, rather than have our sincerity called in question;

by throwing cold water on a cause then on the tip-top of its popularity in England. So completely was the captain determined to act in good faith with the Spaniards, that he not only brought the frigate into the inner harbour, but likewise, at the suggestion of the Junta, ordered in the French ship captured by Lieutenant Thruston at Camariñas. This advice, or request of the local authorities, coupled with some other circumstances, looked, it must be owned, very like treachery; and, indeed, there was hardly a doubt left on our minds afterwards, that the whole of the last set of measures was a trap to catch the frigate and her prize. But the wretched Junta, we had reason to believe, were made the dupes, not the parties, to this intrigue, of which we were to have become the victims. It has been seen that a mere accident saved us; but the French measures, in every thing else, were so admirably taken, that even at a moment, when we were making no very pleasant figure before them, it was impossible not to admire the skill with which they carried on the war.

I speak not, of course, of their brutal destruction of Corcubion, or the wanton slaughter of the unarmed inhabitants—these proceedings not only cruel, but ill-judged, because useless, and contributing in no respect to the advancement of military objects; but, on the contrary, interfering with them, by still further exasperating the inhabitants. Under such a system; ten times as great a force as the French marched into Spain, could not have subdued the country. But nothing could be more ably managed than their second expedition to Corcubion—excepting the casual indiscretion of firing too soon, which put us on our guard. We had many scouts along the roads, and the inhabitants of the town were by this time well aware of the necessity of keeping a sharp look-out; yet, for all this, a considerable body of troops, with guns to retard them; had almost pounced upon us before we had the slightest warning of their having left head-quarters.

Fortunately, our prize had not been brought into the scrape likewise. I forget why she

had not entered the harbour on the same day with the frigate; but certainly this did not arise from any distrust on our part. Indeed, just before the attack was made upon the *Endymion* by the troops, I was sent for the express purpose of moving the captured ship from Finisterre bay to Corcubion harbour. We had unmoored the prize, and were just about to trip the second anchor, when we saw the fishing-boats, as upon the former occasion, crowded with people, hurrying out of the harbour's mouth, and all the heights along the bay covered with the inhabitants in full flight. Presently the sound of firing was heard; this was from the artillery which had got sight of the frigate. Then there appeared a rush of the gun-boats, driven back by the fire of the troops; and lastly, came sailing out of the harbour the pretty *Endymion* herself—though in rather a shabby plight, I must own—with an escort of flying artillery on each side of her; followed by two bodies of troops, scrambling and running along the rocks, just too late to catch their prey.

In the course of half an hour, the two ships, the frigate and her prize, were safely anchored in the middle of the bay; and we could see the baffled enemy looking at us, we may suppose, with very wistful eyes. About this time one of the Spanish boats came alongside, with two or three French prisoners taken by the natives in a wine-house on the road. These men reported that the force brought against us in the morning consisted of between two and three thousand men, with a considerable number of their heaviest guns—the sole object of the expedition being the capture of the frigate, and the recapture of the Camariñas ship. It was believed in the army, they added, that both ships were in the inner harbour, and the promise of the prize-money was held out to the troops as a motive to their secrecy and expedition. They seemed to be well aware, that it was essential to their success to get round the corner, and establish themselves near the harbour's mouth before being seen from the frigate.

I need scarcely add, that the French now

completed those parts of the work of destruction left unfinished at their first visit. The church, no longer respected, was first plundered, and then burnt, as well as the few houses that had escaped before; and all the temporary roofs put up by the wretched inhabitants on their bare walls were torn down. After this the enemy fell back upon Santiago; and the poor Spaniards returned once more to their ruined houses. We did every thing we possibly could to alleviate their distress, by supplying them with provisions and clothes, and helping to repair their dwellings. But there was, of course, no more talk of resistance—indeed, we never afterwards beheld one soldier of all our patriot army; nor, it must be acknowledged, after the poor success of their exertions, were we inclined to encourage such premature and inadequate attempts at stemming the torrent. The unhappy Junta were hunted about the country like wild beasts by the French cavalry, and a high price being put on their heads, they were at length glad to seek refuge on board the *Endymion*. About thirty

persons in all, including the wives, children, and attendants of the different members of the corporation, availed themselves of our protection. We built them up a large cabin on the main-deck, made the party as comfortable as we could, and, at their own request, landed them at Vigo some days afterwards; for they deemed it most prudent to keep at a distance from home for a time. Besides which, as we had only five days' provisions left on board, we could remain no longer near Corcubion, and at last took our leave of that unfortunate spot with very different feelings from those with which we made its acquaintance a few weeks before.

It is curious that, from that hour to this, I have never been able to learn what was the subsequent fate of Corcubion, or whether it flourishes, or even exists still. As I have said before, it is one of the peculiarities of our naval ramblings, that we form the closest intimacies, swear the most eternal friendships, and then hoist sail, never to see or hear of our dear friends again. A sailor's heart has not inaptly, though somewhat in-

gloriously, been compared to a pin-cushion, stuck full of small darts, which he gets replenished at every port, and pulls out again in the interval—nothing the worse!

Yet there was one person at Corcubion—a female, too—whom none of us can easily forget, although I am sorry to say I have no recollection of her name. She was of low estate, but the true Castilian blood must have flowed in her veins.

During the period of our fancied security at Corcubion, the officers, as usual, sent their clothes on shore to be washed. It so chanced, that the captain's stock, from being much the largest, had not been sent back at the time of the last French incursion, though most of the officers' things had been received. The captain, naturally enough, gave up his linen as lost; and was even ashamed to ask about it, seeing that the inhabitants were not only burnt out of house and home, but had been stripped of very thing they possessed in the world. His Spanish laundress, however, by loading her children's shoulders, and her own, with the

half-washed linen, just as the French were entering the town, contrived not only to carry the clothes safely away, but to hide them in a cave near the beach. Meanwhile, her house, and every article belonging to herself, was burned. Nevertheless, after the French retired, she managed to get the linen properly done up, and, having brought it all on board, quietly counted it out, piece by piece—never seeming to imagine she had done any thing remarkable, or that she was entitled to make a greater demand than the bare price of the labour!

CHAPTER V.

JACK'S ALLOWANCE.

THE moment of Noon is the most important of all the grand epochs which mark the progress of time on board ship. It commences our day in nautical astronomy, and is ushered in by a number of ceremonies, some of which never fail to excite the ridicule of our 'shore going' friends who may happen to be on board; and who, from not well understanding the drift of what they see, are apt to fancy much of it unnecessary. Nothing is so easy, indeed, as to quiz those punctilious formalities with which naval discipline abounds. But if experience have taught, that many of the most valuable fruits of good order can be traced to the exact observance of these very forms, they surely lose

none of their importance from having been so long established that their origin is forgotten—still less from being laughed at by persons not having had the happiness of being brought up at sea, and therefore by no means the best judges of the utility of these refinements.

But, after all, we sailors really ought to be more indulgent to our friends, who smile at these apparent trifles; for we know only by experience, that it requires a long acquaintance with such things to understand their useful bearing on more important matters. It will often happen, for instance, that some part of a particular ceremony may be observed every day for many consecutive months or years, during all which interval it might, perhaps, have been entirely omitted, without any obvious detriment to the general course of discipline, and yet, at the end of the period, serious evils might possibly arise from its being accidentally or wilfully neglected. Unforeseen circumstances often occur so suddenly, that there is no time to make provision for the exigency; and it is then

the forms alluded to become of the utmost consequence in preserving order, chiefly by pointing out clearly to every one concerned what is usually done.

Ingenious but narrow-sighted men, sufficiently gifted, too, with talents and knowledge, sometimes take great delight in holding up to ridicule many apparently absurd, or, what they are pleased to call useless forms, in the House of Commons, the Court of Chancery, the Church, and in other long-established institutions. Their field of view seems too limited to embrace all the parts of the subject at once, and they forget how presumptuous it is, to place their own insulated opinion, and comparatively brief course of observation, in opposition to the experience of centuries, during which a boundless variety of circumstances must necessarily have brought these rules into play again and again. The fair *prima facie* inference, respecting any thing which has stood the wear and tear of many years surely is, that as it has been often tried and not found wanting, it is indiscreet to con-

demn it, merely because its value, at any given moment, may not happen to be quite obvious to a person professedly hunting for faults.

Almost all the forms and ceremonies alluded to, which constitute integral parts of the system on board ship, though, to inexperienced eyes, some of them may seem trivial and even cumbersome, and often ridiculous, have probably been found, in the long run, the most suitable, not only to the average current of probable circumstances in the course of daily practice, but likewise the best adapted to meet those uncommon incidents which, however rare, may occur, and must, therefore, be guarded against.

I remember once seeing a line-of-battle ship very nearly lost on a shoal, from one of the links of this chain of formal observances being accidentally dropped. There was an Admiral on board, and, when that is the case, he, of course, takes command of the deck if he pleases—though it is not usual for him to do so. We were beating through the Straits of Malacca one morning, when the Admiral,

who was anxious about the passage, came out of his cabin and gave various orders respecting the course, the quantity and trim of the sails, and so on. These directions were repeated to the officer of the watch by the captain, who always comes on deck the moment the Admiral appears. The lieutenant had thus two persons over him commanding the evolutions of the ship, and, of course, his responsibility was diminished in proportion. Presently the Admiral stepped into his cabin; and the captain, forgetting to go through the ceremony of re-investing the officer of the watch with the charge of the deck, went quietly below. In strictness, it is not necessary that the captain should go through any such ceremony, but it is usual to do so, especially in so ticklish a navigation. At all events, for a minute or two, the officer who was on the fore part of the deck did not perceive that he was left alone. The ship, in the meanwhile, was standing towards the shore, and as the lieutenant naturally thought, still under the joint guidance of the Admiral and captain, who, by their

interference, for the previous half-hour, had almost entirely taken the charge off his shoulders. The water shoaled so rapidly, that in two minutes the Minden would have been on shore, had not the poop midshipman detected the danger, and called out to the officer that the Admiral had gone into his cabin, and the captain below. The helm was instantly put down; but so close was the shoal, that, as the ship came round, the heel of her rudder grazed the edge of the bank, stirring up the mud in a whirlpool of ten yards across.

The moment of apparent noon, or what the astronomers term the sun's culmination—the instant, in short, when his centre passes the meridian of the ship—is called twelve o'clock. This, which is named Apparent Time, being exactly that shewn by a sun-dial, is never the same as the correct Mean Time of a clock, except near the equinoxes and solstices. These periods are about the middle of April and June, the beginning of September and the end of December. Owing, however, to the constant

change of the ship's position in longitude, far greater errors in time are produced than these, which are accounted for by the inequality of the sun's motion. As it is impossible, therefore, to have any fixed time with us regulated by a clock, as on shore, we are forced to adopt the best determinate starting point we can find. This is the moment when the sun is observed by a sextant to be at his greatest altitude above the horizon.

I need not mention, that as there are 360 degrees in the circuit of the globe, which revolves once in 24 hours, each degree of longitude must take four minutes to pass. Now, in those high latitudes where a degree of longitude—owing to the convergence of the meridians as they approach the poles—becomes only 30 or 40 miles in length, it will often happen to cruising ships that Monday may be half an hour longer than Sunday, and Tuesday, on the contrary, half an hour shorter. To make this plain, let us suppose the ship to have remained during Sunday on the same meridian—say she is

in longitude 40° W., and in latitude 60° N. Her day will have lasted in this case exactly 24 hours, as if she had been in harbour. But if, at the beginning of the next day (Monday), she happens to start a chase in the western horizon, and during the pursuit runs due west, at the rate of about nine miles and a half an hour, she will make 225 miles westing in the course of the day. In the latitude of 60° , a degree of longitude contains only 30 miles; and as each degree is equal to four minutes, 225 miles, or seven degrees and a half, make 30 minutes difference of time, and the ship will now be in longitude $47\frac{1}{2}$ W. In other, and more popular words, as she will have run away from the sun seven degrees and a half of longitude, it will cost the sun thirty minutes' time to come up to the new meridian reached by the ship, further to the westward than the day before. The length of Monday (counting from noon on Sunday to noon on Monday) will therefore consist of 24 hours and a half.

Again, if it shall happen, just at twelve o'clock on Monday, when the sun is on the

meridian of the ship, that a strange sail heaves in sight due East, and the ship starts off back again to the meridian of 40° W. at the same rate, it is clear she will now meet the sun, and thus anticipate the noon, by a portion of time nearly equal to that by which she had retarded that epoch on the previous day, by getting ahead of him. Her day, counted from one noon to the other, will now, of course, be only 23 hours and a half long. Thus, there will be one whole hour's difference between the length of Monday and Tuesday.

If this experiment be pushed to the utmost, and the entire circuit of the globe made out, it is obvious that, in going round the world to the westward, a complete day will be lost in the reckoning of time, and in sailing to the eastward a day will be gained. A ship, it is true, takes considerably longer than the sun to make this circuit, but the accumulated effect is the same. Although no one can doubt that in theory this must be so, the practical evidence of its truth generally strikes the imagination almost as much

as if it were unexpected. At least, I remember being a good deal interested by finding the Spaniards at Manilla, in the Philippine Islands, calling that Sunday which we called Monday.

Manilla lies in the China Sea, nearly in 120° East longitude; and as we had reached it by sailing round the Cape of Good Hope, we met the sun each day somewhat sooner than if we had remained stationary since noon of the day before. Consequently, it was eight o'clock on Monday evening, by true solar time at Manilla, when our chronometers—set to Greenwich time—indicated noon in England.

But the Spaniards, who first went to Manilla, had followed the opposite course, sailed to the westward round Cape Horn, and thence across the Pacific ocean. By following this course they lost a certain portion of time daily, until, on reaching Manilla, they were no fewer than sixteen hours behind hand of European time, instead of being eight hours a-head, as we were who came round the Cape of Good Hope. When these

Spanish voyagers, in crossing the Pacific, reached the meridian of 180° , they had lost just twelve hours; or, which means the same thing, when it was only midnight of Sunday by their reckoning, it was noon of Monday by their watches shewing Cadiz time. Had the present usage been followed in those early days (three centuries ago and upwards), the name of their day would have been changed from Sunday to Monday in their log-book, the moment the meridian of 180° was passed, and they had come into east longitude. With the termination of west longitude, which ends at the 180th degree, the reckoning of time, proper to the hemisphere which includes America, ought to have terminated likewise; but the Spaniards, not reflecting upon this, carried on the days they brought from Europe. So that, when they fell in with their countrymen in the Indian seas, who, from having sailed round the Cape of Good Hope from west to east, had met, instead of receded from the sun; the voyagers necessarily differed by one whole day. To repeat this in other words — the party

which sailed westward by Cape Horn were 16 hours slow of Cadiz, and those who had gone east by the Cape of Good Hope were 8 hours fast of the same place. By these joint differences, 24 hours were made up just as completely as if the whole circuit of the globe had been made.

To render all this still clearer—let it be supposed, at a given moment, that the sun is on the meridian of London. The time there is called noon—we shall suppose it to be noon of Monday. Then, at the same instant of absolute time, those voyagers at Manilla, who went to the eastward by the Cape of Good Hope, will call that moment 8 o'clock on Monday evening; while the others, who sailed to the westward by Cape Horn, might call it 8 o'clock on Sunday evening. One set being 8 hours ahead of London time, the other 16 hours behind it.

The missionaries who first visited the Friendly Islands, sailed by the Cape of Good Hope, and, like the Spaniards, omitted to change their style on passing the 180th

degree of longitude. Consequently, when they reached Otaheite (in 150° W.), they called that Sunday which in strictness was Saturday, and this erroneous reckoning still exists.*

The remedy for these mistakes is simple. When a ship, coming from the West, passes the 180th degree of longitude, she changes the name of her day in the log-book from Monday to Sunday, to suit the style of west longitude. A ship coming from the Eastward, changes from Sunday to Monday.

From this circumstance, a case of apparent difficulty often arises in the Navy. If a ship sails completely round the world by going towards the eastward, she will, by meeting the sun, have 366 noons in the course of one year; and as Jack expects, and is entitled, by law, to a bellyful every day at that hour—who is to suffer—he or the purser? The crew, it is obvious, must have their regular meals; but it would be hard that the purser should be a loser,

* See Capt. Beechey's very interesting Voyage, p. 199.

merely because the world happens not to stand still.

On the other hand, if a ship sails to the westward, and makes the entire circuit of the globe, the very self-same interval of one year will have elapsed, while the Johnnies will have had only 364 dinners served out to them—though, by the regulations of the service, they are entitled to 365. How is this to be settled?

As I was myself a little puzzled how to answer my own question, I thought it prudent to write to a friend in the Navy Office, to procure correct information. The following is the reply I received:—

“ The answer from the Victualling Office is, that the 366 days’ victualling are allowed in the voyage which gives that number of noons; but, upon the contrary voyage the purser is not cut down to 364 meals, because the men, knowing that he can claim 365 days’ victualling for the interval, demand the odd day from him, under the head of ‘Savings,’ which is accordingly allowed—so that John Bull suffers, as usual.”

I shall only add to the luminous statement of my official correspondent, that I am very sure of all the sufferings to which John Bull is said to be exposed, this is perhaps the one which that worthy old gentleman is likely to grudge the least. I may perhaps have failed to make it clear to his sober understanding how there can possibly be a year with 366 days in it ; but if he is good enough to admit the fact, on my professional assurance, I think he will likewise see the reasonableness of giving his sailors at least one dinner for every day in the year.

Noon, therefore, which is the ship's company's dining hour, forms an important era in the day of every man-of-war, and is ushered in with suitable respect. At seven bells in the forenoon, or half-past eleven, as it is called on shore, the mate of the watch goes down to the master, and tells him what o'clock it is ; upon which that officer, while he is getting his sextant ready, and looking at his own watch, to see how it agrees with the chronometer, asks the midshipman if the day be clear or

thick, how the ship's head is, and what chance there is of his seeing the sun. These are merely questions of curiosity; for whether it be a fine day or not, or whether there be any chance, or none at all, of seeing the sun, it is the same thing, or ought to be the same thing to him. By a rude inspection of the log board, the experienced eye of the master infers how much easting or westing the ship has made since noon of the day before, and, accordingly, he is prepared either to find the sun before or after the ship's time; that is, he judges whether to expect the moment of noon sooner or later than the watches shew.

So irregular, indeed, is the return of this period of our noon afloat, that it is the custom, in most ships, not to turn the half-hour glass at 7 bells ($\frac{1}{2}$ -past 11), because the interval between $\frac{1}{2}$ -past 11 and noon is seldom thirty minutes long—being sometimes fifteen, and sometimes forty-five minutes in duration. If, therefore, the sentry at the cabin-door, who has charge of the glass, were to turn it at seven bells, and it were

to be made noon when the sand had only half run out, what would he do?

How long this primitive device for measuring time by a sand-glass has continued, or will be allowed to continue, on board ships of war, I do not know; but certainly nothing can be more completely out of character with every other part of the equipment on board, or more unworthy of the present state of nautical science.

Be that as it may, the master follows the mate of the watch to the quarter-deck; and if the sun be shining out distinctly, he glances his eye to one or the other gangway, from which it can generally be seen. If the ship's course be exactly south or exactly north, it is obvious that, to get the sun's altitude at noon, the observer must place himself either forward, over the bows, or abaft on the taffrail; but, in all other cases, or nearly all, the meridian altitude can be taken from the gangway. Most ships have a very convenient little recess at the after end of the waist hammock-netting, just over the gangway-steps, bounded, as the geography

books would say, on the after side by the end of the quarter-deck bulwark, and on the foremost part by a board against which the hammocks rest. This snug corner, which is about 3 feet square, affords the officer of the watch the means of looking nearly right ahead or right astern. From this station he can also cast his eye along the whole length of the ship's side, to see if any ropes be trailing overboard, or the still greater abomination of a net full of potatoes, or a piece of salt beef or pork, silyly tied to a string, be towed alongside—a practice the men adopt, whenever they can—their object being to wash out some portion of the brine from the meat, before dressing it.

If the captain be one of the star-gazers of the ship, that is, if he takes any personal interest in, or charge of the navigation of the vessel under his command, he, of course, occupies this favourite spot, or observatory, in the gangway. Should any bold youth, therefore, have got there before him, the intruder leaps out of it in a great hurry, the instant the glitter of the captain's sextant is

seen at the top of the ladder. I should have mentioned before, that every mid who has an instrument—whether it be a wooden quadrant, or a brass sextant—is required to muster on deck at seven bells, to look out for the sun. Of course, this is the grand period for comparison of notes; and much cheerful discussion goes on as to the merits of the different observers and instruments, methods of calculation, and all the crude slang of incipient information, in which half-informed folks delight to exhibit their knowledge—quite sure they know every thing.

In fine weather, accordingly, this is perhaps one of the pleasantest half-hours in the day. The good humour extends itself all over the ship; and mid-day being the dinner-time of the sailors, some of the most important steps preparatory to that ceremony are taken in this interval. The ship's cook, with his one arm (for he has seldom more—or if he have two arms, he has certainly only one leg), empties the coppers, by means of a monstrous fork, called his Tormentors, of the beef or pork which has been in preparation

during the forenoon. He likewise allows the pease-soup to run off by a cock from another boiler into a huge tub, ready to receive it.

The number of men in a mess varies from eight to twelve in a frigate, each mess having a separate table—every man is cook in rotation, for one day only. It is customary to allow the people to change their messes monthly, giving timely intimation to the mate of the lower deck, and to the purser's steward, at the end of the month, to arrange his mess-book; no other sanction or form being necessary. In a line-of-battle ship the tables are larger, and two messes sit at the same table—one on each side. The average number in the mess is the same as in a frigate, and they are under the same regulations. A petty officer or leading man, who is styled captain of the mess, is at the head of each; and in a well-disciplined ship, he is in some manner responsible for the good conduct and cleanliness of the others. He also signs for short allowance money, savings, and so on.

The captain, first lieutenant, and mate of the lower-deck, correct their mess-books

every month from that of the purser's steward, to enable them to estimate the characters of the men who mess together, and in order to assist in referring to his associates, when the conduct of any one is called in question.

As the hour of noon approaches, the cooks of the messes may be seen coming up the fore and main hatchways, with their mess-kids in their hands, the hoops of which are kept as bright as silver, and the wood work as neat and as clean as the pail of the most tidy dairy-maid. The grog, also, is now mixed in a large tub, under the half-deck, by the quarter-masters of the watch below, assisted by other leading and responsible men amongst the ship's company, closely superintended, of course, by the mate of the hold, to see that no liquor is abstracted, and also by the purser's steward, who regulates the exact quantity of spirits and of water to be measured out. The seamen whose next turn it is to take the wheel, or heave the lead, or who have to mount to the mast-head to look out, as well as the marines who are

to be planted as sentries at noon, are allowed to take both their dinner and their grog beforehand. These persons are called 'seven-bell men,' from the hour at which they have their allowance served to them.

Long before twelve o'clock, all these, and various other minor preparations, have been so completely made, that there is generally a remarkable stillness over the whole ship just before the important moment of noon arrives. The boatswain stands near the break of the fore-castle, with his bright silver call, or whistle, in his hand, which ever and anon he places just at the tip of his lips, to blow out any crumbs which threaten to interfere with its melody, or to give a faint 'too-weet! too-weet!' as a preparatory note, to fix the attention of the boatswain's mates, who being, like their chief, provided with calls, station themselves at intervals along the main-deck, ready to give due accompaniment to their leader's tune.

The boatswain keeps his eye on the group of observers, and well knows when the 'sun is up,' by the stir which takes place amongst

the astronomers, or by noticing the master working out his latitude with a pencil, on the ebony bar of his quadrant, or on the edge of the hammock-railing; though, if he be one of your modern, neat-handed navigators, he carries his little book for this purpose. In one way or other the latitude is computed, as soon as the master is satisfied the sun has reached his highest altitude in the heavens. He then walks aft to the officer of the watch, and reports 12 o'clock, communicating also the degrees and minutes of the latitude observed. The lieutenant proceeds to the captain, wherever he may be, and repeats that it is 12, and that so and so is the latitude. The same formal round of reports is gone through, even if the captain be on deck, and has heard every word spoken by the master, or even if he have himself assisted in making the observation.

The captain now says to the officer of the watch, "Make it 12!"

The officer calls out to the mate of the watch, "Make it 12!"

The mate—ready primed—sings out to the quarter-master, "Strike 8 bells!"

And lastly, the hard-a-weather old quarter-master, stepping down the ladder, grunts out to the sentry at the cabin-door, "Turn the glass, and strike the bell!"

By this time, the boatswain's call has been in his mouth for several minutes, his elbow in the air, and his little finger on the stop, ready to send forth the glad tidings of a hearty meal. Not less ready or less eager are the groups of listeners seated at their snow-white deal tables below, or the crowd surrounding the coppers, with their mess-kids acting the part of drums to their impatient knuckles. At the first stroke of the bell, which, at this particular hour, is always sounded with peculiar vivacity, the officer of the watch exclaims to the boatswain, "Pipe to dinner!"

These words, followed by a glorious burst of shrill sounds, 'long drawn out,' are hailed with a murmur of delight by many a hungry tar, and many a jolly marine. The merry notes are nearly drowned next instant in the rattle of tubs and kettles, the voice of the ship's cook and his mates bawling out the

numbers of the messes, as well as by the sound of feet tramping along the decks and down the ladders, with the steaming, ample store of provisions—such as set up and brace the seaman's frame, and give it vigour for any amount of physical action.

Then comes the joyous grog!—that nautical nectar, so dear to the lips of every true-hearted sailor, with which he washes down His Majesty's junk, as he roughly but good-humouredly styles the government allowance of beef; and while he quaffs off his portion, or his whack, as he calls it, he envies no man alive, and laughs to scorn those party philanthropists who describe his life as one of unhappy servitude. The real truth is, there are no set of men in the world, in their condition of life—I believe I might say in any class of life—who are better taken care of than the sailors and marines of the Navy, or who, upon the whole, are more happy than they. I shall certainly make a point, some day or other, of explaining not only how all this has been brought about, but how it is kept up, and likewise how the

system may be perpetuated, in spite of the many attempts made at home to persuade the seamen that if they are not discontented, they ought to be so.

In the mean time, a few words may not be uninteresting on the daily allowance of provisions to the marines and seamen of His Majesty's service. I have often, indeed, observed a considerable degree of curiosity expressed on this score, and shall therefore transcribe, without abridgment, the regulations recently established.

It is right to preface these details with one explanatory remark. Up to the date of the following order (1824) every man on board was allowed, each day, no less a quantity than half-a-pint of ardent spirits, mixed with three half-pints of water; but, even when thus diluted, the allowance formed a quart of extremely strong drink. It was divided into two portions, one half being served out soon after noon, the other between four and five o'clock. This quantity was undoubtedly a great deal more than the average strength of men's heads could bear;

and, in the opinion of the most observant officers in the Navy, a large proportion of all the punishments, were consequent upon offences, caused by the inebriating effects of that very allowance, with which the men had been supplied by Government. The captain was not authorised to diminish the allowance, while among the men it would have been a reproach in any one not to have drunk the whole, whatever his taste or discretion suggested. In hot climates especially, I really do not think it an exaggeration to say, that one-third of every ship's company were more or less intoxicated, or at least muddled and half stupified, every evening. The effect of such a system on the health of the crews of His Majesty's ships must have been very serious, while to good discipline it was most hurtful.

It was at length determined by Government to reduce the allowance of spirits one half; and now only one quarter of a pint is served out daily. Captain Sir John Phillimore is, I believe, entitled to the praise of having first induced his ship's company to

try the good effects of drinking only one half of their usual portion of grog. This experiment was made a year or two antecedent to these regulations, and in all probability its great success suggested the general adoption of this admirable measure.

I believe I am justified in saying that the alteration has been attended by the most valuable effects; and that, so far from its being unpopular amongst the seamen, they are perfectly sensible of the salutary nature of the change. I have not myself been afloat since; but I learn, from good authority, that the effect has greatly exceeded the expectation of the warmest advisers of the plan.

On diminishing the allowance of grog, however, the Admiralty acted, not only with an exactness of good faith which was felt and acknowledged by all the fleet, but with a degree of considerate liberality, which, though it may perhaps appear a trifle in the eyes of persons to whom sailors' habits are not familiar, has gone a long way to increase their comforts, and to add to the popularity of the service. I allude to the compensation

given to the men, in lieu of the spirits taken away from their allowance. Not only is a pecuniary equivalent given them, in the shape of an addition to their monthly pay, but they have now allowed them, over and above what they had before, a quantity of tea, coffee, or cocoa (as the case may be), sufficient to make a full pint of liquid every evening.

To those who are acquainted with the peculiar cooking and slopping sort of habits in which seamen take so much delight, I need not mention how great a boon this additional meal has proved to them. Indeed, so fond are they of such messes, that, although in old times their whole allowance of cocoa was not a drop too much for breakfast, they generally managed to put by a portion of it for what they call their supper. This mess consists of a biscuit, broken into small bits, and boiled in a tin pot along with the cocoa.

A curious circumstance, I am told, has been the result of this change. In former times, it very seldom happened that the men

drew their entire allowance of bread, viz: one pound a-day; and the purser, consequently, had always some 'savings' to pay them on this account. Now, however, it rarely happens, I understand, that any bread is 'left behind;' clearly shewing, that the sailors have acquired better appetites as they have learned to drink less grog.

The whole tenour of these regulations, as well as their minutest details, shew the most thorough knowledge of the character of the men in whose favour they were established. For instance, it will be observed, by an inspection of the orders, that spirits are served out, as in all times past, only when wine or beer is not within reach; and consequently, the men would have no right, in strictness, to claim additional pay, or an additional meal at such periods. But these admirable regulations—riding over such petty exceptions—made both the compensation and the new allowance permanent, although the diminution was only occasional. That is to say, when, instead of grog, the undiminished allowance of wine or beer is

served out, the new meal, and the addition to their pay are, nevertheless, still continued.

It is by such means that the hearty goodwill of a ship's crew is at all times, and under all circumstances, most effectually won and preserved. Nor do I believe there is any set of men alive, who have a quicker or juster perception of the value of such gentleman-like treatment than sailors have; and this, by the way, is one of the best arguments in favour of correct and decorous language and conduct on the part of officers who wish to maintain their authority in full force.

Some persons, indeed, without due consideration, as I conceive, are apt to distrust the gratitude of sailors, and often to scoff at the notion of their having any just feeling for such minute attentions. But I am convinced that it is we ourselves—the officers—who are generally to blame, for the unreasonable expectations we form as to the effects of our treatment upon the men. On calmly looking back to every incident of my naval life, I can say with truth, that I find it difficult to recall a single instance in which I have

known a sailor prove himself ungrateful, or whose services, if properly managed, might not have been depended upon to the last.

By his nature and habits, Jack is a creature so essentially docile, that his merits and faults depend very much upon the discretion and talents of his officer. And I would most earnestly urge upon my young naval friends the primary importance of this truth. Their professional conduct, in fact, must always have a double effect—first on themselves, and secondly, on those under them. A generous-minded and truly patriotic officer will therefore never cease to recollect, that his crew may fairly be considered in the light of his own children, whose happiness or misery—whose errors or whose virtues, are always more or less under his control.

I have used, in the above account of ship matters, the word seaman or sailor in speaking of the crew; but it is right to explain, that in using this term in its general sense, I mean to include the royal marine, who, though in some respects a very different being from the sailor, has very nearly the same

feelings and objects. The interests of this invaluable body of men have, accordingly, been attended to, with the same good sense and generous consideration, as those of the blue jackets.

The orders now in force on this subject in the Navy are as follow :—

VICTUALLING REGULATIONS.

“ Admiralty Office, July 1, 1824.

“The King having been pleased, by his order in council of the 23d June, to establish a new and improved scale for victualling His Majesty’s Navy, a copy thereof is subjoined.

“ There shall be allowed to every person serving in His Majesty’s ships, the following daily quantities of provisions, viz.—

Bread	One pound.
Beer.....	One gallon.
Cocoa	One ounce.
Sugar	One and half ounce.
Fresh meat	One pound.
Vegetables	Half pound.
Tea	Quarter of an ounce.

“ When fresh meat and vegetables are not issued, there shall be allowed in lieu thereof—

Salt beef.....	¼ lb.	}	Alternately.
and			
Flour	¼ lb.		
Salt pork	¼ lb.	}	
and			
Pease.....	½ pint.		

“ And weekly, whether fresh or salt meat is issued—oatmeal, half pint; vinegar, half pint.

“ On the days on which the flour is ordered to be issued, suet and raisins, or currants, may be substituted for a portion of flour, at the following rate:—

One pound of raisins	{	being considered equal to one pound of flour.	
Half pound of currants	}	ditto	ditto.
Half pound of suet ..			

“ In case it should be found necessary to alter any of the above species of provisions, and to issue others as their substitutes, it is to be observed that

1½ lb. of soft bread, or 1 lb. of rice, or 1 lb. of flour	} is to be considered equal to 1 lb. of biscuit.
1 pint of wine, or ¼ pint of spirits	} is to be considered equal to a gallon of beer.
1 oz. of coffee, or ½ oz. of tea	} is to be considered equal to 1 oz. of cocoa.
1 lb. of rice, or 1 pint of calavances, or 1 pint of dhol	} is to be considered equal to 1 pint of pease.
1 lb. of butter.....	} is to be considered equal to 1 lb. of sugar.
2 lbs. of cheese	} are to be considered equal to 1 lb. of cocoa.
¼ lb. of onions, or of leeks, is to be considered equal to 1 lb. of other vegetables.	

“ Flag officers, captains, and other commanding officers, will observe in the above scale, and will fully explain to the ships’ companies under their orders, the advantages of this new system, viz., that what were called banyan days are abolished; that meat, with vegetables, flour, or pease, is to be issued every day; that flour, instead of being ex-

changed for a portion of beef, will now become an article of the men's regular allowance; and that a quantity of tea or coffee, sufficient to make a pint of liquid, will be issued every evening:

“ It will be observed in the table of substitutes, that the quantity of spirits to be issued in lieu of beer or wine is diminished one half; but, in addition to the pint of tea or coffee allowed in part compensation for this diminution of spirits, His Majesty has been graciously pleased, in further and full compensation, to add two shillings per month to the pay of such warrant officers as do not rank with lieutenants, and of each petty and non-commissioned officer, seaman, marine, and boy. As the diminution of spirits only takes place when beer and wine are not issued, while the addition of tea or coffee and the increased pay are permanent, it will be obvious how much this regulation is to the pecuniary advantage and comfort of the ships' companies, while it is confidently expected that the diminution in the article of spirits will conduce to the health of the

people, and the good order and discipline of the ships.

“ In addition to these advantages, it is intended that a certain portion of the pay which may be due to each warrant and petty officer (not allowed to draw bills), and to each non-commissioned officer, seaman, marine, and boy, who may be desirous of receiving it, shall be issued to them when in any port abroad or at home, at the expiration of every one, two, or three months, as the captain may judge expedient, by way of pocket money, viz. four shillings per month to warrant, petty, and non-commissioned officers, seamen and marines, and two shillings to each boy: but as the carrying this arrangement into full effect will require the sanction of the legislature, it is intended to submit a bill to parliament, early in the next session, to authorise it; and in the meanwhile, in order to carry the same principle into effect as far as is at present practicable, the additional two shillings, now added to the pay as compensation for part of the spirits, will be paid to the before-mentioned.

classes, in the same way that short allowance money is now paid.

“ The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, in communicating to the Fleet the gracious and beneficent intentions of the King, are satisfied that they will be received by the officers and men as additional marks of His Majesty’s favour, and as real and substantial improvements to the condition of the petty and non-commissioned officers and men.

“ By command of their Lordships,

“ J. W. CROKER.”

Lemon juice, our grand antiscorbutic, is not issued except to the ships going on foreign stations, nor until fourteen days have elapsed after the issue of beer, fresh meat, fruit or vegetables, has ceased—unless, under some extraordinary circumstances, the surgeon thinks it necessary for the health of the crew.

There is no fixed regulation as to the manner in which it is to be used—it may be either mixed with the grog or made into lemonade. The allowance is half an ounce of lemon juice, and half an ounce of sugar

per day, to each man. Some officers prefer serving out double allowance for one week, and then missing a week: the pint of lemonade is thus made doubly strong, and, of course, more agreeable to the palate. It is sometimes mixed with the grog, which is converted into punch by this process; but this is not relished by the sailors. Occasionally, it is served out in a raw state, and in this case, the men use it either as a condiment for their dough or pudding, or mix it with their drinking water. It is generally appreciated in any way, and seems to be equally beneficial in all, as far as the health of the crew is concerned.

It may not be out of place, perhaps, to mention here, that the only perfectly free privilege which the interfering nature of our sea discipline allows to the sailors, is their choice of messmates, already alluded to—at least I am not at present aware, that, from the rising of the sun to his setting, or from his setting to rising again, there is any part of a man-of-war's-man's life which is not more or less subjected to regulations over which he himself has no control.

CHAPTER VI.

ROCKALL.

EVERY good officer makes a point of conscience, as far as he possibly can, not to order any evolution, or otherwise to interfere with the people at their meals—especially at dinner. This habitual and official consideration grows so completely into a habit, that it follows most naval men on shore, who can never bear that their servants should be interrupted at meals, without the most urgent necessity. This, like every other good thing, may be caricatured ; but the principle is not only sound in itself, as a matter of feeling and propriety, but the practice is one which, in the long run, will always prove the most beneficial to the master, whether afloat or on shore. Hearty service, or that

which springs from a wish to oblige, is not to be purchased by any thing but kindness. And people ought sometimes to recollect, that punctuality and consideration are reciprocal qualities; and that no amount of reward or punishment will procure really good service, if the master himself fails in his part of the obligation, and is not, in his own person, punctual, and considerate.

On the 13th of October, 1811, we were cruising in the *Endymion* off the north of Ireland, in a fine clear day, succeeding one in which it had blown almost a hurricane. The master had just taken his meridian observation—the officer of the watch had reported the latitude—the captain had ordered it to be made twelve o'clock—and the boatswain, catching a word from the lieutenant, was in the full swing of his “Pipe to dinner!” when the captain called out—

“Stop! stop! I meant to go about first.”

“Pipe belay! Mr. King,” smartly ejaculated the officer of the watch, addressing the boatswain. Which words being heard over

the decks, caused a sudden cessation of the sounds peculiar to that hungry season. The cook stood with a huge six-pound piece of pork uplifted on his tormentors—his mate ceased to bale out the pease soup—and the whole ship seemed paralysed. The boatswain having checked himself in the middle of his long-winded dinner-tune, drew a fresh inspiration, and dashed off into the opposite sharp, abrupt, cutting sound of the “Pipe belay!”—the essence of which peculiar note is, that its sounds should be understood and acted upon with the utmost degree of promptitude.

There was now a dead pause of perfect silence all over the ship, in expectation of what was to come next. All eyes were turned to the chief.

“No!—never mind—we’ll wait,” said the good-natured captain, unwilling to interfere with the comforts of the men—“Let them go to dinner—we shall tack at one o’clock—it will do just as well.”

The boatswain, on a nod from the lieutenant of the watch, at once recommenced

his merry 'Pipe to dinner' notes; upon which a loud, joyous laugh rang from one end of the ship to the other. This hearty burst was not in the slightest degree disrespectful; on the contrary, it sounded like a grateful expression of glee at the prospect of the approaching good things which, by this time, were finding their speedy course down the hatchways.

Nothing was now heard but the cheerful chuckle of well-fed company, the clatter of plates and knives, and the chit-chat of light hearts, under the influence of temperate excitement.

When one o'clock came, the hands were called—"About ship!" But as the helm was in the very act of going down, the look-out man at the fore-topmast-head called out—

"I see something a little on the lee bow, sir!"

"Something! What do you mean by something?" cried the first lieutenant, making at the same time a motion to the quartermaster at the conn to right the helm again.

“ I don't know, what it is, sir,” cried the man; “ it is black, however.”

“ Black! Is it like a whale?” asked the officer, playing a little with his duty.

“ Yes, sir,” cried the look-out man, unconscious that Shakespeare had been before him, “ very like a whale!”

The captain and the officer exchanged glances, at the poor fellow aloft having fallen into the trap laid for him; and the temptation must have been great to have inquired whether it were not ‘ like a weasel;’ but this might have been stretching the jest too far; so the lieutenant merely called to the signal midshipman, and desired him to skull up to the mast-head with his glass, to see what he made of the look-out man's whale.

“ It looks like a small rock,” cried young skylark, as soon as he reached the top-gallant-yard and had taken the glass from his shoulders, across which he had slung it with a three-yarn fox.

“ Stuff and nonsense,” replied the officer, “ there are no rocks hereabouts—we can but just see the top of Muckish behind Tory

Island. Take another spy at your object, youngster. The mast-head man and you will make it out to be something, by and by, between you, I dare say."

"It's a boat, sir!" roared out the boy. "It's a boat adrift, two or three points on the lee-bow."

"Oh ho!" said the officer, "That may be, sir?" turning, with an interrogative air, to the captain, who gave orders to keep the frigate away a little, that this strange-looking affair might be investigated. Meanwhile, as the ship was not to be tacked, the watch was called, and one half only of the people remained on deck. The rest strolled, sleepily, below; or disposed themselves in the sun on the lee gangway, mending their clothes or telling long yarns.

A couple of fathoms of the fore and main sheets, and a slight touch of the weather top-sail and top-gallant braces, with a check of the bow-lines, made the swift-footed Endymion spring forward, like a greyhound slipped from the leash. In a short time we made out that the object we were in chase

of was, in fact, a boat. On approaching a little nearer, some heads of people became visible, and then several figures stood up waving their hats to us. We brought to, just to windward of them, and sent a boat to see what was the matter.

It turned out as we supposed; they had belonged to a ship which had foundered in the recent gale. Although their vessel had become water-logged, they had contrived to hoist their long boat out, and to stow in her twenty-one persons, some of them seamen and some passengers. Of these, two were women, and three children. Their vessel, it appeared, had sprung a leak in the middle of the gale, and in spite of all their pumping, the water gained so fast upon them, that they took to baling as a more effectual method. After a time, when this resource failed, the men, totally worn out, and quite dispirited, gave it up as a bad job, abandoned their pumps, and actually lay down to sleep. In the morning the gale broke; but the ship had filled in the meantime, and was falling fast over on her broadside. With some dif-

ficulty they disentangled the long boat from the wreck, and thought themselves fortunate in being able to catch hold of a couple of small oars, with a studding-sail boom for a mast, on which they hoisted a fragment of their main-hatchway tarpaulin for a sail. One ham, and three gallons of water, were all the provisions they were able to secure; and in this fashion they were set adrift on the wide sea. The master of the ship, with two gentlemen who were passengers, two sailors, and one woman, remained on board, preferring to stick by the vessel while there was any part of her above water. This, at least, was the story told us by the people we picked up.

The wind had been fair for the shore when the long-boat left the wreck, and though their ragged sail scarcely drove them along, their oars were only just sufficient to keep the boat's head the right way. Of course, they made but small progress; so that when they rose on the top of the swell, which was still very long and high in consequence of the gale, they could only just discover the distant

land of Muckish, a remarkable flat-topped mountain, on the north-west coast of Ireland, not very far from the promontory called the Bloody Foreland.

There appeared to have been little discipline amongst this forlorn crew, even when the breeze was in their favour; but when the wind chopped round, and blew off shore, they gave themselves up to despair, laid in their oars, let the sail flap to pieces, gobbled up all their provisions, and drank out their whole stock of water. Meanwhile the boat, which had been partially stove, in the confusion of clearing the ship, began to fill with water; and—as they all admitted afterwards—if it had not been for the courage and patience of the women, under this sharp trial, they must have gone to the bottom. As it was both cold and rainy, the poor children, who were too young to understand the nature of their situation, or the inutility of complaining, incessantly cried out for water, and begged that more clothes might be wrapped round them. Even after they came to us, the little things were still

crying, "Oh! do give me some water!" Words which long sounded in our ears. None of these women were by any means strong—on the contrary, one of them seemed to be very delicate—yet they managed to rouse the men to a sense of their duty, by a mixture of reproaches and entreaties, combined with the example of that singular fortitude, which often gives more than masculine vigour to female minds in seasons of danger. How long this might have lasted, I cannot say; but probably the strength of the men, however stimulated, must have given way before night, especially as the wind freshened, and the boat was drifting further to sea. Had it not been for the accident of the officer of the forenoon watch on board the *Endymion* being unaware of the captain's wish to tack before dinner, these poor people most probably would all have perished.

The women, dripping wet, and scarcely capable of moving hand or foot, were lifted up the side—in a state almost of stupor—for they were confused by the hurry of the

scene,—and their fortitude had given way: the moment all high motive to exertion was over. One of them, on reaching the quarter-deck, slipped through our hands, and, falling on her knees, wept violently, as she returned thanks for such a wonderful deliverance. But her thoughts were bewildered; and, fancying that her child was lost, she struck her hands together, and, leaping again on her feet, screamed out, “ Oh! where’s my bairn? my wee bairn?”

At this instant, a huge quarter-master, whose real name or nickname (I forget which) was Billy Magnus, and who was reputed to have no fewer than five wives, and God knows how many children, appeared over the gangway hammocks, holding the missing urchin in his immense paw, where it squealed and twisted itself about, like Gulliver between the finger and thumb of the Brobdignag farmer. The mother had just strength enough left to snatch her offspring from Billy, when she sunk down flat on the deck, completely exhausted.

By means of a fine blazing fire, and plenty

of hot tea, toast, and eggs, it was easy to remedy one class of these poor people's wants; but how to rig them out in dry clothes was the puzzle, till the captain bethought him of a resource which answered very well. He sent to several of the officers for their dressing gowns; and these, together with supplies from his own wardrobe, made capital gowns and petticoats,—at least till the more fitting drapery of the ladies was dried. The children were tumbled into bed in the same apartment close to the fire; and it would have done any one's heart good to have witnessed the style in which the provisions vanished from the board, while the women wept, prayed, and laughed, by turns.

The rugged seamen, when taken out of the boat, shewed none of these symptoms of emotion, but running instinctively to the scuttle-butt, asked eagerly for a drop of water. As the most expeditious method of feeding and dressing them, they were distributed amongst the different messes, one to each, as far as they went. Thus they were

all soon provided with dry clothing, and with as much to eat as they could stow away; for the doctor, when consulted, said, they had not fasted so long as to make it dangerous to give them as much food as they were disposed to swallow. With the exception of the ham, devoured in the boat, and which, after all, was but a mouthful a-piece, they had tasted nothing for more than thirty hours—so that, I suppose, better justice was never done to His Majesty's beef, pork, bread, and other good things, with which our fellows insisted upon stuffing the new comers, till they fairly cried out for mercy, and begged to be allowed a little sleep.

Possibly some of us were the more disposed to sympathise with the distress of these people when adrift in their open boat on the wide sea, from having ourselves, about a month before, been pretty much in the same predicament. It always adds, as every one knows, greatly to our consideration for the difficulties and dangers of others, to have recently felt some touch of similar distress in our own persons. This maxim, though

it is familiar enough, makes so little impression upon our ordinary thoughts, that when circumstances occur to fix our attention closely upon it, we are apt to arrive as suddenly at the perception of its truth as if it were a new discovery.

Travelling, indeed, of every kind, but especially that variety of it which belongs to the naval profession, is so fertile in wholesome and home illustrations of this class of subjects, that if a man have an atom of thought, or a spark of right sentiment in him, let it lie ever so deep, the chances are it will get stirred up, sooner or later, by the rough shaking and friction of his peregrinations.

The advantages of moving about are stated with great truth and force by one of the most accomplished and graceful of modern writers, who remarks that—

“In travelling we multiply events, and innocently. We set out, as it were, on our adventures; and many are those that occur to us, morning, noon, and night. The day we come to a place we have long heard and read of, and in Italy we do so continually, it is an

era in our lives ; and from that moment the very name calls up a picture. How delightfully, too, does the knowledge flow in upon us, and how fast ! Would he who sat in a corner of his library, poring over books and maps, learn more, or so much, in the time, as he who, with his eyes and his heart open, is receiving impressions all day long from the things themselves ? How accurately do they arrange themselves in our memory—towns, rivers, mountains ; and in what living colours do we recall the dresses, manners, and customs of the people ! Our sight is the noblest of all our senses. ‘ It fills the mind with most ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest distance, and continues longest in action without being tired.’ Our sight is on the alert when we travel ; and its exercise is then so delightful, that we forget the profit in the pleasure.”*

So true, indeed, have I found all this, that on looking back, I can scarcely recollect

* Italy, a Poem by Samuel Rogers, Esq. 1830, p. 173. Perhaps the most tastefully got-up book of this or any other age.

a single day, during the many years I never ceased to wander over the earth's surface, which has not furnished, in greater or less store, some materials for agreeable or useful reflection. I have generally found the store of objects for comparison with those seen elsewhere, go on increasing at each step, till, in process of time, hardly any novel scene could be viewed without its instantly calling up, as if by magic, the images of many other places, all contributing to give not only fresh interest, but higher utility to what was present.

In a fine autumnal morning, just a week after we had sailed from Lough Swilly, to cruise off the north of Ireland, a sail was reported on the leebeam. We bore up instantly, but no one could make out what the chase was, nor which way she was standing—at least, no two of the knowing ones could be found to agree upon these matters. These various opinions, however, presently settled into one, or nearly so—for there were still some of the high-spyers who had the honesty to confess they were puzzled. The

general opinion was, that it must be a brig with very white sails aloft, while those below were quite dark — as if the royals were made of cotton, and the courses of tarpaulin, — a strange anomaly in seamanship; it is true, but still the best theory we could form to explain the appearances. A short time served to dispel these fancies; for we discovered, on running close to our mysterious vessel, that we had been actually chasing a rock — not a ship of oak and iron, but a solid block of granite, growing, as it were, out of the sea, at a greater distance from the mainland than, I believe, any other island, or islet, or rock of the same diminutive size, is to be found in the world. This mere speck on the surface of the waters — for it seems to float on the sea — is only seventy feet high, and not more than a hundred yards in circumference. The smallest point of a pencil could scarcely give it a place on any map, which should not exaggerate its proportions to the rest of the islands in that stormy ocean. It lies at the distance of no fewer than 184 miles very nearly due west of St. Kilda, the

remotest of the Hebrides, 290 from the nearest part of the main coast of Scotland, and 260 from the north of Ireland. Its name is Rockall, and it is well known to those Baltic traders which go north about. The stone of which this curious peak is composed is a dark-coloured granite, but the top being covered with a coating as white as snow, from having been for ages the resting-place of myriads of sea-fowl, it is constantly mistaken for a vessel under all sail. We were deceived by it several times during the same cruise; even after we had been put on our guard, and knew its place well. I remember boarding three ships in one day, each of which, in reckoning the number of vessels in sight, counted Rockall as one, without detecting their mistake till I pointed their glasses to the spot.

The vignette on the title-page of this volume gives a view of the rock seen close at hand, when all resemblance, however, to a ship is lost.

As we had nothing better on our hands, it was resolved to make an exploring expe-

dition to visit this little islet. Two boats were accordingly manned for the purpose; and while the ship stood down to leeward of it, the artists prepared their sketch-books, and the geologists their hammers, for a grand scientific field day.

When we left the ship, the sea appeared so unusually smooth, that we anticipated no difficulty in landing; but on reaching the spot, we found a swell rising and falling many feet, which made it an exceedingly troublesome matter to accomplish our purpose. One side of the rock was perpendicular, and as smooth as a wall. The others, though steep and slippery, were sufficiently varied in their surface to admit of our crawling up when once out of the boat. But it required no small confidence in our footing, and a dash of that kind of faith which carries a hunter over a five-bar gate, to render the leap at all secure. A false step, or a faltering carriage, after the spring was resolved on, might have sent the explorer to investigate the secrets of the deep, in those fathomless regions where the roots of this my-

sterious rock connect it with the solid earth. In time, however, we all got up, hammers, sketch-books, and chronometers, inclusive.

As it was considered a point of some moment to determine not only the position, but the size of the rock by actual observations made upon it, all hands were set busily to work—some to chip off specimens—others to measure the girt by means of a cord—while one of the boats was sent to make soundings in those directions where the bottom could be reached.

After we had been employed for some time in this manner, we observed a current sweeping past us, at a considerable rate, and rather wondered that the ship, which was fast drifting away from us, did not fill and make a stretch, so as to preserve her distance. But as the day was quite clear, we cared less about this addition to the pull, and went on with our operations. I forget exactly at what hour a slight trace of haze first came across the field of view. This soon thickened into a fog, which felt like a drizzle, and put some awkward apprehensions

into our heads. It was immediately decided to get into the boats and return to the *Endymion*; for, by this time, we had finished all our real work, and were only amusing ourselves by scrambling about the rock.

The swell had silently increased in the interval to such a height, that the operation of returning to the boats was rendered twice as difficult as that of disembarking; and what was a great deal worse, occupied twice as much time. It required the greater part of half an hour to tumble our whole party back again. This proceeding, difficult at any season I should suppose, was now reduced to a sort of somerset or flying leap; for the adventurer, whose turn it was to spring, had to dash off the rock towards the boat, trusting more to the chance of being caught by his companions, than to any skill of his own. Some of our Dutch-built gentry, known in the cock-pit by the name of heavy-sterned Christians, came floundering amongst the thwarts and oars with such a crash, that we half expected they would make a clear breach through the boat's bottom.

As none of these minor accidents occurred, we pushed off, with our complement entire, towards the ship; but, to our astonishment and dismay, no Endymion could now be seen. Some said "only a minute ago she was there!" others asserted, as positively, that they had seen her in a totally different direction. In short, no two of us agreed as to where the frigate had last been seen, though all, unhappily, were of one mind as to the disagreeable fact of her being now invisible. She had evidently drifted off to a considerable distance; and, as the first thickening of the air had destroyed its transparency, we could see nothing in the slightest degree, even like what is called the loom of a vessel. The horizon was visible—indistinctly indeed; but it was certainly not the same horizon along which we had seen the ship sailing; but half an hour before. The atmosphere had something of that troubled look which is given to a glass of water by dropping a little milk into it. So that, although there was no fog as yet, properly so called, there was quite enough of

moisture to serve the unpleasant purpose of hiding the object of our search; and we remained quite at a loss what to do. We rowed to some distance from the rock, supposing it possible that some condensation of vapour, incident to the spot, might have cast a veil over our eyes. But nothing was to be seen all round.

It then occurred to some of our philosophers that as dense air, by its very definition (as they gravely put it), is heavier than light air, it might so happen that the humid vapours had settled down upon the surface of the sea, and that, in fact, we were groping about in a shallow stratum of untransparent matter. The top of the rock, which was seventy feet higher, it was thought, might be in the clear region, and the ship's masts, if not her hull, be visible from thence. There was a sort of pedantic plausibility about the technology of these young savans, which induced the commanding officer of the party—a bit of a dabbler himself in these scientific mysteries—to decide upon trying the experiment. At all events, he thought

it might amuse and occupy the party. So one of the men was landed, the most alert of our number, who skipped up the rock like a goat.

All eyes were now turned to our lookout man, who no sooner reached the summit, than he was asked what he saw, with an impatience that betrayed more anxiety on the part of the officers than they probably wished should be perceived by the boats' crews.

"I can see nothing all round," cried the man, "except something out thereabouts" —pointing with his hand.

"What does it look like?"

"I am afraid, sir, it is a fog bank coming down upon us." And so it proved.

The experienced eye of the sailor, who in his youth had been a fisherman on the banks of Newfoundland, detected a strip or extended cloud, hanging along the verge of the horizon, like the first appearance of a low coast. This gradually swept down to leeward, and, at length, enveloped rock, boats, and all, in a mantle of fog, so dense

that we could not see ten yards in any direction.

Although our predicament may now be supposed as hopeless as need be, it was curious to observe the ebbs and flows in human thought as circumstances changed. Half an hour before, we had been provoked at our folly in not having left the rock sooner: but it was now a matter of rejoicing that we possessed such a fixed point to stick by, in place of throwing ourselves adrift altogether. We reckoned with certainty upon the frigate managing, sooner or later, to regain the rock; and as that was the only mark at which she could aim, it was evidently the best for us to keep near.

We had been cruising for some time off the north of Ireland, during which we observed that these fogs sometimes lasted a couple of days, or even longer; and, as we had not a drop of water in the boats, nor a morsel of provisions, the most unpleasant forebodings began to beset us. The wind was gradually rising, and the waves, when driven against

the rock, were divided into two parts, which, after sweeping round the sides, met again to leeward, near the spot where we lay, and dashed themselves into such a bubble of a sea, that the boats were pitched about like bits of cork in a mill-lead. This motion was disagreeable enough, but our apprehension was, that we should be dislodged altogether from our place of refuge; while the gulls and sea-mews, as if in contempt of our helpless condition, or offended at our intrusion, wheeled about and screamed close to us, in notes most grating to our ears.

Since there was evidently nothing for it now but to remain fast, we chatted away as merrily as we could—each one trying to conceal his anxiety from his neighbour—some with considerable success—others without any. Several of the party overdid this matter, and talked so loud and so fast, that it was easy to see what was sitting at their hearts. One young gentleman received a check for this from his commanding officer, who said that he considered the case in the

light of a piece of service, in which it became every person's duty to be as composed as if he were in the presence of an enemy.

What was curious enough, this brief, though trying occasion—like the agency of fire on metals—brought out qualities unsuspected before. Some of the men, who had been held rather cheap on board, in ordinary times, behaved so well during the few hours our present difficulties lasted, that they were looked upon ever afterwards with a totally different eye; and several of them rose, from that day, to higher and higher ratings on the ship's books. On the other hand, one or two of the number, upon whose steadiness we should perhaps have reckoned with confidence, in situations of danger or difficulty, gave way, and shewed an unexpected degree of nervous irritability under this protracted and uncertain detention.

Persons in command would do well to bear constantly in mind, that on such accidental occasions as this, they will often have opportunities of obtaining a correct knowledge of the merits, as well as demerits of

the people under them ; and may learn how best to turn to account, at moments of need, the talents, fortitude, courage, or other qualities of their officers and crew.

It is well known to have been one of the most remarkable professional attributes, if I may call it so, of Nelson and Napoleon, that they never failed to discover at once, and, as it seemed, intuitively, what were the exact qualifications of the different persons with whom they had to deal. But, in reasoning from these great officers to others, we must recollect, that such transcendent sagacity and quickness of perception are given but to very few. The ordinary run of commanding officers, therefore, who can pretend to no such depth of judgment, ought always to be on the watch for those minute symptoms which by peeping out on such accidental occasions, furnish a key to the whole character.

Probably, indeed, this is the very course originally adopted by the great master spirits of the world : till at length the habit of rapid decision as to the characters of others, like

all habits, becomes an unconscious process, even to those who exercise the power. It naturally appears like intuition.

Such an acquaintance with the character of his people is frequently not only of the highest public service, but it may often save an officer from much injustice and remorse. At least I can recollect, on more than one occasion, having formed opinions to the prejudice of persons under me, and having treated them with a want of consideration, of which I had afterwards occasion sorely to repent, when some incident occurred to shew how unjustly I had estimated their real merits. This sort of error in judgment is what I understand by the word prejudice, which steals so insensibly upon us, that, unless manfully and systematically resisted, is apt to distort the whole course of our thoughts. Unfortunately, prejudice, like the faculty of memory, is its own judge. We fancy we shall remember a particular circumstance for ever, and stoutly declare we shall never forget it. Yet, if all trace of it

fade from the recollection in the very next hour—how shall its former existence be recalled? Prejudice, in like manner, generally conceives itself to be just; and yet, unless novel circumstances arise to prove or disprove the soundness of its estimates, by what means shall the truth be disentangled from the delusion?

But I am quite forgetting Rockall!

While we were speculating upon one another's characters in the boats below, our faithful watchman perched on the peak of the rock, suddenly called out, "I see the ship!" This announcement was answered by a simultaneous shout from the two boats' crews, which sent the flocks of gannets and sea mews screaming to the right and left, far into the bosom of the fog.

An opening or lane in the mist had occurred, along which we could now see the frigate, far off, but crowding all sail, and evidently beating to windward. We lost as little time as possible in picking our shivering scout off the rock, an operation which cost nearly a quarter of an hour. This accom-

plished, away we rowed, at the utmost stretch of our oars, towards the ship.

We had hardly proceeded a quarter of a mile before the fog began to close behind our track, so as to shut out Rockall from our view. This we cared little about, as we not only still saw the ship, but trusted, from her movements, that she likewise saw the boats. Just at the moment, however, that we came to this satisfactory conclusion, she tacked, thereby proving that she had seen neither boats nor rock, but was merely groping about in search of her lost sheep. Had she continued on the course she was steering when we first saw her, she might have picked us up long before the fog came on again; but when she went about, this hope was destroyed. In a few minutes more we, of course, lost sight of the frigate in the fog; and there we were, in a pretty mess, with no ship to receive us, and no island to hang on by!

It now became necessary to take an immediate part; and we decided at once to turn back in search of the rock. It was

certainly a moment of bitter disappointment when we pulled round ; and the interval between doing so and our regaining a resting place, was one of great anxiety. Nevertheless, we made a good land fall, and there was a wonderful degree of happiness attendant even upon this piece of success. Having again got hold of Rockall, we determined to abide by our firm friend till circumstances should render our return to the ship certain. In the meantime we amused ourselves in forming plans for a future residence on this desolate abode, in the event of the ship being blown away during the night. If the weather should become more stormy, and that our position to leeward was rendered unsafe, in consequence of the divided waves running round and meeting, it was resolved, that we should abandon the heaviest of the two boats, and drag the other up to the brow of the rock, so as to form, when turned keel upwards, a sort of hurricane house. These, and various other Robinson-Crusoe-kind of resources, helped to occupy our thoughts, half in jest, half in earnest, till, by the in-

creased gloom, we knew that the sun had gone down. It now became indispensable to adopt some definite line of operations, for the angry-looking night was setting in fast.

Fortunately, we were saved from further trials of patience or ingenuity by the fog suddenly rising, as it is called—or dissipating itself in the air, so completely that, to our great joy, we gained sight of the ship once more.

It appeared afterwards that they had not seen our little island from the *Endymion* nearly so soon as we discovered her; and she was, in consequence, standing almost directly away from us, evidently not knowing exactly whereabouts *Rockall* lay. This, I think, was the most anxious moment during the whole adventure; nor shall I soon forget the sensation caused by seeing the jib-sheet let fly, accompanied by other indications that the frigate was coming about.

I need not spin out this story any longer. It was almost dark when we got on board. Our first question was the reproachful one,

“ Why did you fire no guns to give us notice of your position ?”

“ Fire guns ?” said they — “ why, we have done nothing but blaze away every ten minutes for these last five or six hours.”

Yet, strange to say, we had not heard one single discharge !

CHAPTER VII.

A SEAMAN'S GRAVE.

THERE are few places better known to sailors than Madeira — I mean to those of Europe, and especially such as sail out of England. It lies directly in the path of almost every ship leaving the British Channel; the shores of the Bay of Biscay, and the coasts of the Peninsula; or those which flow out in a continuous stream from that singular funnel, or strait, the Gut of Gibraltar. It stands nearly in the centre of a circle, in the circumference of which, at the distance of less than two hundred leagues, are found Gibraltar, Cadiz, Lisbon, and the Azores. Teneriffe lies at the distance of eighty leagues, nearly due south of it; and the north-west coast of Africa a hundred and twenty leagues

to the eastward. Nor does it seem too much to say, that this enchanting island enjoys almost all the advantages, with but few of the evils, of the remarkable places by which it is surrounded. Its latitude is the same as that of Morocco, and yet what a different degree of salubrity belongs to the atmosphere of these two spots! Madeira has all that is desirable of the warmth of the Gold Coast, without its fatal malaria, or its no less fatal despotism.

Madeira is never so cold as St. Michael's, in the Azores, or so sultry and relaxing as Lisbon; nor is it subject to the yellow fever of Cadiz, or to the confinement of Gibraltar. But it partakes of the real merits of the climate of all those places, without their violent fluctuations.

We may assist in fixing the position of such a place in our minds, by twirling round an artificial globe, and running along its parallel of latitude, so as to string upon it any other remarkable spots on the earth's surface which lie nearly at the same distance from the equator. Thus, the parallel of

Madeira is found almost to touch Tripoli, Jerusalem, Cashmere, Nankin, Japan, California, Charleston, and Bermuda. In this circuit, what a variety of climates and nations are to be met with!—And where is the fancy so torpid as not to be roused to some degree of curiosity and interest by the mere enumeration of such names? What, then, must be the solid delight of actually viewing them on the spot, in their own native dress, and under their own skies. Yet a certain apprenticeship is necessary, in order to enjoy this rich privilege to the utmost; for the first experiment is not always successful. I, at least, have found that it required many a visit to Madeira, and other places, before I felt sufficiently familiar with them to discover their true merits.

The truth of this seeming paradox will perhaps be soonest acknowledged by those who have had most experience in such matters. The first appearance of a totally new place bewilders the imagination; and by giving the fancy more to work upon than it can well arrange, is apt to interfere with

wholesome, or even agreeable generalisation. On the second visit, when many of the minor details have been forgotten, and only the leading facts retained, we insensibly fall into a habit of classing things, which being thus understood properly, may be enjoyed as they deserve. We are greatly helped in the acquisition of what may be called the language of sight-seeing, if we have opportunities of examining analogous places—just as our idiom and accent are improved by conversing with the natives of different parts of a country.

Thus, Lisbon and Madeira, both Portuguese places—or Corunna and Teneriffe, both Spanish—help materially to illustrate each other, although very different in many points. Madeira is, of course, much more like Lisbon than it is like Teneriffe; and yet an acquaintance with the scenery and people which are to be found along the base of that celebrated Peak, imparts a certain additional power of viewing similar objects in a Portuguese country. If circumstances give the voyager repeated opportunities of running

the rounds of these places, his perception of what is interesting in each and all of them, becomes sharper and sharper, and his pleasure in visiting them greater at every trial. So much so, that if he accidentally drops out of their acquaintance, and is not likely soon, if ever, to see them again, he feels almost as if he had bid adieu to friends in whose society he could well have passed his life.

What is true of places, so like one another as those above enumerated, the Azores, the Canaries, Madeira, and the ever-romantic Spain, will be found to hold, to a certain useful extent, between any two regions whatsoever. Nor have I ever visited any corner of the globe, however remote, barren, uninhabited, or apparently profitless, that did not contribute some share to this reflected sort of interest. To a mind much accustomed to view new objects, scarcely any thing can come amiss; for whatever is seen, either gives out light, or receives it. For example, I remember, long after the period I am now writing about, happening to pass within

sight of the Portuguese town of Goa in the East Indies—one of the last lingering possessions of the former European lords of the East. To the eyes of many of the party, this celebrated spot was viewed solely on its own merits, and as such it certainly had its share of interest. But to those amongst us who had seen Lagos, and Funchal, and Orontava, or St. Salvador, the scene was lighted up with tenfold brilliancy, and the imagination sent capering round the globe in search of illustrations to render the occasion more useful, as well as interesting.

When things are examined in this manner, each successive visit to the same scene is attended with two advantages of some value. Not only is the spot examined under the accumulated authority, if I may call it so, of the intermediate experience of other places; but the observations made at all those places may derive benefit, in their turn, from the improved knowledge communicated by this visit at the end of the series.

There is one illustration of this theory which may convey a distinct enough idea of

my meaning to the mind of professional men, though perhaps I shall fail in making it quite intelligible to others. In that branch of navigation called hydrography, persons who are surveying coasts busy themselves more in discovering the difference of longitude between point and point, than in seeking to determine their actual longitude reckoned from Greenwich. These differences are measured by chronometers, or by bases and triangles, without much regard, at that stage of the process, to the actual longitude of any one of the points. Occasions, however, do arise, from time to time, by which, under favourable circumstances, the longitude from Greenwich of some of the positions in the series is determined by means of astronomical observation. And it will be readily understood, that when this occurs even to one of the series whose differences have been previously ascertained, the longitude of all the rest becomes known likewise.

Somewhat in the same way, when wandering backwards and forwards between place and place on the earth's surface, we may

carefully note differences or resemblances between national characteristics; and it can scarcely ever happen that an observation made at one spot shall not tell at all the rest in the traveller's path. A man, indeed, who leaves his own country, and establishes himself permanently in another, may carry with him a set of opinions and feelings, apparently fixed by long habit into his very existence. But if he takes firm root in a foreign land, he will gradually lose, by the process of grafting, so much of the sap and substance of the original stem, that if, after a time, he return to his native land, with his ancient prejudices diluted by foreign intercourse, he will scarcely be able to recall his old ideas, or to credit that he could ever have viewed things as his memory assures him he once did. But even now, when he fancies, good easy mortal, that he has finally got rid of prejudice and error, he may, in fact, still be wrong. The more he travels, in short, the more he will discover that very material changes may take place in all his views. And thus, supposing him to be

honest, and to have truth for his sole object, he will go moving on, under a gradually increasing conviction that he has more and more to learn.

In the middle of the summer of 1809, we received on board one of those most interesting of all invalids, of whom it has been my fortune to see but too many in the course of my life. I need scarcely say, I allude to a person in what is so emphatically termed a decline—where the downhill road of life is travelled over at a rapid pace—sometimes so easily and smoothly, that the journey, to the poor patient, appears a party of pleasure. At other times the wretched way is all broken up, and in pain and sorrow; the victim of delicacy feels life dropping away at every pore—the body wasted, but the mind entire—the spirits unsubdued, and the hopes and capabilities of enjoyment as fresh, apparently, as ever, while the cruel necessity of retiring from this happy world is obvious and immediate. There are perhaps few incidents in the course of ordinary life more fertile in those instructions, of

which we all stand in need, than the rise, progress, and termination of this class of diseases, during which it may be so truly said, that 'in the midst of life we are in death.' For it is scarcely possible not to feel in some degree impressed with a sense of awe, when conscious of being in the presence of a person who, in a very few days—it may be, hours—must be laid in the tomb. In the present instance, there was not a man on board the *Endymion* who could help feeling personally interested in the fate of our poor invalid, or fail to be softened and improved by the presence of so much excellence, and beauty, and youth, all sinking together into the grave.

Our passenger was a young married woman of rank, accompanied by her husband and brother; and any thing more patient under suffering, or more resigned, was never seen. She won all hearts. The weather was delightfully fine, the breeze fair, and the sea smooth the whole way; and as we gradually stole into more genial regions, the change of climate was hailed by every one on board

with unfeigned joy, not on their own account, but on that of their guest.

The sea-air, the exercise, and the new scene altogether, conspired to revive the drooping sufferer, in a manner so extraordinary, that it excited the hopes of every one who had little experience of the treacherous ways of this sad complaint. I remember a moment when she herself was the only person on board who betrayed any distrust of this revival being more than a hectic flush—like the aurora borealis of the region we had quitted—vanishing as it came. When attentively watched, it might be discovered that she wore the look which, as Lord Byron expresses it, ‘is not of this world’—though, to general or careless observation, she was the most cheerful and confident person about herself of any one in the ship. A group of the seamen might often be seen, standing on the fore-castle, either looking aft in silence at the couch of flags and boat cloaks spread on the quarter-deck, or discussing, in a low tone, the chances of our carrying the ‘lady passenger’ safe to

the Island, as Madeira is generally called by the men.

Independently of any personal interest, the sailors are always very desirous that no one should die on board—or rather, they have a great objection to the body of any one who has died remaining amongst them. This is a superstition easily accounted for amongst men whose whole lives are passed, as it were, on the very edge of the grave, and who have quite enough, as they suppose, to remind them of their mortality, without the actual presence of its effects. An idea prevails amongst them, that sharks will follow a ship for a whole voyage which has a corpse on board; and the loss of a mast, or the long duration of a foul wind, or any other inconvenience, is sure to be ascribed to the same influence. Accordingly, when a man dies on board ship, there is an obvious anxiety amongst the crew to get rid of their late shipmate as speedily as possible.

It need not be mentioned, that the surgeon is in constant attendance upon the dying man, who has generally been removed

from his hammock to a cot, which is larger and more commodious, and is placed within a screen on one side of the sick bay, as the hospital of the ship is called. It is usual for the captain to pass through this place, and to speak to the men, every morning; and I imagine there is hardly a ship in the service in which wine, fresh meat, and any other supplies recommended by the surgeon, are not sent from the tables of the captain and officers to such of the sick men as require a more generous diet than the ship's stores provided. After the carver in the gun-room has helped his messmates, he generally turns to the surgeon, and says, "Doctor, what shall I send to the sick?" But, even without this, the steward would certainly be taken to task were he to omit inquiring, as a matter of course, what was wanted in the sick bay. The restoration of the health of the invalids by such supplies is perhaps not more important, however, than the moral influence of the attention on the part of the officers.

I have generally observed, also, a most valuable effect produced on the minds of the survivors, by the captain attending the death-bed of any of his crew. It is astonishing, indeed, how far such well-timed notice, however small, goes with the sailors. And it is of importance to remember, that this is only one of numberless means by which a judicious officer may always strengthen his hands, and improve the discipline of his ship, at an extremely small sacrifice of time, and none at all of his true dignity. For the men are vastly easier managed when they have reason to believe their superiors enter into and respect their feelings, than when, as sometimes happens, they see them act as if they scarcely considered themselves of the same species. Sailors, indeed, will submit cheerfully to much greater hardships, and work with double energy, at the word of an officer, however strict, provided they are made sensible that while he is regulated by a sense of justice in his severity, he likewise considers an attention to their comforts and happiness a part of his duty.

I would, accordingly, strongly recommend every captain to be seen (no matter for how short a time) by the bedside of any of his crew whom the surgeon may report as dying. Not occasionally, and in the flourishing style with which we read of great generals visiting hospitals, but uniformly and in the quiet sobriety of real kindness, as well as hearty consideration for the feelings of a man falling at his post in the service of his country. The *éclat* of such a death is inferior, no doubt, to that which is bestowed in battle; but we should recollect, that on this very account the sacrifice deserves more attention at our hands. A man who is killed in action has a brilliant Gazette to record his exploits, and the whole country may be said to attend his death-bed. But the merit is not less—or may even be much greater—of the soldier or sailor who dies of a fever in a distant land—his story untold, and his sufferings unseen. In warring against climates unsuited to his frame, he may have encountered, in the public service, enemies often more formidable than those who handle pike and

gun. There should be nothing left undone, therefore, at such a time, to shew not only to the dying man, but to his shipmates and his family at home, that his services are appreciated.

I remember, on one occasion, hearing the captain of a ship say to a poor fellow who was almost gone, that he was glad to see him so cheerful at such a moment; and begged to know if he had any thing to say.

"I hope, sir," said the expiring seaman with a smile, "I have done my duty to your satisfaction?"

"That you have, my lad," said his commander, "and to the satisfaction of your country, too."

"That is all I wanted to know, sir," replied the man.

These few common-place words cost the captain not five minutes of his time, but were long recollected with gratitude by the people under his orders, and contributed, along with many other graceful acts of considerate attention, to fix his authority as firmly as he could desire.

If a sailor who knows he is dying, has a captain who pleases him, he is very likely to send a message by the surgeon to beg a visit—not often to trouble his commander with any commission, but merely to say something at parting. No officer, of course, would ever refuse to grant such an interview, but it appears to me it should always be volunteered; for many men may wish it, whose habitual respect would disincline them to take such a liberty, even at the moment when all distinctions are about to cease.

Very shortly after poor Jack dies, he is prepared for his deep-sea grave by his mess-mates, who, with the assistance of the sail-maker, and in the presence of the master-at-arms, sew him up in his hammock, and having placed a couple of cannon-shot at his feet, they rest the body (which now not a little resembles an Egyptian mummy,) on a spare grating. Some portion of the bedding and clothes are always made up in the package—apparently to prevent the form being too much seen. It is then carried aft, and, being placed across the after hatchway, the

union jack is thrown over all. Sometimes it is placed between two of the guns, under the half deck; but generally, I think, he is laid where I have mentioned, just abaft the mainmast,

I should have mentioned before, that as soon as the surgeon's ineffectual professional offices are at an end, he walks to the quarter-deck, and reports to the officer of the watch that one of his patients has just expired. At whatever hour of the day or night this occurs, the captain is immediately made acquainted with the circumstance. At the same time the master-at-arms is ordered by the officer of the watch to take possession of the dead man's clothes; and his messmates, soon afterwards, proceed to dress and prepare the body for burial.

Next day, generally about eleven o'clock, the bell on which the half-hours are struck, is tolled for the funeral by one of the quarter-masters of the watch below, or by one of the deceased's messmates; and all who choose to be present, assemble on the gangways, booms, and round the mainmast, while

the forepart of the quarter-deck is occupied by the officers.

In some ships—and it ought perhaps to be so in all—it is made imperative on the officers and crew to attend this ceremony. If such attendance be a proper mark of respect to a professional brother—as it surely is—it ought to be enforced, and not left to caprice. There may, indeed, be times of great fatigue, when it would harass men and officers, needlessly, to oblige them to come on deck for every funeral, and upon such occasions the watch on deck may be sufficient. Or, when some dire disease gets into a ship, and is cutting down her crew by its daily and nightly, or it may be hourly ravages; and when two or three times in a watch, the ceremony must be repeated, those only, whose turn it is to be on deck, need be assembled. In such fearful times, the funeral is generally made to follow close upon the death.

While the people are repairing to the quarter-deck, in obedience to the summons of the bell, the grating on which the body is placed, being lifted from the main-deck by

the messmates of the man who has died, is made to rest across the lee gangway. The stanchions for the man-ropes of the side are unshipped, and an opening made at the after-end of the hammock netting, sufficiently large to allow a free passage.

The body is still covered by the flag already mentioned, with the feet projecting a little over the gunwale, while the messmates of the deceased range themselves on each side. A rope, which is kept out of sight in these arrangements, is then made fast to the grating, for a purpose which will be seen presently.

When all is ready, the chaplain, if there be one on board, or, if not, the captain, or any of the officers he may direct to officiate, appears on the quarter-deck and commences the beautiful service, which, though but too familiar to most ears, I have observed, never fails to rivet the attention even of the rudest and least reflecting. Of course, the bell has ceased to toll, and every one stands in silence and uncovered as the prayers are read. Sailors, with all their looseness of habits,

are well disposed to be sincerely religious ; and when they have fair play given them, they will always, I believe, be found to stand on as good vantage ground, in this respect, as their fellow-countrymen on shore. Be this as it may, there can be no more attentive, or apparently reverent auditory, than assembles on the deck of a ship of war, on the occasion of a shipmate's burial.

There is no material difference in the form of this service from that used on shore, excepting in the place where allusion is made to the return of the body to its parent earth. Perhaps it might have been as well to have left this unchanged—for the ocean may well be taken, in this sense, as a part of the earth—but since an alteration of the words was thought necessary, it could not have been made in better taste.

The land service for the burial of the dead contains the following words:—

“ Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, of his great mercy, to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground ;

earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;
in sure and certain hope," &c.

Every one, I am sure, who has attended the funeral of a friend — and who will this not include? — must recollect the solemnity of that stage of the ceremony, where, as the above words are pronounced, there are cast into the grave, three successive portions of earth, which, falling on the coffin, send up a hollow, mournful sound, resembling no other that I know.

In the burial service at sea, the part quoted above is varied in the following very striking and solemn manner : —

“ Forasmuch,” &c. — “ we therefore commit his body to the deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the resurrection of the body, when the sea shall give up her dead, and the life of the world to come,” &c.

At the commencement of this part of the service, one of the seamen stoops down, and disengages the flag from the remains of his late shipmate, while the others, at the words “ we commit his body to the deep,” project the grating right into the sea. The body

being loaded with shot at one end, glances off the grating, plunges at once into the ocean, and —

“ In a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into its depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.”

This part of the ceremony is rather less impressive than the correspondent part on land; but still there is something solemn, as well as startling, in the sudden splash, followed by the sound of the grating, as it is towed along, under the main-chains.

In a fine day at sea, in smooth water, and when all the ship's company and officers are assembled, the ceremony just described, although a melancholy one, as it must always be, is often so pleasing, all things considered, that it is calculated to leave even cheerful impressions on the mind.

Occasions, however, as gloomy as any sad heart could conceive, do sometimes occur for a sea funeral, sufficient to strike the sternest natures. The most impressive which I recollect, of the numbers I have

witnessed, was in the flag-ship, on the coast of North America.

There was a poor little middy on board, so delicate and fragile, that the sea was clearly no fit profession for him : but he or his friends thought otherwise ; and as he had a spirit for which his frame was no match, he soon gave token of decay. This boy was a great favourite with every body—the sailors smiled whenever he passed, as they would have done to a child—the officers petted him, and coddled him up with all sorts of good things—and his messmates, in a style which did not altogether please him; but which he could not well resist, as it was meant most kindly, nicknamed him Dolly. Poor fellow!—he was long remembered afterwards. I forget what his particular complaint was, but he gradually sunk ; and at last went out just as a taper might have done, exposed to such gusts of wind as blew in that tempestuous region. He died in the morning ; but it was not until the evening that he was prepared for a seaman's grave.

I remember, in the course of the day, going

to the side of the boy's 'hammock, and on laying my hand upon his breast, was astonished to find it still warm—so much so, that I almost imagined I could feel the heart beat. This, of course, was a vain fancy; but I was much attached to my little companion, being then not much taller myself—and I was soothed and gratified, in a childish way, by discovering that my friend, though many hours dead, had not yet acquired the usual revolting chiliness.

In after years I have sometimes thought of this incident, when reflecting on the pleasing doctrine of the Spaniards—that as soon as children die, they are translated into angels, without any of those 'cold obstructions' which, they pretend, intercept and retard the souls of other mortals. The peculiar circumstances connected with the funeral which I am about to describe, and the fanciful superstitions of the sailors upon the occasion, have combined to fix the whole scene in my memory.

Something occurred during the day to prevent the funeral taking place at the usual

hour, and the ceremony was deferred till long after sunset. The evening was extremely dark, and it was blowing a treble-reefed top-sail breeze. We had just sent down the top-gallant yards, and made all snug for a boisterous winter's night. As it became necessary to have lights to see what was done, several signal lanterns were placed on the break of the quarter-deck, and others along the hammock railings on the lee gangway. The whole ship's company and officers were assembled, some on the booms, others in the boats; while the main rigging was crowded half way up to the cat-harpings. Overhead, the mainsail, illuminated as high as the yard by the lamps, was bulging forwards under the gale, which was rising every minute, and straining so violently at the main-sheet, that there was some doubt whether it might not be necessary to interrupt the funeral in order to take sail off the ship. The lower deck ports lay completely under water, and several times the muzzles of the main-deck guns were plunged into the sea; so that the end of the grating on which

the remains of poor Dolly were laid, once or twice nearly touched the tops of the waves, as they foamed and hissed past. The rain fell fast on the bare heads of the crew, dropping also on the officers, during all the ceremony, from the foot of the mainsail, and wetting the leaves of the prayer-book. The wind sighed over us amongst the wet shrouds, with a note so mournful, that there could not have been a more appropriate dirge.

The ship — pitching violently — strained and creaked from end to end : so that, what with the noise of the sea, the rattling of the ropes, and the whistling of the wind, hardly one word of the service could be distinguished. The men, however, understood, by a motion of the captain's hand, when the time came—and the body of our dear little brother was committed to the deep.

So violent a squall was sweeping past the ship at this moment, that no sound was heard of the usual splash, which made the sailors allege that their young favourite never touched the water at all, but was at once carried off in the gale to his final resting-place !

CHAPTER VIII.

MADEIRA.

OUR voyage to Madeira was favourable to the last; and we had the satisfaction of thinking, that, as far as depended upon the nautical part of this almost hopeless experiment, our interesting passenger had the fairest chance of recovery. We had favourable winds, a smooth sea, and a delicious balmy climate the whole way; to which must be added the comforts of a first-rate frigate, admirably fitted up. But it was all of no avail.

Madeira lies in latitude $32\frac{1}{2}$, nearly ten degrees north of the tropic of Cancer, and three or four beyond the northern limit of the trade winds. These mysterious currents in the air—so useful to the moderns—were sorely perplexing to the early voyagers, and enough to have broken the heart of a less

adventurous or sagacious man than Columbus. When I have an opportunity of describing them, I hope to be able to shew how beautifully they fall into the order of physical laws, and how much more, therefore, a navigator, disciplined by science, who really knows what he is about, may take advantage of them, than one who merely acts by rule and compass. To ignorant eyes, whether practised or not—these great aërial currents offer nothing for observation but the means of advancing in the voyage; and as they are generally quite unconscious of the principles, or laws by which the phenomena are regulated; such navigators act completely in the dark; and being naturally enough misled by the influence of names, often commit the grossest blunders.

In the mean time I must return to Madeira, which we reached on the tenth day from England; and on the fourteenth morning from leaving London, our amiable sufferer was safely landed in almost a new world. The climate was so genial, and so dissimilar to that she had been snatched from,

that had its healing aid been sought early enough, it might, very possibly, have proved propitious. Much precious time, indeed, is generally lost; and owing to this sad mistake, by far the greater number of patients come to Madeira only to die—without the comforts they have abandoned, too late, at home—far from their natural friends and connexions, and completely deprived of those conveniences and comforts to which they have been accustomed.

From what I saw of Madeira during many visits at different seasons of the year, I had long been of opinion, that this delightful island formed one of the best, if not the very best place in which a consumptive patient might hope to find a cure—or rather, to which a person having a consumptive tendency might resort in hopes of preventing the fatal access of a disease which, at certain stages, is but too well known to be beyond the reach either of climate or medical skill. I was not aware, however, till lately, how completely this idea of the superior advantages of Madeira was borne out by

the opinion of the best-qualified professional men, especially by Dr. James Clark, whose very interesting work, on the Influence of Climate in the Prevention and Cure of Chronic Diseases, may be consulted with great advantage on this subject.

Our poor passenger's case was precisely one of those which, had this work been published twenty years sooner, would never have been referred to Madeira for a cure. Of comforts, indeed, she had no want; for she was received into the house of one of those splendid persons, the great English Madeira merchants, who, with a sort of oriental hospitality and luxury, in character with their happy climate, used to fling their doors wide open to receive strangers coming to the island. In those days, there was great difficulty in procuring good lodgings; but I am told that accommodations for families, or for single persons, may now be hired by those who have not the advantage of such introductions, or who are unwilling to encumber these most hospitable of men with the anxious companionship of invalids.

Most, if not all the merchants have two houses—one, of course, in the city, where their business is transacted—another lying beyond the noise and bustle of the Port. Many of these gentlemen reside occasionally at their country seats, on the side of the mountain which takes its rise from the beach at the town of Funchal, and rises with a steep face to the height of many thousands of feet above the sea. The upper parts of all are so lofty, that there is no vegetation finds root upon them; and although there be no coating of perpetual snow, I believe ice may be found, at all seasons, in the crevices which surround the well-known Caldeira, cauldron, or crater, near the summit. Be this as it may, I am sure that by going up the hill, or coming down it, a range of many degrees of the thermometer may be commanded. So that, if the taste of an infirm person, or the peculiarities of his complaint, require a heat of 60° or 70°, he may live as long as he pleases in a climate that is best suited to his recovery,

The medical gentlemen resident on the

spot, reprobate in strong terms the inutility, not to say cruelty, of sending out patients in the advanced stages of consumption. "Generally speaking," observes Dr. Renton of Madeira, as quoted by Dr. Clark, "the poor patient himself has nothing to do with the arrangements; and it is principally in obedience to medical advice that he undertakes a voyage productive of nothing but mischief and disappointment. So uniform is the result of this practice, that the annual importation of invalids from England is thought a fit subject for ridicule, amongst the boatmen, on landing these unfortunates on their island. 'La vai mais hum Inglez á Laranjeira'—'there goes another Englishman to the Orange-tree,'—such being the name of the burying ground of the Protestants."*

Dr. Clark gives a table, from which it appears, that of 47 cases of confirmed consumption, no fewer than 32 died within six months after their arrival at Madeira; while out of 35 cases of incipient consump-

* Clark on Climate, 2d Edition, 1830, page 192.

tion, or of those wherein there was merely reason to dread this disease, 26 were cured, or, at all events, they left the island much improved.

The same authority, Dr. Renton, long a resident at the island in question, further remarks, that "when consumption has proceeded to any considerable extent, he should consider it the duty of a medical attendant not only not to advise the adoption of such a measure, but most earnestly to dissuade from it those who, from hearsay evidence of the recovery of persons in circumstances similar to their own, may feel disposed to fly to it as a last resource."

"That great and lasting benefit," he adds, "is to be derived even from a temporary residence in the climate of Madeira—which is probably inferior to no other in cases where pulmonary disease is merely threatened, or where strong family predisposition to it exists—many living examples sufficiently prove. But even under such comparatively favourable circumstances, it ought to be strongly impressed on the mind of the invalid, that

half measures are worse than useless, and that no advantage is to be derived from climate, however fine, unless it be seconded by the utmost caution and prudence on his part."*

The whole of the work alluded to is interesting, and, I should think, valuable to almost every reader; for the number of persons in England is probably small who are so fortunate as to have no friends or relatives whose health, spirits, and even fortune, do not in some degree depend on climate. The chapter, however, which engaged my attention most, was that which relates to Madeira—probably because the opinions contained in it were almost identical with my own, formed on the spot.

Dr. Clark's very decided conclusions, after discussing the various professional reports sent to him from the island, are worthy of so much attention, that I should venture to quote a page or two from his valuable work, were it not in the hands of every one who

* Dr. Clark, page 194.

cares about such subjects. I am fully satisfied, however, from personal observation, that his doctrines are sound, and his advice well calculated to have the double effect of saving much fruitless misery to patients in hopeless cases, and affording the very fairest chance, which the nature of things allows, to those who are still within the reach of cure. But I must refer to the book itself for more particular information on these subjects.

Some people prefer both living and dying in a temperate, or even in a cold atmosphere; but even these may be accommodated at Madeira. Indeed, I am acquainted with no place in which such a variety of climates may be commanded with certainty as in this beautiful island—beautiful in every sense; for the scenery is so varied, that almost all tastes may be suited. The soil is volcanic, though there has been no eruption within the memory of man; and all those fruits and flowers which thrive upon the rich soil of decomposed lavas are here produced in great abundance. The very name ‘Madera,’ signifying wooded, was given to it by the

first discoverers, from the uncommon luxuriance of its foliage.

To persons familiar with the scenery of Switzerland or Italy, that of Madeira will not, of course, wear the very novel dress that it must do to the upturned eyes of a genuine Cockney, whose conceptions of the sublime and beautiful in mountain scenery, have been moulded on the lofty ridges of Highgate and Hampstead, or the celebrated cone of Primrose Hill. But I have seldom seen any new comer, whatever his experience might have been, who was not more struck with Madeira than with almost any other spot in the world. It does not very much matter on which side the island is approached. I have tried it in a great many ways, and found them all delightful, and all striking. Take it where you will, the aspect is always such as to make you long eagerly to get on shore, that you may climb the side of the mountain, or bask in the sunshine on some of the knolls peeping out from amongst the rich coating of trees, unknown to your sight till now—or to luxuriate in the belts of shade hanging

along the bottom of the innumerable deep ravines which intersect the surface of the island on every side.

On steering towards Madeira, when at the distance of thirty or forty miles, or even considerably more, persons in the habit of looking out for the land will often see it long before others possessed of equally good eyes, but not accustomed to such observations. The truth is, that inexperienced people are not aware what they ought to look for; and when at length they perceive the land, generally exclaim—"Oh! I thought it would appear much higher!" For it takes a considerable time to understand the effects produced on objects by distance. The curvature of the earth, in the first place, is found to conceal much more of an island, or tower, or any high object, than most persons are at all prepared for. On shore, there are so many other things to fill the interval, and to break up the surface, that a correct estimate of the curvature of the earth is almost out of the question, except in great alluvial districts, such as Bengal or Louisiana, where,

by proper management, it may be rendered quite conspicuous. At sea, we have perpetual opportunities of trying these experiments; and I confess, for one—though by this time pretty well convinced of the globular shape of the earth—that I never tire of repeating them.

I remember once, when standing in for the British Channel, the look-out man on the fore yard-arm said he saw a light on the weather-bow. The evening was dark, though clear, with the wind about north, and the sea as smooth as a mill-pond. The light reported was that on the Scilly Islands, then distant from us between fifteen and twenty miles. I was officer of the watch; and being anxious to ascertain that it was not, as so often happens, a star rising in the east, but truly St. Agnes' light, I went up the main rigging, and sure enough, saw the splendid beacon in question performing its periodical revolutions in fine style.

As there was not the slightest swell, I determined to try within what degree of nicety the curvature of the earth could be made

sensible to actual observation, and therefore came slowly down the rigging, ratlin by ratlin, till the light was lost. I then mounted again till it came in sight once more, and so on till it was brought within one step. That is to say, when standing on the upper of two ratlins the light could be seen distinctly, while from the lower one it was not discernible. In order to reduce this to the smallest observable limits, I then stood on the upper ratlin, and bent my body, gradually, till the light appeared to go out. By this means it was ascertained that a range of less than six inches was sufficient either to obliterate a small and well-defined object, or to bring it into view.

With respect to such an island as Madeira or Teneriffe, the experiment is of necessity a much looser affair; because, when the mountain's top comes close to the horizon, the land generally melts into the sky, by reason of the haze which hangs in the lower strata of the atmosphere: the distance, and the amount of interposed air, being increased in proportion to the height of the land. So

that, long before the mere curvature of the earth would conceal an island so high as Madeira, it would vanish from other causes. This observation varies with the state of the weather, and with those obscure phenomena in meteorology which enable the air to hold moisture in such perfect solution, that at one time it may be totally invisible, while at another it shall be curdled into clouds, or thrown down in rain. I have occasionally seen the high ridge of Madeira just peering above the horizon, as sharp and cutting as that of a mountain not three leagues off. But this is rare; and, generally speaking, it is not seen till about a third of its perpendicular height is above the horizon. In such cases, it sometimes appears to require a long time to run up to it, even when the wind is fair. The spectator's impatience, especially if it be his first visit, far outstrips the lazy pace of the ship. It seems to him as if the island flitted away nearly as fast as the vessel sailed towards it. This delusion is sometimes so strong, that the only method of convincing oneself of the contrary,

is to go below for half an hour, and then come up to take a look at the land. The change in the apparent height and distance is then as wonderful as the slowness had seemed before.

On nearing the land, so as to get sight of the houses and fields, the church spires and the vessels' masts, we are furnished with something like a scale wherewith to estimate heights, distances, and even magnitudes. The mountains we had previously complained of for being so low, have risen into importance in our imagination. After this stage of the voyage has been reached, a totally novel set of objects meets our view, and every mile augments the interest. Foreign-looking houses—strange trees and rocks stand round the landscape; grotesque boats come alongside, filled with copper-coloured people in fantastic dresses, speaking an unknown language. On reaching the anchorage such a multitude of new and striking objects rush upon the observation, that the fancy is often crowded to excess, partly with what it actually beholds, partly with vague

recollections of drawings of foreign scenes, and partly with comparisons between what has been left elsewhere and what is actually present. We feel, upon the whole, much delighted—like a child at its first pantomime; but—I scarcely know why—there is often a dash of pain along with all this gratification, arising, perhaps, from the bewildered state of our senses, and the difficulty of arranging our new information.

Things appear less involved next day; and I remember to this hour the confused consciousness of satisfaction with which I awoke after the first night's sleep at Madeira, and struggled to disentangle the wild scenery of my dreams from that of my waking observation the day before, which, indeed, was scarcely less wild. I ran to the window, which looked into a verandah, and, wrapping a cloak over my shoulders, leaped into the open air. Every thing was now still, and a heavy dew had settled, almost like rain drops, upon all the vine leaves. The land breeze of the night had long blown itself out, and the sea in the roads was so per-

fectly smooth that every vessel looked double. The rolling of the surf, though close at hand, could scarcely be heard, but it was the only sound that broke the entire stillness of the scene.

The highest peaks of the mountain could be seen just catching the first rays of the sun; and their shadows being now stretched out in the opposite direction from that in which they had been cast overnight, the aspect of the island was entirely changed. The desire we felt to leave the lower districts, to travel in the region of the clouds, was so greatly increased by this enchanting sunrise, that we yielded with reluctance to the suggestions of our host, to wait till after breakfast. He promised to furnish one of my brother officers and myself with horses and guides, and added, that if we liked it, we might dine with him in his country house, far up on the side of the mountain, where we might have a trial of their cooler climates.

I am sure that if Aladdin had been present to offer us the accommodation of his lamp, we could have demanded nothing more de-

lightful at the hands of the Genii. To complete our happiness, we possessed in our host one of the kindest, most gentlemanlike, and obliging persons I ever met with in any part of the world. Indeed, it is not easy to describe how much it adds to the enjoyment of such scenes, to discover, in regions far removed from home, those intellectual charms which, indigenous to no region in particular, flourish under every sun.

I may take this opportunity of mentioning, that on many a subsequent occasion, both in the East and in the West, but especially in the East, I have been surprised to find myself in situations where the actual enjoyment came as fully up to the promise of the most enthusiastic previously conceived wish, as it certainly did on this occasion at Madeira. So far from these repeated instances of enjoyment fatiguing, or even satisfying curiosity, they generally give fresh ardour to the pursuit of novelty; and, by quickening the faculties of observation at every successive step, tend to enlarge the means of further gratification and improvement.

To some persons such declarations may seem extravagant ; but those who have tried the greatest number of experiments, will, I think, generally be the readiest to allow, that even the simplest beauties of nature, when duly selected and combined, are more than a match for the brightest creations of mere fancy. At all events, one of the most vigorous-minded writers of any age made no scruple of confessing how far his imagination fell short in the conception of natural scenery :

“ Yet there are things, whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy land ; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse.”*

* Childe Harold, Canto IV. Stanza vi.

CHAPTER IX.

MADEIRA.—TRIP TO THE MOUNTAIN.

WE set out from Funchal after breakfast, on a pair of stout little ponies, and galloped away under the feeling that we had before us quite as much enjoyment as we chose to grasp, and far more than we could ever hope to tell about. The first point at which we aimed was a romantic-looking white church, called "Nossa Senhora do Monte," peeping out from amongst the chestnuts and vines, and all sorts of rich green foliage, with which the side of the mountain is clad, even to a distance considerably beyond that elevated spot. In running into the bay, the day before, every eye was directed to this striking object, which was dubbed by all hands 'the convent'—though

convent it certainly was none—and many vows were made that its fair inmates should be visited. In this one respect, I must fairly own that performance and promise are sadly out of keeping; and I warn my roving successors in Catholic countries, before they visit convents in search of youth and beauty under the veil, to get rid of the fancies suggested by Mrs. Radcliffe and others.

Our guide, for some time, could not understand what we were at when we desired him to take us to the convent, and pointed up the hill. We had been in Portugal, it is true; but the prejudices we had picked up in Spain against the language of the neighbouring country, or perhaps our imperfect opportunities of learning it, had kept us in ignorance of Portuguese. Our present communications were carried on in Castilian, interlarded, when we became impatient, with a touch of English—for John Bull, when he is in a rage, fancies no outlandish man—as he calls all the rest of the world—can fail to understand his strong terms. The lads who accompanied us could jabber no-

thing but the dialect of the island, which probably bears the same relation to that spoken at Lisbon which the English of Bermuda does to that of Bristol. Nevertheless, we contrived to make ourselves understood—for, all over the world, your guides are fellows so much accustomed to a variety of masters, that they soon learn how intimate the connexion is between a stranger's liberality and his satisfaction with himself. Accordingly, when the glitter of a dollar meets their eye, they seldom make difficulties, but fall into their master's humour in a moment. At all events, our companions, finding us determined to call the church a convent, a convent they consented to vote it, and away we trudged up the hill.

I am afraid to say what the angle of inclination of the road may be which leads directly up the mountain from the town of Funchal, but it is by far the steepest I have ever seen travelled over in any country; and to a horse unaccustomed to it, or shod in the usual way, would afford no footing whatever. At first starting we could scarcely believe it

possible that our horses were intended to climb such a precipice as it appeared; but the guides gave them a sound bang with a long pole on the haunches, accompanied by an oath set to the music of a Portuguese yell. The fellows then caught hold of the horses' tails to assist themselves in the ascent, and away we scampered, like so many heathen deities, each mounted on his fiery Pegasus, and bound on a voyage to the upper skies!

This sort of scramble between earth and heaven became a good enough joke as soon as we ascertained that it was safe; but really it was not a little alarming, at first, to be travelling up a surface so steep, that, under ordinary circumstances, the danger of a capsize would have been most imminent. It really appeared, that if the horses had slipped and fallen, both they and their riders must have rolled down, heels over head, for a mile or two, with a velocity accelerated at every bump, till they reached the town. The idea, also, sometimes crossed our minds, that by jerking the bridles too smartly, the horses, making already such a great angle

with the horizon, might assume the perpendicular, and urged by the momentum of their elevation, fairly topple backwards, in which case there was nothing to bring us up, till we reached our native element amongst the shipping. No such mischance occurred, however, though the centre of gravity of the ponies was shifted back more than we sometimes thought safe, by the tugging of the guides, who made no apology for holding our nags by the tail. We ventured, once or twice, when apprehensive of tumbling over, to enter into some remonstrance; but John Portuguese made no other reply than by a thundering thump with his pole, which whistled by our heads, and, falling on the wretched beasts' rumps, threatened to crush them to the ground. The stout little ponies, however, never slipped or stumbled once all the way up; and we took advantage of the first stop to investigate the cause of so curious a phenomenon in horsemanship.

The guides, who probably conceived the roads in every other part of the world to be equally steep, were surprised at our

turning up the horses' feet to see by what possible conjuration they could avoid slipping down the hill. The mystery explained itself at a glance. The horses' shoes were made somewhat after the fashion of those worn by our great grandmothers, with heels at least an inch high. These spikes were let into the hind part of the shoe, like long frost nails, only stronger, and, in fact, integral parts of the shoe; but as this claw or cramp-iron alone would be insufficient to prevent riders (especially nautical riders) from sliding downwards, it is necessary to adapt the hill to the horses' feet, as well as the feet to the hill. In this view the roads of Madeira are paved in the most regular manner with smooth stones, each about half the size of a man's fist. These are not exactly round, but slightly pointed, and made to stand up in such a way as to leave a hollow space between each. Hence it is impossible for the horse to put his foot any where that the spikes in his heels will not find a secure lodgment. Even if these rest at first on the top of the stone, they glance off, and

fix themselves in a moment in such a way that to slip is impossible. Of this we were soon convinced, and the ascent became as easy and natural to us as if we had never tried any other method. But the amount of faith in these securities required to be much greater on coming down again. The road then looked so much steeper and more dangerous, that our nerves, upon one occasion, not being quite equal to the trial, we fairly dismounted. It really looked like riding down the stair of a cellar more than along His Most Faithful Majesty's highway. But, here again a fresh evil beset us. The small, sharp-pointed stones of the road struck so keenly into our feet, that after a quarter of a mile's rumble, we were fain to remount, under the ill-repressed grins of the two Portuguese boys, who doubtless wrote us down in their long list of English mules, whose obstinacy it had been their trade for so long a time to humour.

Each guide was armed with a long stick, with which he belaboured his pony in the most merciless way, and, at every blow,

added insult to injury, by showering all the epithets of abuse he could think of, in tones of anger, reproach, and entreaty, and all the while hanging upon the tail as if his object was to retard, not to advance the march.

These men dress like the rest of the peasantry, in a coarse, white, cotton frock, with wide sleeves, and loose linen breeches, or drawers, open at the knee. Although these inexpressibles are furnished with buttons and holes, they are never fixed;—a fashion prevalent both in Spain and Portugal. Round the body is buttoned a blue cloth waistcoat, over which, but only in rainy weather, may be drawn a jacket, not unlike that worn by sailors. In general, however, this part of their apparel is flung in a careless manner over the left shoulder; and not a little dandyism enters into its adjustments. Our guides, at least, were perpetually shifting it about and redispersing its folds, exactly as one sees the Spaniards fidgetting with the festoons of their graceful capotes. Most of the labouring people of Madeira are remarkably athletic in their

forms, but their brawny legs are generally concealed in yellow boots; their feet, I need scarcely say, being guiltless of stockings. On the head is placed a neat, blue, cloth bonnet, lined with red, somewhat in the shape of a mitre. On each side of this covering there stands out, queerly enough, a little red knot, like an ear, formed by a portion of the lining turned upwards; from under this cap a profusion of glossy black hair falls over the shoulders, in a picturesque style enough.

The female peasants are mostly dressed in dark blue gowns and petticoats, of a coarse stuff, with a coloured, showy handkerchief thrown over their shoulders. Many of them wear a white square veil cast loosely on the head, so that one of its corners may hang down behind nearly to the middle of the back. The lower orders of Madeira appear to enjoy a prodigious advantage over the higher classes in personal appearance—a distinction they owe, no doubt, to those temperate and laborious habits of life, which probably they consider as any thing but good

gifts of fortune. To our superficial glance, at least, the peasantry of that happy island seemed amongst the most cheerful people we had yet met with. In the course of our evening rambles, we were often reminded, by the sound of a guitar in the cottages, of Peter Pindar's lines, describing Madeira, in which, amongst other graphic and characteristic details of the manners of these simple islanders, he tells us how generally they

“ Touch, when the labours of the day are done,
The wire of music to the setting sun.”

But I am forgetting our excursion.—By dint of whip and spur, and, above all, the poles of the guides, we were not long in getting up the hill. These lads had learned by experience, as they declared, that the horses go up much easier, upon the whole, by forcing themselves forward at a quick pace, than when their rate of climbing is reduced to a walk. So they continued belabouring and scolding the wretched animals only the more vehemently, the steeper the road became, and the more we begged, in the name of their cattle, for a little mercy.

At our first starting from the town, we found ourselves amongst the vineyards, spread out conspicuously on the face of the mountain, and fronting the meridian sun. Funchal is placed in the centre of an immense amphitheatre, open to the south, and backed on the north by ridges of volcanic origin, piled one above another, to the height of several thousand feet. The vineyards, in most instances, are enclosed and crossed by walls, on the top of which rest the ends of long poles, placed horizontally at the height of five or six feet from the ground, and supported at intervals by upright posts. These are crossed by rods, inserted at such distances from one another as to make an open roof of irregular basket or trellis-work, along which the vines, having crept up the vertical poles, spread themselves out in all directions, and, I think, with more freedom than is generally seen in other countries where the grape is cultivated. This canopy of leaves, creepers, and bunches of grapes, affords a most complete shade; or if it be pierced here and there by a chance ray

of sunshine, this serves by contrast, only to give more complete effect to the exclusion of the light, and glare, and heat in all other parts of the vineyard.

Before the sea breeze sets in, which is generally about ten in the morning, it must be owned that in these covered gardens the air is often sultry, and rather overloaded with the perfume of the fruit, which hangs in a degree of profusion worthy of one of the most favoured spots in the whole world. But when that greatest of all luxuries, the delicious sea breeze, sweeps away from the land the noxious vapours of the night, and substitutes the cool, pure atmosphere of the ocean, I can conceive, for my part, no paradise more perfect than such a scene; nor, indeed, on such occasions, does one desire any thing more. The thought of its transient nature, it is true, affects some self-tormenting minds, and mars a portion of their enjoyment. But a more extensive experience is sure to satisfy any one who views these things in their proper light, that in this very uncertainty as to the

duration, and doubt as to the chances of the recurrence of such high feasts, consists, essentially, no inconsiderable portion of their exquisite relish.

For our parts, we had learned to make the most of every thing. For we had already seen some snatches of the world, and knew how to profit by the hour as it rattled past, and also how to leave the future to take care of itself, when it should come up with us. Off we spanked, therefore, straight up the hill, keeping the convent right ahead, with the vines at some parts of the road, where it was narrowest, very nearly meeting over us, their branches being often so much loaded, that the wonder was, how they were not broken down. It was mortifying to be told that we were just one fortnight too soon; for not one ripe grape could we find, among the fifty-four different kinds which we were gravely assured by the guides grew on the island.

As we ascended the mountain, we gradually left the vineyards far behind us, and got into a region of more vigorous, and a more

lofty description of foliage. I cannot say at what height the vines cease, and the Spanish chestnut and other forest-trees commence; but the transition is most agreeable and picturesque. The air likewise is cooler, and the views much more extensive. On entering the wood, we completely lost sight of the church, or convent, as we still called it, and indeed of the whole upper part of the island; but we were more than repaid by the occasional peeps through the openings of the town and harbour beneath us, and of the distant horizon, which appeared to be lifted up many degrees above the usual height, as if the sea, instead of being flat, had assumed the form of a huge bowl, in the centre of which lay the island. This curious deception augments in proportion as the eye is raised; and to persons who witness it for the first time, is extremely puzzling.

After proceeding for a considerable distance through the woods, we came to a showy iron railing and gateway, apparently the entrance to some wealthy magnifico's mansion;

and as we were ripe for any sort of adventure, we dismounted and knocked at the gate, not in the least to the surprise of the guides, who were accustomed to all sorts of mad pranks in their English employers.

The porter, or major domo, or whoever he was—at all events, a very dignified personage—soon made his appearance, and begged to know our pleasure. We explained, as well as we might, that our only desire was to look over grounds which appeared so beautifully laid out. Having ascertained this point, he moved off with a very stately air, and soon returned with Donna Isabella's compliments, and her permission for us to walk round her garden. The major domo, however, before he trusted us alone, led us up to a rose-bush ; and shewing us the flowers, pointed to his eyes, with two of his fingers expanded like the branches of a double quizzing-glass, said in English, " Senhor, you look." After a pause, during which he supposed we might be digesting his first injunction, he added, " Senhor, you smell;" and as he was far from sure about the last ex-

pression, he suited the action to the word, by thrusting his deeply-bronzed nose right into the bush. All this was intelligible enough, and we were getting impatient to be off; but the imperturbable major domo held us back, and with a most austere visage intended to be particularly impressive, exclaimed, "Senhor, you no rompe!"—meaning, we supposed, "Pray, gentlemen, don't break any."

Every thing was new to us, the fruits and flowers, the form of the walks, the architecture of the house, the language and dress of the people; and even a pretty little waterfall, tumbling over the black rocks into a basin, carved in the lava to receive it, appeared strange to our eyes, and had its peculiar interest accordingly. The branches of some of the finest trees were cut away, to admit light to the parterres; while a most unhappy sun-dial was so ingeniously placed as to enjoy the shade during the whole day. On stepping up to look at it, the word 'London,' engraved upon it, broke up for an instant the Arabian-Night kind of air

which was breathed over the whole of this fantastical but very pleasing spot.

What we lamented most was the absence of any opening by which we could obtain a glimpse of the bay, or of the town, or of the glorious display of vineyards which matted the whole face of the mountain below us. The sole object seemed to be, the exclusion of the glare and heat at all hazards; at least it seemed a point of no importance with the proprietor to extend the view beyond the limits of the flower-garden and waterfall. From one part of the grounds, indeed, we saw, through an opening in the forest, to our great surprise, the church of our Lady of the Mountain towering above us. We had fancied ourselves still far from it, and were glad to hail it at the distance of only a few hundred yards.

The church is built of a dark-coloured blue lava, white washed over,—it contains a number of badly-painted pictures, but is, of course, well stocked with huge wax candles. In short, ‘Nossa Senhora do Monte’ is not so attractive when examined closely, as she

is when viewed from a distance. Our attention, however, was more taken up with the view from the church of all the lower country—not only about the town and the bay, but far to the left—towards the promontory called the Brazen Head, and in the opposite direction towards a set of very high cliffs, which stand boldly into the sea.

Whatever errors may have belonged to the Romish church, it can never be denied, that its ministers had a strong perception of the sublime and the beautiful in scenery, and that the sites of their churches, convents, priories, and other places of residence, are generally such as the most chastised taste, even of our own more refined days, would not scruple to select. It is admitted, I believe, on all hands, that to the Roman Catholic priests of the Middle Ages we are indebted for the preservation of classical letters, which might otherwise have been swept entirely from the face of the earth, by the deluge of barbarism which inundated Europe, when the great barrier of the Roman power was broken down. Neither is it improbable, that

from the secretly cherished study of the ancient authors so preserved, these good fathers may have derived much of their feeling for the beauties of nature. The knowledge how to profit by their extensive opportunities would soon follow; and from their possessing the undisputed ascendancy in wealth, and in every other description of power, they would naturally take the lead in architectural ornament. The minds which could conceive such buildings as York Minster and Westminster Abbey, and find hands to execute them, with riches to endow them, would, almost as a matter of course, understand the advantages of suitable situations for these and other great works of art.

It is always agreeable, when we can do so with fairness, not only to give the devil his due, but to give him a lift when he deserves praise. People, however, who have lived all their lives in Protestant countries, and flattered themselves with the idea of their being thoroughly unprejudiced, in their antipathy to the priests, can scarcely be made to listen with patience to any thing which tells in

their favour. And yet I have often visited countries where I have made acquaintance with many highly meritorious and conscientious ministers of the Roman Catholic religion. The happiness so generally diffused by these persons over their flocks, was not only worthy of unqualified approbation, but might, perhaps, have set the example to places in which these ministers, merely from possessing an erroneous form of worship, are looked upon as little better than demons.

The commanding elevation we had now reached enabled us to inspect the structure of the different valleys intersecting the face of the mountain immediately above the town of Funchal. The channels of these streams were all dry, but they bore evident marks of the violence with which they had been scooped out.

I suspect, that no one who has not actually seen a mountain torrent in full action can form a just conception of its power in transporting loose materials, or of the rapid manner in which it carves a channel for itself, through very hard rocks. I had after-

wards an opportunity of witnessing, at Madeira, one of the grandest specimens of these floods which is any where to be met with. The whole of the upper part of the mountain is split into crevices, in some instances deep enough to be called ravines, or, in the larger cases, even valleys. Many of these run into one another, so that, when the rain falls in any quantity, the whole series are set in operation at once, like so many gigantic sluices, to conduct the water into the main channels which convey it to the sea. In less precipitous countries, the minor streams take some time to collect their waters; but at Madeira, where the hills are steep, the whole is done almost at a blow, and with an impetuosity that looks quite formidable to strange eyes. A few hours only after a heavy rain has commenced, the torrents are all at work.

. A valley of considerable dimensions indents the side of the mountain, at the foot of which stands the town of Funchal. Into this I do not know how many ravines empty their contents—certainly a considerable num-

ber, and some of them of great length, and reaching almost to the summit of the highest ridges of the island. At the point where this huge water-course approaches the town, which it divides into two parts, its channel is confined between walls of great strength, built in such a manner as to humour the natural tendency of the stream, and thus to lead so troublesome a visitor, with all convenient speed, into the ocean. If some precaution of this kind were not taken, the town would be liable to dangerous inundation. Even as it is, and with every kind of device to lead the water quickly off, Funchal is frequently all but submerged; and I remember hearing that in one season the bay of Funchal was strewed with pipes of 'London particular,' washed out of the cellars of the distracted merchants.

Things did not reach this pass, however, on the occasion I speak of, though it seemed, to an inexperienced eye, as if a few drops more would have made the flood break over its embankment, and, like one of those terrific

crevasses in Louisiana, when the Mississippi bursts through the Levée, carry destruction to every thing it encountered.

I do not recollect exactly the dimensions of the artificial channel along which the waters of this torrent are carried in safety through Funchal; but I should think it may be about eighty or a hundred feet wide, by twenty or thirty deep. This space was filled within a few feet of the top, partly with water and partly with stones, many of them of great dimensions, all moving together, with a noise like continuous loud thunder, and boiling and tearing along, over a much-inclined surface. I am afraid to guess what the angle might be which the bed of the stream made with the horizon; but it was sufficient to cover the surface with waves more tumultuous than I remember to have seen on any of the rapids in Canada. The water was flowing fast enough to bear along rocks with the utmost vivacity, which, I verily believe, the river St. Lawrence would not have been able to budge one inch. I saw stones, varying in size from that of a common chair to many

times that magnitude, jerked half out of the stream by the prodigious violence with which they were dashed against one another, or perhaps against some opposing angle of the native rock, now undergoing a process of the most active discipline, in the way of grinding, that the bed of any current was ever exposed to. What may be the annual amount of wear and tear on these occasions, I have no means of judging; but my first conception was, that, ere long, the torrent would hollow out such a channel for itself, that the worthy merchants of Funchal would no longer have occasion to dread the loss of their dear wine pipes. But the plague is, that these formidable torrents choose, like the Mississippi when it breaks loose, to take the management of all such things into their own hands. Accordingly it happens at Madeira as at New Orleans, and I suppose elsewhere, that nothing is more dangerous than attempting to alter essentially the direction of these currents. It is next to impossible, indeed, to predict what will happen in any given case when moving

water is to be dealt with. It is true, that when man sets fairly about it, he may eventually beat even old Neptune himself—witness the breakwater at Plymouth, or the Eddystone light-house, which now completely defy the most violent winter gales. And yet we often see the best-constructed works, that skill and capital can put together to resist the ocean, ‘melt into the yeast of its waves,’ like so many walls of sugar at the first touch of a summer gale!

At Madeira, when the rain ceases, the torrent quickly runs itself dry, after which we find the bed of the ravine paved along its whole length with blocks of stone, varying in dimensions according to the shape and inclination of the ground. On the occurrence of a comparatively flat spot, there is generally assembled a set of enormous boulders, which the torrent, though it has had power to force down the steepest places, has not been able to transport along the less inclined surface. Consequently we find a barrier, strictly resembling, in the principle of its formation, the bar which occurs at the mouth of a river.

It is well known that water, moving at a given rate, will carry along materials, of a certain weight and magnitude—and no larger or heavier; but the instant this velocity is diminished, the heaviest materials cease to move; or, in the language of the geologists, they are deposited. This holds good, whether the contact with the sea checks the stream, or the smaller inclination of the ground makes the torrent move slower, or that it has room to spread out.

Owing to these causes, the mountain stream at Madeira is sometimes attended by evils of great magnitude, against which no skill has yet been able to contend successfully. These deposits of large stones, across the direction of the torrent, act as dams or weirs, by which the water is raised above the ordinary channel, and consequently, by overtopping the banks, it flows to the right and left, carrying devastation wherever it goes—sweeping out the warehouses, ripping up the pavements, and unfurnishing the dwellings of the inhabitants.

A succession of floods may deposit a succession of these great stones, without much mischief occurring; till during some very rainy season a torrent of unusual magnitude descends the hill, charged, of course, with a fresh supply of materials. This new inundation sometimes drives the previous barrier fairly into the sea, and thus clears the channel. But, in accomplishing this arduous purpose, the waters are generally found to swell to such a monstrous height, that before its bed is opened, the stream has deluged the town, and the evil is done. In 1803 or 4, I forget which, I was told that an incident of this kind had occurred at Madeira. The accumulation of several years was swept completely through the town, carrying along with it a church, half a street of substantial houses, together with some of the inhabitants, and a countless number of pipes of wine, full into the sea. This formidable inundation—the work of a few minutes—was so unusually violent, that there was reason to believe a water-spout had broken over the island.

Upon the occasion when I witnessed one of these striking exhibitions of the power of moving water, though it was at a season of the year (April) when no great catastrophe was to be expected, the inhabitants of Funchal flocked in crowds to the edge of the flood, where they stood with looks of as much apparent wonder as if this had been the first time they had seen such a thing. Possibly, their familiarity with the effects of past torrents may have only increased their respect for those which succeeded; so that what we looked upon merely with admiration may have seemed terrific in their eyes.

This is well known to be the effect of earthquakes upon the inhabitants of countries much exposed to their action. Strangers are interested, and even delighted to feel a moderate shock or two; but the natives invariably become more and more alarmed at each successive movement of the earth under their feet.

To us, this torrent was the grandest thing possible—indeed, no imagination could have placed it before us. I remember that it

required an effort of considerable resolution to advance to the brink and look over. The noise was such, that hardly any elevation of voice could make two persons audible to one another, though standing side by side. The ground shook, or rather trembled violently, in a manner which indicated the enormous weight passing over the surface. I have seen no surf, or breakers, or rapids, in any part of the world, that impresses the senses with so obvious a feeling of irresistible power as this prodigious mountain torrent.

Old Niagara, indeed, is a sight a thousand times more magnificent and more beautiful; but its perfect uniformity, the graceful majesty with which it curls over the precipice, and the grand dash with which it falls into the pool below, distinguish it altogether from the impetuous but transitory mountain torrent at Madeira. Nevertheless, the two scenes are not bad pendants to one another; and he who has seen only one of them must, I suspect, have an incomplete idea of what can be accomplished by moving water.

As we rode up the hill, we kept pretty nearly on the highest line, or back bone of one of the ridges pointing towards the summit; but on striking across, which we were obliged to do, in order to reach the country house for which we were bound, another sort of tactic became necessary. We now coasted along, as it were, nearly at the same level, till we reached the bottom of the adjacent valley, then crossed the water-course, at this season generally quite dry, and again skirted along the bank till we gained the summit of the neighbouring ridge, having continued all the while nearly at the same horizontal elevation. When these valleys assume the character of clefts or ravines, their passage is much more difficult—and sometimes even dangerous—at least in appearance. This arises from the narrow roads, being bounded on one side by a precipice, and on the other by a bank almost perpendicular, so that any false step or alarm on the part of the horse, or rider, might prove fatal. The guides instructed us in this matter as well as they

could; but not to much purpose, for we had got into high spirits, partly from the amusements of the day, and partly from a glass of Madeira from an old Dominie, whose house we had visited near the church. As we had no longer the steep face of the mountain to climb, we resolved to give our attendants a race for it, and off we set along the narrow path just described at a round gallop.

The guides, however, unwilling to lose sight of us, clung lustily to the horses' tails, and loudly entreated us to go slower, as the road was dangerous, and near the bottom of the valley it became still more steep. We heard them, but we heeded not; or, at all events, the only notice we took of their supplications was to rap their knuckles with our sticks till they let go their hold, and then, being freed from all detention, we shot along at full speed over ground totally unknown to us, except that a trip, or a slip, would have sent a couple of His Majesty's officers full fifty fathoms deep into some yawning ravine.

The danger was greatest just at the turn of the road, as it wound along the curve of the valley, before reaching the water channel; at this spot its inclination was considerable, and its width not more than three feet. I was leading the way in this madcap scamper, followed by my companion who was thundering along the path, pursued by the wretched Portuguese yelling and howling to us to stop. I was afraid lest, in his impetuosity, my friend might be impelled between me and the bank, so that I should be wedged off the road into the bottomless pit on the left. At this critical point in the race, what should heave in sight ahead but a young lady, walking slowly towards us! To pass her was impossible—to draw up equally so—and had she not been a person of considerable presence of mind, the whole party, in all probability, would have gone to pot together. She took her line with the decision of a veteran, familiar with danger, and confident in resources. By springing at once to the side, and grasping the roots of the trees with her

hands, she was enabled to cling to the upright bank, for the instant of time it cost us to whiz past her. We grazed her drapery as a cannon ball might have done; but the wind of the shot did her no harm, and the guides, brandishing their poles, and screaming with terror, on our account, (and that of their ponies), likewise dashed by her with scarcely less impetuosity. We were all out of sight in a moment; and it was not till long afterwards, when I found myself in company with a lady who was relating a story which made the company stare, that I had an opportunity of apologising for the alarm to which we had exposed her.

By the time the guides came up, we had reached our friend's house, delivered over our horses to the groom, and were enjoying ourselves on the grassy knoll in front of the verandah—one of the prettiest spots, if not the very prettiest in the world, and commanding a more varied and extensive view of the scenery of Madeira than any other we had yet seen. From the house, which is placed on the top of the ridge, we

could peer into both the valleys by which it was flanked, and, upon looking up, could see almost into the great Caldeira;— or, if that were too high, we could see into several deep and barren ravines far above the reach of vegetation—the ground thereabouts being rugged and stern, in the highest degree savage and uninviting, and eminently picturesque. To those who delight in contrasts, nothing could be more interesting than the change of scene which a single turn of the head brought in sight. On looking downwards, towards the south, we could see before us all the riches of this rich island, literally glowing at our feet. In the middle distance stood the town, fringing the bay, speckled over with boats and shipping; and beyond this gay and busy scene lay our old friend, the sea—of which one never tires—with its horizon thirty or forty miles off. A panorama from this spot would tell famously, I think, in Leicester Square; but I fear no verbal description could do more than revive, in the minds of those who have witnessed it, some traces of the splen-

did original, which, in its way, has few things that I know of to match it in any country. To some tastes, indeed, the tropical scenery is preferable—and mine is of that number—but, beyond that luxurious zone, it would be difficult to name a spot superior to Madeira. And yet—in consequence of the discomforts of a ten days' voyage—how small are the numbers who ever see that splendid island?—and, of that number, how great a proportion are too much weighed down, either with sickness or with sorrow, to care for scenery or for any thing else? For instance, our poor passenger, whom we carried out in the *Endymion*, who, had she been in health, would have enjoyed this wonderful landscape more than most people, never even noticed it. She soon sunk into the grave, without once lifting her head, and her afflicted companions in the voyage re-embarked, and hastened away from scenes too deeply associated in their minds with their recent loss to excite any feelings but those of sorrow.

I wish I had it in my power, before quit-

ting this subject, to give some practical instructions likely to be useful to persons desirous of trying the climate of Madeira. I am told that there is at present good accommodation for invalids upon the island, who may either board, or take apartments. Rent and servants' wages are said to be low. A convenient house can be had for 200 dollars, or about £45 per annum. Some of the boarding houses are maintained exclusively for the use of sick people, where every care is taken of them. There are frequent opportunities of going to Madeira, as the East or West India ships almost always call there. Any vessel touching at that island will be glad to carry passengers at from £20 to £25. Nobody would think of going in any of the small traders. The passage varies from ten days to three weeks from Portsmouth: perhaps a fortnight would be a fair average.

Lest any thing I may have said, when recommending Madeira to invalids, should be misunderstood, I may remark, that it is in England, and in England alone, that real comforts are known. Foreigners possess not

the word—nor the idea—nor the thing. This should never be forgotten when sick persons are to be moved from home.

In the course of my inquiries, I was sorry to learn that the ancient manners of the island had lately suffered by those political shocks, which have so dreadfully disturbed the relations of society elsewhere. A friend writes to me as follows :

“ I believe the hospitalities of Madeira are not quite so general as they used to be, as things are much changed for the worse. Revolution has reached even that once quiet and happy spot. ‘ The schoolmaster is abroad,’ but his scholars are a sad, ignorant, intractable, conceited, and mischievous crew. They will require, I fear, much severe discipline to subdue them to decent behaviour, and to fit them—for they are very unfit at present—to receive any useful instruction.”

CHAPTER X.

THE CHASE.

WHEN the Dey of Algiers, in full divan, was once rather sharply taken to task, by the captain of an English man-of-war, on the score of sundry piracies committed by the cruisers of his Highness, it is recorded that the Chief, in reply, merely held up his hands, and placing his two thumbs perpendicularly side by side, looked significantly to the interpreter, gave an enormous angry puff from his pipe, and broke up the conference.

It required no small share of diplomatic address to read this riddle to the indignant captain, and something like force, to prevent his returning to the palace, to take the circumcised villain by the throat, when it was explained to him that the Turk's meaning was to institute a comparison between one of his own rovers and one of His Bri-

tannic Majesty's ships, the resemblance being correctly typified, as the Dey chose to insinuate, by the similarity of his two thumbs.

There may be some use, however, in considering what points of resemblance there really are between a mere piratical corsair and a regularly-commissioned man-of-war. The same great poet has celebrated both; but as he drew his conceptions of a pirate's life from the red-hot furnace of his own fancy, it necessarily partakes of the warmth and brilliancy of its volcanic origin. On the other hand, when speaking of the Royal Navy, he was tied down to formal realities; and never having had any opportunity of seeing the poetical parts of our profession, he naturally constructed his verse to suit his limited acquaintance with the subject. Take the lines beginning

“ White is the glassy deck, without a stain,
 Where on the watch the staid lieutenant walks:
 Look on that part which sacred doth remain
 For the lone chieftain, who majestic stalks,
 Silent and feared by all . . .”*

* Childe Harold, Canto II. Stanza xix.

and it is clear that a stranger to the sea could no more infer from them the true character of a naval officer, or come to any just conception of his duties, than he could estimate his character from seeing a suit of uniform made for him by Mr. Willis of St. James's Street. But mark what an immediate difference there is in the strain when the bard comes to sing of downright pirates, or such as his fancy chooses to create. So enchanting, indeed, is the magic of his miraculous verse, that we can scarcely make an effort to resist its conclusions, but yield up our judgment to the imagination of the writer, and allow ourselves to suppose, that in the following lines we have a correct representation of a gang of nautical highwaymen:—

“ O'er the glad waters of the dark-blue sea,
 Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
 Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
 Survey our empire, and behold our home !
 These are our realms, no limits to their sway—
 Our flag the sceptre, ail who meet obey—
 Ours the wild life in tumults still to range,
 From toil to rest, and joy in every change.”*

* The Corsair, § i.

But these pictures—one of a naval life, the other of a pirate's—though both are beautiful, are both nearly equally imperfect. At all events, they certainly convey totally incorrect impressions of the two kinds of life respectively. It would be a needless task, I presume, to shew that regular pirates in the Mediterranean, as well as elsewhere—bucaniers on the Spanish main, or mainotes in the Archipelago—are, in fact, about as miserable and unpoetical a set of scoundrels as ever cut defenceless people's throats, or squabbled amongst themselves for the booty.

The truth is, that the world does not furnish, in the whole round of its joyous excitements, a more animating scene than is to be found on board one of His Majesty's frigates on a cruise, in the height of the war. It has all the vigorous occupation, the glowing spirit of enterprise, and all the brilliant hopes of the freest piratical life, without the guilt and the fears of that calling. It is mere nonsense to say that a sense of crime augments the pleasures of such a life; for

there is not a tittle of sound evidence to prove that there can ever be any satisfactory or permanent enjoyment which has not duty for its object, or its source, and true principle for its guide.

I should be happy indeed, could I describe, in suitable terms, the delightful sort of life we led in the *Endymion*, during the two or three years which followed our abortive attempts to drive the French out of the Peninsula, by means of two or three thousand unarmed Galician peasants. During the remaining months of 1809, all 1810, and for the greater part of 1811, we had almost as free a roving commission as any corsair could have drawn up for himself. At one time, we bore down to the very edge of the trade winds, in latitude 30° , at another, stretched far to the north, in parallel of 60° , within a day and a half's sail of Iceland. Sometimes we entered the Straits, to fill up our water-casks at Gibraltar; then stood off to Madeira, to replenish our stores of generous wine; or we touched at St. Michael's, to revel in its beautiful orange-groves, and

pluck ripe fruit from the very trees; or we made a trip to Lisbon, to hear the fresh tidings of such battles as Talavera; or we turned homewards, landed at Cork or at Plymouth, and enjoyed a nearer and dearer hospitality. It often fell in our way to visit these places, and a great many others, in the ordinary course of regular duty, while the intervals were filled up with the more arduous occupations of cruising after the scattered ships of the enemy, or protecting immense convoys of our own merchant vessels.

A more delightful species of voyaging and travelling than was afforded by these random calls, at the ports of different countries, cannot well be imagined. We never staid long enough at any place to become tired ourselves, nor, we trusted, to tire others. We skimmed the cream of every thing—got rapidly acquainted with the best people at every new place—saw the most interesting objects on half the shores of Europe—indulged in the first luxuries of every season—and then dashed away, either to

some new anchorage, or to roam at large amongst the islands of the Atlantic, in search of any thing that might turn up in the way of an enemy, armed or unarmed—a foe to grapple with, or a prize to profit by; while our thoughts and feelings were alternately occupied by dreams of promotion, or disturbed by the smiles and other blandishments of the goddesses, ‘black, brown, and fair,’ of our well-peopled Pantheon.

It so chanced, however, that in all this busy period of the most active possible cruising, flirting, and feasting, there did not occur a single adventure deserving of that name, or such as would figure in a novel. We often got scent of French frigates, but never ran one of them home; and although we used to frighten the lady abbess of many a convent with threats of abductions, we never carried our rope-ladders further than the most orthodox priest would have sanctioned. Neither, with all our opportunities, and apparently with the choice of our own cruising ground, did we ever pounce on a prize worth the trouble of catching; or, to

speaking more correctly, did we ever catch one, in which the chase was not by far the most interesting part of the adventure.

On the 8th of November, 1810, when we were lying in that splendid harbour the Cove of Cork, and quietly refitting our ship, an order came for us to proceed to sea instantly, on a cruise of a week off Cape Clear, in quest of an enemy's vessel, reported to have been seen from some of the signal towers on the west coast. We were in such a predicament, that it was impossible to start before the next morning, though we worked all night. Off we went at last; but it was not till the 11th that we reached our appointed station. Towards evening it fell dead calm, at which time there were two strange sails in sight; one of them a ship, which we 'calculated' was an American, from the whiteness of his sails — the other a very suspicious, roguish-looking brig; but as both of them were hull down, much of this was guess-work.

As the night fell, a light breeze sprung up, and we made all sail in the direction of the

brig, though she was no longer visible. In the course of the middle watch, we fortunately got sight of her with our night-glasses, and by two in the morning were near enough to give her a shot. The brig was then standing on a wind; while we were coming down upon her, right before it, or nearly so. The sound of our bow-chaser could hardly have reached the vessel it was fired at, before her helm was up; and in the next instant her booms were rigged out, and her studding-sails, low and aloft, seen dangling at the yard-arms. The most crack ship in His Majesty's service, with every thing prepared, could hardly have made sail more smartly.

For our parts, we could set nothing more, having already spread every stitch of canvass; but the yards were trimmed afresh, the tacks hauled closer out, and the haulyards sweated up till the yards actually pressed against the sheeve-holes. The best helmsman on board was placed at the wheel; and the foot of the foresail being drawn slightly up by the bunt slab-line, he could just see the chase clear of the fore-mast, and so keep her very

nearly right a-head. The two fore-castle guns, long 9-pounders, were now brought to bear on the brig; but as we made quite sure of catching her, and did not wish needlessly to injure our prize, or to hurt her people, orders were given to fire at the sails, which, expanded as they now were before us, like the tail of a peacock in his fullest pride, offered a mark which could not well be missed. Nevertheless, the little fellow would not heave to, for all we could do with our fore-castle guns. At four o'clock, therefore, we managed to get one of the long 18-pounders on the main-deck to bear upon him from the bridle-port. Still we could not stop him, though it was now bright moonlight, and there was no longer any tenderness about hurting his people, or injuring his hull. The vessel, however, at which we were now peppering away with round and grape-shot, as hard as we could discharge them from three good smart guns, was so low in the water, that she offered, when seen end on, scarcely any mark. How it happened that none of her yards or masts came rattling down, and that none of her

sails flew away, under the influence of our fire, was quite inexplicable.

The water still continued quite smooth, though the breeze had freshened, till we went along at the rate of six or seven knots. When the privateer got the wind, which we had brought up with us, she almost kept her own, and it became evident that she was one of that light and airy description of vessels which have generally an advantage over larger ships when there is but little wind. We, therefore, observed, with much anxiety, that about half-past four the breeze began, gradually, to die away, after which the chase rather gained than lost distance. Of course, the guns were now plied with double care, and our best marksmen were straining their eyes, and exerting their utmost skill, confident of hitting her, but all apparently to no purpose. One or two of the officers, in particular, who piqued themselves on knowing how to level a gun on principles quite unerring, in vain tried their infallible rules to bring our persevering chase to acknowledge himself caught.

By this time, of course, every man and boy in the ship was on deck, whether it was his watch or not; even the marine officer, the purser, and the doctor, left their beds—a rare phenomenon. Every one was giving his opinion to his neighbour; some said the shot went over her, some that they fell short; and the opinion that she was a witch, or the Flying Dutchman, or some other phantom, was current amongst the sailors, whilst the marines were clicking their flints, and preparing to give our little gentleman a taste of the small arms when within their reach.

While things were in this anxious but very pleasurable state, our foresail flapped slowly against the mast—a sure indication that the breeze was lulling. The quadruple rows of reef points were next heard to rattle along the topsails—sounds too well known to every ear as symptoms of an approaching calm. The studding-sails were still full, and so were the royals; but, by and by, even their light canvass refused to belly out, so faint was the air which still carried us, but very gently, along the water, on the surface of

which not a ripple was now to be seen in any direction. As the ship, however, still answered her helm, we kept the guns to bear on the chase without intermission, and with this degree of effect, that all her sails, both low and aloft, were soon completely riddled, and some of them were seen hanging in such absolute rags, that the slightest puff of wind must have blown them away like so many cobwebs. By five o'clock it was almost entirely calm, and we had the mortification to observe, that the chase, whose perseverance had kept him thus long out of our clutches, was putting in practice a manœuvre we could not imitate. He thrust out his sweeps, as they are called, huge oars requiring five or six men to each. These, when properly handled, by a sufficiently numerous crew, in a small light vessel, give her the heels of a large ship, when so nearly calm as it now was with us. We were not going more than a knot through the water, if so much, which was barely enough to give us steerage way.

The Frenchman got out, I suppose, about

fifteen or twenty of these sweeps, and so vigorously were they plied, that we could see by the moonlight, and still more distinctly when the dawn appeared, that the foam was made to fly in sheets at each stroke of these gigantic oars, which were worked together, by their looms being united by a hawser stretching fore and aft. Our chief anxiety now was to pitch a shot amongst his sweeps, as one successful hit there, would have sent half his crew spinning about the decks. But we were not so fortunate; and in less than an hour he was out of shot, walking off from us in a style which it was impossible not to admire, though our disappointment and vexation were excessive. By mid-day he was at least ten miles ahead of us; and at two o'clock, we could just see his upper sails above the horizon. We had observed, during the morning, that our indefatigable little chase, as soon as he had rowed himself from under the relentless fire of our guns, was busily employed in bending a new suit of sails, fishing his splintered yards, shifting his top-gallant masts,

and rigging out fresh studding-sail booms—all wounded, more or less, by our shot. As the severe labour of the sweeps was never intermitted, we knew to a certainty that the chase, though small, must be full of hands, and, consequently, it was an object of great importance for us to catch him. Of this, however, there now seemed but very little chance; and many were the hearty maledictions he received, though shared, it is true, by our own crack marksmen, now quite crest-fallen, or driven to the poor excuse of declaring that the moonlight on the water had deceived them as to the distance.

It really seemed as if every one on board had been seized with a fever—nothing else was thought of, or talked of, but the French brig; every glass, great and small, was in requisition, from the pocket spy-glass of the youngest midshipman, to the forty-inch focus of the captain. Each telescope in its turn was hoisted to the cross-trees, and pointed with a sort of sickening eagerness toward the lessening speck on the distant horizon. One might also have thought, that the ship was planted

in a grove of trees, in the month of spring time, so numerous were the whistlers, the practice of whistling for a wind is one of our nautical superstitions, which, however groundless and absurd, fastens itself on the strongest-minded sailors at such times. Indeed, I have seen many an anxious officer's mouth take the piping form, and have even heard some sounds escape from lips which would have vehemently disclaimed all belief in the efficacy of such incantation.

But it would be about as wise a project to reason with the gales themselves, as to attempt convincing Jack that as the wind bloweth only when and where it listeth, his invoking it can be of no sort of use one way or the other. He will still whistle on, I have no doubt, in all time to come, when he wants a breeze, in spite of the march of intellect; for, as long as the elements remain the same, a sailor's life—manage it as we will—cannot be materially altered. It must always be made up of alternate severe labour and complete indolence—of the highest imaginable excitement—and of

the most perfect lassitude. If I were not anxious at this moment to get back to my chase, I think I could shew how these causes, acting upon such strange stuff as sailors are made of, leads to the formation of those superstitious habits by which they have always been characterised.

In the course of the afternoon, we perceived from the mast-head, far astern, a dark line along the horizon, which some of our most experienced hands pronounced the first trace of a breeze coming up. In the course of half an hour, this line had widened so much that it could easily be perceived from the deck. Upon seeing this, the whistlers redoubled their efforts; and whether, as they pretended, it was owing to their interest with the clerk of the weather office; or whether the wind, if left alone, would have come just as soon, I do not venture to pronounce; but certain it is, that, long before sunset, our hearts were rejoiced by the sight of those numerous flying patches of wind, scattered over the calm surface of the sea, and called by seamen catspaws—I presume from the stealthy,

timorous manner in which they seem to touch the water, and straightway vanish again. By and by, the true wind, the ripple from which had marked the horizon astern of us, and broken the face of the mirror shining brightly every where else, indicated its approach, by fanning out the skysails and other flying kites, generally supposed to be superfluous, but which, upon such occasions as this, do good service, by catching the first breath of air, that seems always to float far above the water. One by one the sails were filled; and as the ship gathered way, every person marked the glistening eye of the helmsman, when he felt the spokes of the wheel pressing against his hand, by the action of the water on the rudder. The fire-engine had been carried into the tops; and, where its long spout could not reach, buckets of water were drawn up and thrown on the sails, so that every pore was filled, and the full effect of the wind was exerted on the canvass.

The ship now began to speak, as it is termed; and on looking over the gangway

we could see a line of small hissing bubbles, not yet deserving the name of spray, but quite enough to prove to us that the breeze was beginning to tell. It was near the middle of November, but the day was as hot as if it had been summer; and the wind, now freshening at every second, blew coolly and gratefully upon us, giving assurance that we should have no more calms to trouble us, whatever might be our other difficulties in catching Monsieur Frenchman.

Of these difficulties, the greatest by far was that of keeping sight of the brig after it became dark. We overhauled him, however, so fast, that we had great hopes of getting near enough to be able to command him with the night-glasses, in which case we made pretty sure of our prize. The night-glass, it may be right to explain, is a telescope of small power, increasing the diameter of objects only about eight times. It has a large field-glass; and, in order to save the interception of light, has one lens fewer than usual, which omission has the effect of inverting the object looked at. But this,

though inconvenient, is of little consequence in cases where the desideratum is merely to get sight of a vessel, without seeking to make out the details.

Meanwhile, as we spanked along, rapidly accelerating our pace, and rejoicing in the cracking of the ropes, and the bending of the lightest and loftiest spars—that butterfly sort of gear which a very little wind soon brushes away—we had the malicious satisfaction of observing that the poor little privateer had not yet got a mouthful of the charming wind which, like the well-known intoxicating gas, was by this time setting us all a-skiping about the decks. The greater part of the visible ocean was now under the influence of the new-born breeze; but, in the spot where the brig lay, there occurred a belt or splash of clear white light, within which the calm still lingered, with the privateer sparkling in its centre. Just as the sun went down, however, this spot was likewise melted into the rest, and the brig, like a poor hare roused from her seat, sprang off again. We were soon near enough to see her

sweeps rigged in—to the delight, no doubt, of her weary crew, whose apprehensions of an English prison had probably kept up their strength to a pitch rarely equalled.

As the twilight—the brief twilight of winter—galloped away, a hundred pairs of eyes were almost jumping out of their sockets in their attempts to pierce the night; while those who had glasses kept scrubbing them without mercy, as if they imagined more light would be let into the tube the more they injured the lenses. One person, and only one, continued, as he asserted, to see the chase, faintly strung, like a bead, on the horizon. I need not say that this sharp-sighted gentleman was nailed to his post, and ordered on no account to move his head, fatigue or no fatigue. There happened to be a single star, directly over the spot to which this fortunate youth was directing his view, with as much anxiety as ever Galileo peered into the heavens in search of a new planet. This fact being announced, a dozen spy-glasses were seen wagging up and down between this directing star and

that part of the horizon, now almost invisible, which lay immediately below it. Many were the doubts expressed of the correctness of the first observation, and many the tormenting questions put to the observer as to which way the brig was standing? what sail she had set? whether we were drawing up with her or not? as if the poor youngster had been placed alongside of the vessel. These doubts and fears were put an end to, or nearly so, by bidding the boy keep his eye fixed on what he took to be the chase, and then, without acquainting him with the change, altering the ship's course for half a minute. This experiment had scarcely been commenced before he cried out, "I have lost sight of her this very moment! I saw her but an instant ago!" And when the ship's head was brought back to the original course, he exclaimed, "There she is again, by jingo! just to the right of the star."

This star served another useful purpose at the same time. The man at the wheel could see it shining between the leech of the fore-top-sail and that of the top-mast studding-sail,

and was thus enabled to steer the ship with much greater steadiness than he could possibly have done by the compass alone. Before midnight, as the breeze had freshened greatly, and we were going at the rate of nine knots an hour, we had drawn up so much with the privateer that every one could see her with the naked eye, and the gunner with his mates, and the marksmen who had lost their credit on the preceding night, were fidgetting and fussing about the guns, eager to be banging away again at the prize, as they now began, rather prematurely, to call her—little knowing what a dexterous, persevering, and gallant little fellow they had to deal with, and how much trouble he was yet to give us.

It was not till about two o'clock that we once more came within good shot of him; and as it had been alleged that the guns were fired too quickly the night before, and without sufficient care in pointing, the utmost attention was now paid to laying them properly; and the lanyard of the trigger never pulled, till the person looking along the gun

felt confident of his aim. The brig, however, appeared to possess the same witch-like, invulnerable quality as ever; for we could neither strike her hull, so as to force her to cry peccavi, nor bring down a yard, nor lop off a mast or a boom. It was really a curious spectacle to see a little bit of a thing skimming away before the wind, with such a huge monster as the *Endymion*, tearing and plunging after her, like a voracious dolphin leaping from sea to sea in pursuit of a flying fish.

In time this must have ended in the destruction of the brig; for as we gained upon her rapidly, some of our shot must by and by have taken effect, and sent her to the bottom. She was destined, however, to enjoy a little longer existence. The proper plan, perhaps, would have been to stand on, firing at her sails, till we had reached within musket-shot, and then to have knocked down the helmsman, and every one else on her deck. This, however, was not our captain's plan—or perhaps he became impatient—at all events he gave orders for the whole star-

board broadside to be got ready; and then, giving the ship a yaw, poured the whole discharge, as he thought, right into his wretched victim!

Not a mortal on board the frigate expected ever to see the poor brig again. What, then, was our surprise, when the smoke blew swiftly past, to see the intrepid little cocky, gliding away more merrily than before. As far as good discipline would allow, there was a general murmur of applause at the Frenchman's gallantry. In the next instant, however, this sound was converted into hearty laughter over the frigate's decks, when, in answer to our thundering broadside, a single small gun, a six-pounder, was fired from the brig's stern, as if in contempt of his formidable antagonist's prowess.

Instead of gaining by our manœuvre, we had lost a good deal;—and in two ways. In the first place, by yawing out of our course, we enabled the privateer to gain several hundred yards upon us; and secondly, his funny little shot, which had excited so much mirth, passed through the lee foretop-

sail yard-arm, about six feet inside the boom iron. Had it struck on the windward side, where the yard was cracking and straining at a most furious rate, the greater part of the sails on the fore-mast might have been taken in quicker than we could have wished—for we were now going at the rate of eleven and a half, with the wind on the quarter.

Just as we made out where his first shot had struck us, another, cut through the weather main-top-gallant sheet; and so he went on, firing away briskly, till most of our lofty sails were fluttering with the holes made in them. His own sails, I need scarcely add, were by this time so completely torn up by our shot, that we could see the sky through them all; but still he refused to heave to—and, by constantly firing his single stern-chaser, was evidently resolved to lose no possible chance of escape. Had one or two of his shot struck either of our top-masts, I really believe he might have got off. It therefore became absolutely necessary that we should either demolish or capture him without further loss of time. The choice we left to himself, as

will be seen. But such a spirited cruiser as this, was an enemy worth subduing at any cost; for there was no calculating the mischief a privateer so admirably commanded might have wrought in a convoy. There was a degree of discretion, also, about this expert privateer's-man, which was very remarkable, and deserving of such favour at our hands as we had to spare. He took care to direct his stern-chaser so high, that there was little chance of his shot striking any of our people. Indeed, he evidently aimed solely at crippling the masts—knowing right well, that it would answer none of his ends to kill or wound any number of his enemy's crew, while it might irritate their captain to shew him less mercy at the last moment, which, as will be seen, was fast approaching.

The breeze had now freshened nearly to a gale of wind, and when the log was hove, out of curiosity, just after the broad-side I have described, we were going nearly twelve knots (or between thirteen and fourteen miles an hour), foaming and splashing along. The distance between us and the

brig was now rapidly decreasing, for most of his sails were in shreds, and we determined to bring him, as we said, to his senses at last. The guns were re-loaded, and orders given to depress them as much as possible—that is, to point their muzzles downwards—but not a shot was to be fired till the frigate came actually alongside of the chase. Such was the poor privateer's sentence of death—severe indeed, but quite necessary, for he appeared resolved never to yield.

On we flew, right down upon our prey, like the enormous rock-bird of the Arabian Nights. We had ceased firing our bow-chasers, that the smoke might not stand between us and the lesson we meant to read to our resolute pupil, so that there was 'silence deep as death' along our decks—and doubtless on his; for he likewise had intermitted his firing, and seemed prepared to meet his fate, and go to the bottom like a man. It was possible, also, we thought, that he might only be watching, even in his last extremity, to take advantage of any

negligence on our part, which should allow him to haul suddenly across our bows, and, by getting on a wind, have a chance of escaping. This chance, it is true, was very small; for not one of his sails was in a condition to stand such a breeze as was now blowing, unless when running nearly before it. But we had seen enough, during the two days we had been together, to apprehend that his activity was at least a match for ours; and as he had already shewn that he did not care a fig for shot, he might bend new sails as fast as we could.

At all events, we were resolved to make him surrender, or run him down: such was our duty, and that the Frenchman knew right well. He waited, however, until our flying jib-boom end was almost over his taffrail; and that the narrow space between us was filled with a confused, boiling heap of foam, partly caused by his bows, and partly by ours. Then, and not till then, when he must have seen into our ports, and along the decks, which were lighted up fore and aft, he first gave signal of surrender.

The manner in which this was done by the captain of the privateer was as spirited and characteristic as any part of his previous conduct. The night was very dark ; but the ships were so near to one another, that we could distinguish the tall figure of a man mount the weather main-rigging of the brig, where he stood erect, with a lantern in his hand, held out at right angles from his body. Had this light not been seen, or its purpose not understood, or had it been delayed for twenty seconds longer, the frigate must, almost in spite of herself, have gone right over him, and the salvo of a double-shotted broadside would have done the last and fitting honours over the Frenchman's grave.

Even as it was, it cost us some trouble to avoid running him down ; for, although the helm was put over immediately, our lee quarter, as the ship flew up in the wind, almost grazed his weather gangway. In passing, we ordered him to bring-to likewise. This he did as soon as we gave him room ; though we were still close enough to see the effect of such a manœuvre at such a

moment. Every stitch of sail he had set was blown, in one moment, clean out of the bolt-ropes. His haulyards, tacks, and sheets had been all racked aloft, so that every thing not made of canvass, remained in its place; —the yards at the mast-heads, and the booms rigged out—while the empty leech and foot-ropes hung down in festoons, where, but a minute before, the tattered sails had been spread.

We fared, comparatively speaking, not much better; for although, the instant the course was altered, the order was given to let fly the topsail-haulyards, and every other necessary rope; and although the downhaul-tackles, clewlines, and buntlines, were all ready manned, in expectation of this evolution, we succeeded with great difficulty in saving the fore or main-topsails; but the top-gallant-sails were blown to pieces. All the flying kites went off in a crack, whisking far away to leeward, like dried forest-leaves in autumn.

It may be supposed that the chase was now completely over, and that we had no-

thing further to do than take possession of our prize. Not at all! It was found next to impossible to board the brig, or, at least, it seemed so dangerous, that our captain was unwilling to hazard a boat and crew, till day-light came. The privateer having no sail set to keep her steady, became so unmanageable, that the sea made a clean breach over all, rendering it out of the question to board her on the weather side. Nor was she more easily approachable to leeward, where a tangled network of broken spars, half-torn sails, shattered booms, and smacking ropes'-ends, formed such a line of 'chevaux de frise' from the cathead to the counter, that all attempts to get near her on that side, were useless.

The gale increased before morning to such a pitch, that as there was still a doubt if any boat could live, the intention of boarding our prize was of course further delayed. But we took care to keep close to her, a little to windward, in order to watch her proceedings as narrowly as possible. It did not escape our notice, in the mean

time, that our friend — (he was no longer our foe, though not yet our prisoner) — went on quietly, even in the height of the gale, shifting his wounded yards, reeving new ropes, and bending fresh sails. This caused us to redouble our vigilance during the morning, and the event shewed that we had good need for such watchfulness. About three o'clock in the afternoon, the brig having fallen a little to leeward, and a furious squall of wind and rain coming on at the same moment, she suddenly bore up, and set off once more, right before the wind. At the height of the squall we totally lost sight of our prize; and such a hubbub I hardly recollect to have heard in my life before.

“ Where is she? — Who was looking out? — Where did you see her last? ” — and a hundred similar questions, reproaches, scolds, and the whole of the ugly family of oaths, were poured out in abundance; some on the privateer, whose adroitness had thus overreached our vigilance; some upon those who, by their neglect, had given him the opportunity; and many impreca-

tions were uttered merely to express the depth of anger and disappointment at this stupid loss of a good thing, which had cost so much trouble to catch. All this passed over in the first burst—sail was made at once—the topsails, close reefed, were sheeted home like lightning—and off we dashed into the thick of the squall, in search of our lost treasure. At each mast-head and at every yard-arm there was planted a look-out man, while the forecastle hammock-netting was filled with volunteer spy-glasses. For about a quarter of an hour a dead silence reigned over the whole ship, during which anxious interval every eye was strained to the utmost; for no one knew exactly where to look. There was, indeed, no certainty of our not actually running past the privateer, and it would not have surprised us much, when the squall cleared up, had we seen him a mile or two to windward, far beyond our reach. These fears were put an end to by the sharp-eyed captain of the fore-top, who had perched himself on the jib-boom end, calling out with a voice of the greatest glee—

“ There he goes ! there he goes ! right ahead ! under his topsails and foresail ! ”

And, sure enough, there we saw him, springing along from wave to wave, with his masts bending forwards like reeds, under the pressure of sail enough to have laid him on his beam-ends had he broached to. In such tempestuous weather a small vessel has no chance whatever with a frigate ; indeed, we could observe, that when the little brig fell between two high seas, her foresail flapped to the mast, fairly becalmed by the wave behind her.

In a very few minutes we were again alongside, and, doubtless, the Frenchman thought we were at last going to execute summary vengeance upon him for his treachery, as we called it. Nothing daunted, however, by the style in which we bore down upon him, the gallant commander of this pretty little eggshell of a vessel placed himself on the weather-quarter, and with a speaking-trumpet in his hand, indicated by gesticulations, a wish to be heard. This could not well be refused ; and we steered as close as possible

without bringing the two vessels in contact, or risking the entanglement of the yards.

“ I have been compelled to bear up,” he called out in French, “ otherwise the brig must have gone to the bottom. The sea broke over us in such a way that I have been obliged, as you may perceive, to throw all my guns, boats, and spars, overboard. We have now several feet water in the hold, in consequence of your shot, which you may likewise observe have nearly destroyed our upper works. If, therefore, you oblige me to heave to, I cannot keep the vessel afloat one hour in such weather.”

“ Will you make no farther attempt to escape?” asked the captain of the *Endymion*.

“ As yet I have made none,” he replied firmly; “ I struck to you already—I am your prize—and, feeling as a man of honour, I do not consider myself at liberty to escape, even if I had the power—I bore up when the squall came on, as a matter of necessity. If you will allow me to run before the wind, along with you, till the weather moderates,

you may take possession of the brig when you please—if not, I must go to the bottom.”

Such was the substance of a conversation, very difficult to keep up across the tempest, which was now whistling at a great rate. To have brought the ships again to the wind after what had been said; would have been to imitate the celebrated ‘Noyades,’ of Nantes; for the privateer must have been swamped instantly. Although we distrusted our companion, therefore, most grievously, we sailed along most lovingly together, as if we had been the best possible friends, for about sixty or seventy miles.

At eight o’clock in the evening it began to moderate, and by midnight we succeeded in getting a boat on board of the prize, after a run of between three and four hundred miles. Such is the scale of nautical sport! And where, I now beg to ask, is the fox hunting, or the piracy, or any thing else, more exciting than this noble game?

The brig proved to be the Milan privateer, from St. Malo, of 14 guns, and 80 men, many of whom were unfortunately wounded by our shot, and several were killed.

The captain's name was Lepelletier—I have pleasure in recording it—M. Pierre Lepelletier, of St. Malo; and wherever he goes, I will venture to say he can meet no braver or more resolute man than himself.

Long before he came on board he had well earned the respect of his captors, high and low; and his manners and information, after we became personally acquainted with him, raised him still more in general estimation.

One day, when I was walking with him under the half deck, I overheard two of the sailmakers conversing about the chase, the prize, and the prisoners—the only topics which occupied our thoughts for a week afterwards. These men were repairing one of the sails which had been shot through and split during the chase. One of them laid down his palm and needle, and, looking very significantly to our side of the deck, exclaimed,

“ I say, Bill, is it not a pity, that the French captain walking there, is not an Englishman ? ”

I lost no time in translating this observation to the person whom it most concerned, who declared it was by far the highest compliment he had been honoured with since he came on board the *Endymion*.

I happened many years afterwards to relate the details of this chase and capture to one of the ablest and most experienced officers in the Navy, whose comment upon the story it may be useful to give in his own words.

“ This Frenchman’s conduct,” said he, “ may teach us the important lesson, that an officer should never surrender his ship, whatever be the force opposed to him, while there remains the slightest possible chance of escape. The privateer you speak of had very nearly slipped through your hands ; and had he knocked away one of your sticks, probably would have done so. It is always useful to have good practical examples of what perseverance and well-directed zeal may accomplish, especially with very small means. I think I have known more than one ship captured, which might perhaps have baffled

their enemy, had they been as stoutly defended as your little privateer. Don't let us forget her example, for it is no matter whence instruction comes—from friend or from foe—provided it be good.”

Such are a few Fragments of my earliest Voyages and Travels, selected, not altogether at random, but with a desire to combine, if possible, amusement with information.

Whether or not I shall ever be tempted to try a similar experiment, upon the materials collected during more advanced periods of my professional life, must depend, in a great measure, on the degree of indulgence with which the present volumes are received.

THE END.

LONDON:

J. MOYES, TOOK'S COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

Lately published, in 3 vols. Post 8vo, with a coloured Map, ll. 11s. 6d.

By ROBERT CADELL, EDINBURGH,
AND WHITTAKER AND CO., LONDON,

A THIRD EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS, OF

TRAVELS IN NORTH AMERICA,

BY

CAPTAIN BASIL HALL, R.N. F.R.S.

And, in a separate Volume, Royal 4to, 10s. 6d.

FORTY ILLUSTRATIVE ETCHINGS,

DRAWN WITH THE CAMERA LUCIDA.

THE Author's chief object in visiting America was to examine the Institutions of the United States, in order, if possible, to remove some portion of the prejudice existing against that nation, so generally felt by his countrymen, but of which he himself was quite free at the outset of his journey:—in fact, he was actually predisposed the other way.

He was obliged to confess, however, after many struggles between the evidence of his senses on the spot, and his anxious wish to find things right, that the task he had undertaken was hopeless; since there appeared no possibility of establishing any cordial union of political sentiment between two countries, differing so totally from one another, in all the essential attributes which go to the formation of national character.

On making this painful discovery, his purpose, necessarily, took a different direction, and he occupied himself in observing the facts of the case with all the care and impartiality of which he was master—not so much with a view to remove what is called prejudice, as to clear away many egregious errors respecting the actual state of things in America.

On returning to England, with his views and his feelings thus entirely changed, the author had nothing left for it but to tell the story of his disappointment as candidly as possible; and if not to justify, at least to explain, his apparent inconsistency, by describing the unexpected facts which met his eye, during more than twelve months of patient investigation on the spot.

He was, above all things, struck with the evil consequences of placing all the power of the state in the hands of one branch of the community, to the virtual exclusion of all the others. And he has endeavoured to shew, that although the democratical part of the body politic, as long as it continues in its right place, is eminently useful in preserving that equilibrium in society which is most favourable to the extension and maintenance of *genuine freedom*, amongst all the different classes of the community; yet that, when it quits its proper station, and claims the exclusive authority, it amounts, in many respects, to an *absolute despotism*.

That the right chord has been struck, in describing and in commenting upon the singular state of America at this moment, seems apparent from the outcry raised against the work by those parties in England who are not content to remain in their natural places, but desire to imitate their brother democrats and reformers across the Atlantic, in the usurpation of the whole sovereign authority, to the eventual extirpation of the other estates of the realm—the Monarchy—the Church—and the Aristocracy. These people, indeed, little dream of the intolerable misery which a compliance with their wishes would soon bring, not only on the objects of their jealousy, but upon their own class, which, after all, is fully as much interested as any other in maintaining untouched the present order of things.