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MORGAN'S ATTACK ON GIBRALTAR.

T<sub>HE</sub> S<sub>EA</sub>

*Its Stirring Story of Adventure, Peril, &  
Heroism.*

BY

F. WHYMPER,

AUTHOR OF "TRAVELS IN ALASKA," ETC.

ivThe Sea: Its Stirring Story of Adventure, Peril, & Heroism. Volume 3

*ILLUSTRATED.*

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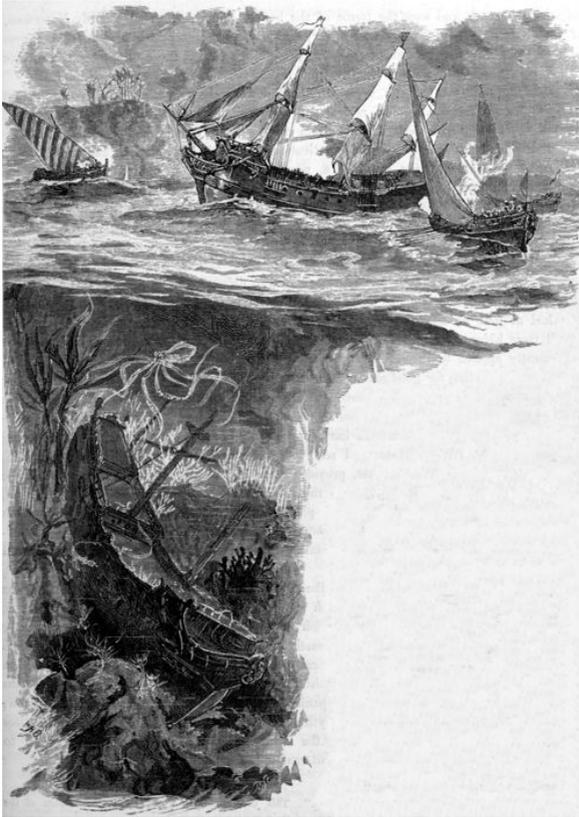
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[1]



THE SEA.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE PIRATES AND BUCANIERS.

Who was the First Pirate?—The Society of Bucaniers—Home of the Freebooters—Rise of the Band—Impecunious Spanish Governors and their Roguery—Great Capture of Spanish Treasure—An Unjust Seizure, but no Redress—Esquemeling's Narrative—Voyage from Havre—"Baptism" of the French Mariners—Other Ceremonies—At Tortuga—Occupied and re-occupied by French and Spanish—The French West India Company—Esquemeling twice sold as a Slave—He joins the Society of Pirates—Wild Boars and Savage Mastiffs—How the Wild Dogs came to the Islands—Cruelty of the Planters—A Terrible Case of Retribution—The Murderer of a Hundred Slaves—The First Tortugan Pirate—Pierre le Grand—A Desperate Attack—Rich Prize taken—Rapid Spread of Piracy—How the Rovers armed their Ships—Regulations of their Voyages—"No Prey, no Pay"—The richly-laden Vessels of New Spain—The Pearl Fisheries—An Enterprising Pirate—Success and Failure—His Final Surrender.

Who was the first pirate is a question easier to ask than to answer. We may be sure, however, that not long after navigation had become a recognised art the opportunities for robbery on the sea produced a breed of "water-rats," who infested the ocean, and were the terror of the honest shipowner. That "hardy Norseman," of whom we sing so pleasantly, was in very truth nothing better; while some of the great names among the mariners of the middle ages are, practically, those of pirates, whose occupation bore

the stamp of semi-legality from royal sanction, directly given or implied.

But the society of pirates, of which the following chapters will furnish some account, was, *sui generis*, the greatest on record, and was formidable even to the great Powers of Europe. “It preserved itself distinct from all the more regular and civilised classes of mankind, in defiance of the laws and constitutions by which other nations and societies were governed. In their history we find a perpetual mixture of justice and cruelty, fair retaliation and brutal revenge, of rebellion and subordination, of wise laws and desperate passions, such as no other confederacy ever exhibited, and which kept them together as a body, until the loss of their bravest and best leaders, who could not be replaced, obliged them to return to the more peaceable arts of life, and again to mix with nations governed by law and discipline.”<sup>1</sup> The origin of the term *bucaneer*, or *bucanier*, is not to be very easily traced; it has an allusion to those who dried the flesh of wild cattle and fish after the manner of the Indians, and was first applied to the French settlers of St. Domingo, who had at first no other employment than that of hunting bulls or wild boars, in order to sell their hides or flesh. Many of them subsequently became pirates, and the term was permanently applied to them.

The West Indies, for good reason, were long the especial home of the freebooters. They abounded—as indeed they still abound—in little uninhabited islands and “keys,” *i.e.*, low sandy islands, appearing a little distance above the surface of the water, with only a few bushes or grass upon them. These islands have any quantity of harbours, convenient for cleansing and provisioning vessels. Water and sea fowl, turtle and turtle eggs, shell and other fish, were abundant. The pirates would, provided they had plenty of strong liquor, want for nothing as

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<sup>1</sup> “The History of the Bucaniers of America.” This once celebrated work contains a number of the most reliable histories of the pirates and freebooters of the seventeenth century.

regards indulgence; and in these secluded nooks they often held high revel, whilst many of them became the hiding-places for their ill-gotten treasures. From them they could dart out on the richly-laden ships of Spain, France, or England; while men-of-war found it difficult to pursue them among the archipelago of islands, sand-banks, and shallows.

The rise of these rovers, or at least the great increase of them in the West Indies, was very much due to the impecunious Spanish governors—hungry courtiers, who would stick at no peculation or dishonesty that could enrich them. They granted commissions—practically letters of marque—to great numbers of vessels of war, on pretence of preventing interlopers from interfering with their trade, with orders to seize all ships and vessels whatsoever within five leagues of their coasts. If the Spanish captains exceeded their privileges, the victims had an opportunity of redress in the Spanish courts, but generally found, to their sorrow, that delays and costs swallowed up anything they might recover. The frequent losses sustained by English merchants during the latter half of the seventeenth century led to serious reprisals in after years; a prominent example occurred in 1716.

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About two years previously, the Spanish galleons, or plate fleet, had been cast away in the Gulf of Florida, and several vessels from the Havannah (Cuba) had been at work with diving apparatus to fish up the lost treasure. The Spaniards had recovered some millions of dollars, and had carried it to the Havannah; but they had some 350,000 pieces on the spot, and were daily taking out more. In the meantime, two ships and three sloops, fitted out from Jamaica, Barbadoes, &c., under Captain Henry Jennings, sailed to the gulf, and found the Spaniards then upon the wreck, the silver before mentioned being deposited on shore in a storehouse, under a guard. The rovers surprised the place, landing 300 men, and seized the treasure, which they carried off to Jamaica. On their way they fell in with a richly-laden

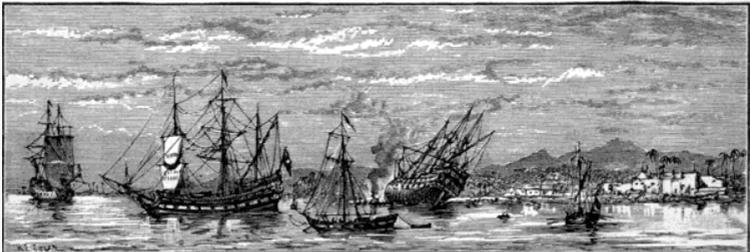
Spanish ship, bound for the Havannah, having on board bales of cochineal, casks of indigo, 60,000 pieces of silver, and other valuable cargo, "which," says the chronicler, "their hand being in, they took," and having rifled the vessel, let her go. They went away to Jamaica with their booty, and were followed in view of the port by the Spaniards, who, having seen them thither, went back to the Governor of the Havannah with their complaints. He immediately sent a vessel to the Governor of Jamaica, making representations as regards this robbery, and claiming the goods. As it was in a time of peace, and contrary to all justice and right that this piracy had been committed, the Governor of Jamaica could do nothing else but order their punishment. They, however, escaped to sea again, but not until they had disposed of their cargo to good advantage; and being thus made desperate, they turned pirates, robbing not the Spaniards only, but the vessels of any nation they met. They were joined by other desperadoes, notably by a gang of logwood cutters from the Bays of Campechy and Honduras. The Spaniards had attacked them and carried off the logwood, but had humanely given them three sloops to carry them home. But the men thought they could do better in piracy, and joined the before-mentioned rovers.

And now to one of the historians, Joseph Esquemeling, whose record is incorporated in the work on which these pages are founded, and who was afterwards in company with such noted pirates as Lolonois, Pierre le Grand, Roche Brasiliano, and others. He says:—

"Not to detain the reader any longer with these particulars, I shall proceed to give an account of our voyage from Havre de Grâce in France, from whence we set sail, in a ship called *St. John*, May the 2nd, 1666. Our vessel was equipped with twenty-eight guns, twenty marines, and two hundred and twenty passengers, including those whom the Company sent as free passengers. Soon after we came to an anchor under the Cape of Barfleur, there to join seven other ships of the same West India

Company which were to come from Dieppe, under convoy of a man-of-war, mounted with thirty-seven guns and two hundred and fifty men. Of these ships two were bound for Senegal, five for the Caribbee Islands, and ours for Tortuga. Here gathered to us about twenty sail of other ships, bound for Newfoundland, with some Dutch vessels going for Nantz, Rochelle, and St. Martin's, so that in all we made thirty sail. Here we put ourselves in a posture of defence, having notice that four English frigates, of sixty guns each, waited for us near Alderney. Our admiral, the Chevalier Sourdis, having given necessary orders, we sailed thence with a favourable gale, and some mists arising, totally impeded the English frigates from discovering our fleet. We steered our course as near as we could to the coast of France, for fear of the enemy. As we sailed along, we met a vessel of Ostend, who complained to our admiral that a French privateer had robbed him that very morning, whereupon we endeavoured to pursue the said pirate; but our labour was in vain, not being able to overtake him.

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PIRATE VESSELS (17TH CENTURY).

“Our fleet, as we sailed, caused no small fears and alarms to the inhabitants of the coasts of France, these judging us to be English, and that we sought some convenient place for landing. To allay their fright we hung out our colours, but they would

not trust us. After this we came to an anchor in the Bay of Conquet, in Brittany, near Ushant, there to take in water. Having stored ourselves with fresh provisions here, we prosecuted our voyage, designing to pass by the Pas of Fontenau, and not expose ourselves to the Sorlingues, fearing the English that were cruising thereabouts. The river Pas is of a current very strong and rapid, which, rolling over many rocks, disgorges itself into the sea on the coast of France, in 48 deg. 10 min. latitude, so that this passage is very dangerous, all the rocks as yet not being thoroughly known.”

Esquemeling mentions the ceremony which, at this passage and some other places, was used by mariners, and by them called “baptism.” The master’s mate clothed himself with a ridiculous sort of garment which reached to his feet, and put on his head a comically constructed cap, made very burlesque; in his right hand he had a naked wooden sword, and in his left a pot full of ink. His face was horribly blacked with soot, and his neck adorned with a collar of many little pieces of wood. Thus appalled he ordered every one to be called who had never passed through that dangerous place before, and then, causing them to kneel down, he made the sign of the cross on their forehead with ink, and gave every one a stroke on the shoulder with his wooden sword. Meanwhile, the standers-by threw a bucket of water over each man’s head, and so ended the ceremony. But that done, each of the baptised was obliged to give a bottle of brandy, placing it near the mainmast, without speaking a word. If the vessel never passed that way before, the captain was compelled to distribute some wine amongst the mariners and passengers; other gifts, which the newly baptised frequently offered, were divided among the old seamen, and of them they made a banquet among themselves.

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“The Hollanders likewise, not only at this passage, but also at the rocks called Berlingues, nigh the coast of Portugal, in 39 deg. 40 min. (being a passage very dangerous, especially by night,

when in the dark the rocks are not distinguishable, the land being very high), they use some such ceremony; but their manner of baptising is very different to that of the French, for he that is to be baptised is fastened and hoisted up thrice at the mainyard's end, as if he were a criminal. If he be hoisted the fourth time, in the name of the Prince of Orange or of the captain of the vessel, his honour is more than ordinary. Thus every one is dipped several times in the main ocean, but he that is dipped first has the honour of being saluted with a gun. Such as are not willing to fall must pay twelve pence for ransom; if he be an officer, two shillings; and if a passenger, at their own pleasure. If the ship never passed that way before, the captain is to give a small rundlet of wine, which, if he denies, the mariners may cut off the stern of the vessel. All the profit accruing by this ceremony is kept by the master's mate, who, after reaching their port, usually laid it out in wine, which was drunk amongst the ancient seamen. Some say that this ceremony was instituted by the Emperor Charles V., though it is not amongst his laws." After recording some similar ceremonies, we find Esquemeling at Tortuga, their desired port, where they landed the goods belonging to the West India Company.

Our chronicler, after describing the abundant fruits and fine trees, the flocks of wild pigeons and abundance of turtle—from which the island derives its name, being supposed to resemble one in the general outline of its coasts—speaks of the multitudes of large crabs, both of land and sea. "These," naïvely says the narrator, "are good to feed servants and slaves, whose palates they please, but are very hurtful to the sight; besides, being eaten too often they cause great giddiness in the head, with much weakness of the brain, so that very frequently they are deprived of sight for a quarter of an hour."

The French, having settled on the Isle of St. Christopher, planted there some large trees, of which they built long boats, and in which they proceeded to discover neighbouring islands.

They first reached Hispaniola, where they landed, and found large quantities of cattle, horses, and wild boars, but did not stop there, as there was already a considerable colony of Spaniards. They proceeded to the neighbouring island of Tortuga, which they seized without difficulty, there being not more than ten or twelve Spaniards in possession. The French were afterwards obliged to abandon it. In 1664 it was occupied by the West India Company of France, who sent thither Monsieur Ogeron as governor. The company expected considerable trade, and even went so far as to give a large amount of trust both to the pirates and to traders. This, as might be expected, did not answer, and they had to resort to force of arms in order to collect some of their payments. To make a long story short, the Company eventually recalled their factors, and sold the servants as slaves. On this occasion Esquemeling was also sold, being a servant of the said Company, and received very hard usage from his first master, the lieutenant-general of the island. Fortunately for himself, he fell sick, and his master, fearing to lose him altogether, sold him cheaply to a surgeon, who treated him humanely, and he soon recovered his health. After having served him one year, he was offered his liberty on a promise to pay a ransom when he was in a position to do so. "Being," says the chronicler, "now at liberty, though like Adam when he was just created—that is, naked and destitute of all human necessities—not knowing how to get my living, I determined to enter into the order of pirates or robbers at sea. Into this society I was received with common consent, both of the superior and vulgar sort, where I continued till 1672. Having assisted them in all their designs and attempts, and served them in many notable exploits, I returned to my own native country."

After some very graphic descriptions of the alligators and other animals, he gives some interesting particulars respecting the numerous wild mastiffs and boars of the island, the former of which were introduced by the bucaniers. He says:—

“The Governor of Tortuga, Monsieur Ogeron, finding that the wild dogs killed so many of the wild boars that the hunters of that island had much ado to find any, fearing lest that common sustenance of the island should fail, sent for a great quantity of poison from France to destroy the wild mastiffs. This was done anno 1668, by commanding horses to be killed and empoisoned, and laid open at certain places where the wild dogs used to resort. This being continued for six months, there were killed an incredible number; and yet all this could not exterminate and destroy the race, or scarce diminish them, their number appearing almost as large as before. These wild dogs are easily tamed among men, even as tame as ordinary house-dogs. The hunters of those parts, whenever they find a wild bitch with whelps, commonly take away the puppies and bring them home, which, being grown up, they hunt much better than other dogs.

“But here the curious reader may perhaps inquire how so many wild dogs came here. The occasion was, the Spaniards having possessed these isles, found them peopled with Indians—a barbarous people, sensual and brutish, hating all labour, and only inclined to killing and making war against their neighbours: not out of ambition, but only because they agreed not with themselves in some common terms of language; and perceiving the dominion of the Spaniards laid great restrictions upon their lazy and brutish customs, they conceived an irreconcilable hatred against them, but especially because they saw them take possession of their kingdoms and dominions. Hereupon they made against them all the resistance they could, opposing everywhere their designs to the utmost; and the Spaniards, finding themselves cruelly hated by the Indians, and nowhere secure from their treacheries, resolved to extirpate and ruin them, since they could neither tame them by civility nor conquer them with the sword. But the Indians—it being their custom to make the woods their chief places of defence—at present made these their refuge whenever they fled from the Spaniards. Hereupon, those first

conquerors of the new world made use of dogs to range and search the intricate thicket of woods and forests for those their implacable and unconquerable enemies; thus they forced them to leave their old refuge, and submit to the sword, seeing no milder usage would do it; hereupon they killed some of them, and, quartering their bodies, placed them in the highways, that others might take warning from such a punishment. But this severity proved of ill consequence, for instead of frightening them and reducing them to civility, they conceived such horror of the Spaniards that they resolved to detest and fly their sight for ever; hence the greatest part died in caves and subterraneous places of the woods and mountains, in which places I myself have often seen great numbers of human bones. The Spaniards, finding no more Indians to appear about the woods, turned away a great number of dogs they had in their houses, and they, finding no masters to keep them, betook themselves to the woods and fields [7] to hunt for food to preserve their lives; thus by degrees they became unacquainted with houses, and grew wild. This is the truest account I can give of the multitudes of wild dogs in these parts.

“But besides these wild mastiffs, here are also great numbers of wild horses everywhere all over the island; they are but low of stature, short-bodied, with great heads, long necks, and big or thick legs: in a word, they have nothing handsome in their shape. They run up and down commonly in troops of 200 or 300 together, one going always before to lead the multitude. When they meet any person travelling through the woods or fields, they stand still, suffering him to approach until he can almost touch them, and then, suddenly starting, they betake themselves to flight, running away as fast as they can. The hunters catch them only for their skins, though sometimes they preserve their flesh likewise, which they harden with smoke, using it for provisions when they go to sea.

“Here would be also wild bulls and cows in great number,

if by continual hunting they were not much diminished; yet considerable profit is made to this day by such as make it their business to kill them. The wild bulls are of a vast bigness of body, and yet they hurt not any one except they be exasperated. Their bodies are from eleven to thirteen feet long.”

The cruelty of many of the planters to their slaves, some of whom were kidnapped Europeans, was revolting. A terrible case is that of one of them who had behaved so brutally to a servant that the latter ran away; after having taken refuge in the woods for some days, he was captured, and brought back to the wicked Pharaoh. No sooner had he got him than he commanded him to be tied to a tree, where he gave him so many lashes on his back that his body ran with an entire stream of blood. Then, to make the smart of his wounds the greater, he anointed him with lemon-juice mixed with salt and pepper. In this miserable posture he left him tied to the tree for four-and-twenty hours, after which he began his punishment again, lashing him again so cruelly that the miserable wretch gave up the ghost, with these dying words:—“I beseech the Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth, that He permit the wicked spirit to make thee feel as many torments before thy death as thou hast caused me to feel before mine!” The sequel is worthy the attention of those who believe in earthly retribution. “Scarce three or four days were past after this horrible fact when the Almighty Judge, who had heard the cries of that tormented wretch, suffered the evil one suddenly to possess this barbarous and inhuman homicide, so that those cruel bonds which had punished to death his innocent servant were the tormentors of his own body; for he beat himself and tore his own flesh after a miserable manner till he lost the very shape of a man, not ceasing to howl and cry without any rest by day or night. Thus he continued raving mad till he died. Many other examples of this kind I could rehearse. The planters of the Caribbee Islands are rather worse and more cruel to their servants than the former. In the Isle of St. Christopher a planter

was known to have killed above a hundred of his slaves with blows and stripes.” And, if Esquemeling is to be believed, the English planters of the period were little better.



#### PIERRE LE GRAND TAKING THE SPANISH VESSEL.

The first pirate of Tortuga was Pierre le Grand, or Peter the Great. He was born at Dieppe, in Normandy. The action which rendered him famous was his taking the vice-admiral's ship of the Spanish fleet, near the Cape of Tiburon, on the west side of Hispaniola; this he performed with only one boat and twenty-eight men. Until that time the Spaniards had passed and re-passed with all security through the channel of Bahama; so that Pierre le Grand, setting out to sea by the Caycos, took this grand ship with all the ease imaginable. The Spaniards found aboard were set ashore, and the vessel was sent to France. “The manner how this undaunted spirit attempted and took this large ship,” says the narrator, “I shall give you out of the journal of the author in his own words, ‘The boat,’ says he, ‘wherein Pierre le Grand was with his companions had been at sea a long time without finding any prize worth his taking, and their provisions beginning to fail, they were in danger of starving. Being almost reduced to despair,

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they spied a great ship of the Spanish flota separated from the rest; this vessel they resolved to take, or die in the attempt. Hereupon they sailed towards her to view her strength. And though they judged the vessel to be superior to theirs, yet their covetousness and the extremity they were reduced to made them venture. Being come so near that they could not possibly escape, they made an oath to their captain, Pierre le Grand, to stand by him to the last. 'Tis true, the pirates did believe they should find the ship unprovided to fight, and therefore the sooner master her. It was in the dusk of the evening they began to attack; but before they engaged they ordered the surgeon of the boat to bore a hole in the sides of it, that their own vessel sinking under them, they might be compelled to attack more vigorously, and endeavour more hastily to board the ship. This was done accordingly; and without any other arms than a pistol in one hand and a sword in the other, they immediately climbed up the sides of the ship, and ran altogether into the great cabin, where they found the captain, with several of his companions, playing at cards. Here they set a pistol to his breast, commanding him to deliver up the ship. The Spaniards, surprised to see the pirates on board their ship, cried, "Jesus, bless us! Are these devils, or what are they?" Meanwhile some of them took possession of the gun-room, and seized the arms, killing as many as made any opposition; whereupon the Spaniards presently surrendered. That very day the captain of the ship had been told by some of the seamen that the boat which was in view cruising was a boat of pirates, whom the captain slightly answered, "What, then, must I be afraid of such a pitiful thing as that is? No! though she were a ship as big and as strong as mine is." As soon as Pierre le Grand had taken this rich prize, he detained in his service as many of the common seamen as he had need of, setting the rest ashore, and then set sail for France, where he continued without ever returning to America again.' "

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The planters and hunters of Tortuga had no sooner heard of the rich prize those pirates had taken than they resolved to

follow their example. Many of them left their employments, and endeavoured to get some small boats wherein to exercise piracy; but not being able to purchase or build them in Tortuga, they set out in their canoes, and sought them elsewhere. With these they cruised at first upon Cape de Alvarez, where the Spaniards used to trade from one city to another in small vessels, in which they carried hides, tobacco, and other commodities to the Havannah, and to which the Spaniards from Europe frequently resorted.

Here it was that those pirates at first took a great many boats laden with the before-mentioned commodities; these they used to carry to Tortuga, and sell the whole purchase to the vessels that waited for their return or accidentally happened to be there. With the gains of these prizes they provided themselves with necessaries wherewith to undertake other voyages, some of which were made to Campechy, and others toward Hispaniola, in both which the Spaniards then drove a good trade. Upon those coasts they found great numbers of trading vessels, and often ships of great burden. Two of the biggest of these vessels, and two great ships which the Spaniards had laden with plate in the port of Campechy to go to the Caraccas, they took in less than a month's time, and carried to Tortuga, when the people of the whole island, encouraged by their success—especially seeing in two years the riches of the country so much increased—they augmented the number of freebooters so fast, that in a little time there were in that small island and port above twenty pirate-ships. The Spaniards, not able to bear their robberies any longer, equipped two large men-of-war, both for the defence of their own coasts and to cruise upon the enemy's. We shall see the result.

Before the pirates went to sea they gave notice to all concerned of the day on which they were to embark, obliging each man to bring as many pounds of powder and ball as they thought necessary. Being all come aboard, they consulted as to where to get provisions, especially flesh, seeing they scarcely used

anything else: this was ordinarily pork and tortoise, which they salted a little; sometimes they robbed the hog-yards, where the Spaniards often had a thousand head of swine together. They approached these places in the night, and having beset the keeper's lodge, would force him to rise and give them as many head as they desired, threatening to kill him if he refused or made any noise; and these menaces were oftentimes executed on the miserable swine-keepers or any other person that endeavoured to hinder their robberies.

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Having got flesh sufficient for their voyage, they returned to the ship. Here every one was allowed, twice a day, as much as he could eat, without weight or measure; nor did the steward of the vessel give any more flesh, nor anything else, to the captain than to the meanest mariner. "The ship being well victualled, they would deliberate whether they should go to seek their desperate fortunes, and likewise agree upon certain articles, which were put in writing, which every one was bound to observe; and all of them, or the chiefest part, set their hands to it. Here they set down distinctly what sums of money each particular person ought to have for that voyage, the fund of all the payments being what was netted by the whole expedition, for otherwise it was the same law among these people as other pirates—'No prey, no pay.' First, therefore, they calculated how much the captain was to have for his ship; next the salary of the carpenter or shipwright who careened, mended, and rigged the vessel; this commonly amounted to one hundred or one hundred and fifty pieces of eight,<sup>2</sup> according to the agreement. Afterwards, for provisions and victualling, they drew out of the same common stock about two hundred pieces of eight; also a salary for the surgeon and his medicine chest, which usually is rated at two hundred or two hundred and fifty pieces of eight. Lastly, they agreed what rate each one ought to have that was either wounded or maimed in

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<sup>2</sup> The "piece of eight" means in value, as nearly as possible, the American dollar of to-day.

his body, or should suffer the loss of any limb: as, for the loss of a right arm, six hundred pieces of eight, or six slaves; for the left arm, five hundred pieces of eight, or five slaves; for a right leg, five hundred pieces of eight, or five slaves; for the left leg, four hundred pieces of eight, or four slaves; for an eye, one hundred pieces of eight, or one slave; for a finger, the same as for an eye: all which sums were taken out of the common stock of what was gathered by their piracy, and a very exact and equal dividend was made of the remainder. They had also regard to qualities and places; thus, the captain or chief was allotted five or six portions to what the ordinary seamen had, the master's mate only two, and other officers proportionately to their employ; after which they drew equal parts, from the highest to the lowest mariner, the boys not being omitted, who drew a half share, because when they take a better vessel than their own it was the boys' duty to fire the former vessel, and then retire to the prize."

They observed among themselves very good order; for in the prizes which they took it was severely prohibited to any one to take anything for themselves; hence all they got was equally divided. They took a solemn oath to each other not to conceal the least thing they might find among the prizes; and if any one was found false to his oath he was immediately turned out of the society. They were very kind and charitable to each other, so that if any one wanted what another had, he was immediately supplied. As soon as these pirates had taken a prize, they immediately set ashore the prisoners, detaining only some few for their own help and service, whom also they released after two or three years. They refreshed themselves at one island or another, but especially at those on the south of Cuba; here they careened their vessels, while some went hunting, and others cruised in canoes for prizes. They often took the poor turtle fishermen, and made them work during their pleasure.

The inhabitants of New Spain and Campechy were wont to lade their best merchandise in ships of great bulk; the vessels



PIERRE FRANÇOIS ATTACKING THE *VICE-ADMIRAL*.

from Campechy sailed in the winter to Caraccas, the Trinity Isles, and that of Margarita, and returned back again in the summer. [12] The pirates, knowing these seasons (and thoroughly alive to the situation), always cruised between the places above-mentioned; but in case they lighted on no considerable booty, commonly undertook some more hazardous enterprise; “one remarkable instance of which,” says our chronicler, “I shall here give you. A certain pirate, called Pierre François, or Peter Francis, waiting a long time at sea with his boat and twenty-six men for the ships that were to return from Maracaibo to Campechy, and not being able to find any prey, at last he resolved to direct his course to Rancheiras, near the River de la Plata, in 12½° north latitude. Here lies a rich bank of pearl, to the fishery whereof they yearly sent from Carthagena twelve vessels, with a man-of-war for their defence. Every vessel has at least two negroes, who are very dexterous in diving to the depth of six fathoms, where they find good store of pearls. On this fleet, called the Pearl Fleet, Pierre François resolved to venture rather than go home empty. They then rode at anchor at the mouth of the River de la Hacha, the man-of-war scarce half a league distant from the small ships, and the wind very calm. Having spied them in this posture, he presently pulled down his sails and rowed along the coast, feigning to be a Spanish vessel coming from Maracaibo; but no sooner was he come to the pearl-bank, when suddenly he assaulted the *Vice-Admiral*, of eighty guns and sixty men, commanding them to surrender. The Spaniards made a good defence for some time, but at last were forced to submit. Having thus taken the *Vice-Admiral*, he resolved to attempt the man-of-war, with which addition he hoped to master the rest of the fleet. To this end he presently sunk his own boat, putting forth the Spanish colours, and weighed anchor with a little wind which then began to stir, having with threats and promises compelled most of the Spaniards to assist him; but so soon as the man-of-war perceived one of his fleet to sail, he did so too, fearing lest

the mariners designed to run away with the riches they had on board. The pirates on this immediately gave over the enterprise, thinking themselves unable to encounter force to force; hereupon they endeavoured to get out of the river and gain the open seas by making as much sail as they could; which the man-of-war perceiving, he presently gave them chase, but the pirates having laid on too much sail, and a gust of wind presently rising, their mainmast was brought by the board, which disabled them from escaping.

“This unhappy event much encouraged those in the man-of-war, they gaining upon the pirates every moment, and at last overtook them; but they, finding they had twenty-two sound men, the rest being either killed or wounded, resolved to defend themselves as long as possible. This they performed very courageously for some time, till they were forced by the man-of-war, on condition that they should not be used as slaves to carry stones, or be employed in other labours for three or four years, as they served their negroes, but that they should be set safe on shore on free land. On these articles they yielded, with all they had taken, which was worth in pearls alone above 100,000 pieces of eight, besides the vessel, provisions, goods, &c., all of which would have made this a greater prize than he could desire: which he had certainly carried off if his mainmast had not been lost, as we said before.”

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## CHAPTER II.

THE PIRATES AND BUCANIERS (*continued*).



### ESCAPE OF PORTUGUEZ.

The Pirate Portuguese—Another Successful Boat Attack—Re-taken—A Gibbet or Life—Escape—Saved by Two Wine-jars—Helped by the Pirates—Rich again—And suddenly Poor—A Dutch Pirate—From Sailor to Captain—A grand Capture—And a brutal Commander—No Surrender to the Spaniards—Victory and Horse-flesh—The Rover's Prodigality—A Stratagem—Worse than ever—The Spaniards reduce their Commerce—Lewis Scot—John Davis—Outrages at Nicaragua—Piratical Gains—Lolonois the Bad and Brave—His First Wounds—And his Early Successes—Six Hundred and Sixty Pirates—The Capture of Maracaibo and Gibraltar—Division of the Gains—His Brutalities—And Deserved Death.

Bold attempts were the order of the day. A certain pirate named Portuguese was cruising off the Cape Coriente in Cuba, where he met a ship from Maracaibo and Carthagenia bound to the Havannah provided with twenty "great" guns of the period, and seventy passengers and crew. This ship he attacked, and was at first beaten off. The assault was renewed on the part of the pirates, and after a long and dangerous fight the rovers became

the victors. The Portuguese lost only ten men and had four wounded. But the Spaniards had a much larger force in those waters.

Being very near the cape before-named, they unexpectedly met with three vessels coming from New Spain, and bound for the Havannah; by these, not being able to escape, they were easily retaken, both ship and pirates, and all made prisoners, and stripped of all the riches they had taken just before. The cargo consisted of 120,000 weight of cocoa-nuts,<sup>3</sup> the chief ingredient of chocolate, and 70,000 pieces of eight. Two days after this misfortune there arose a great storm, which separated the ships from one another. The great vessel, where the pirates were, arrived at Campechy, where a number of merchants resided. The Portuguese pirate was well known there for the outrages he had committed. The next day after their arrival, the magistrates of the city sent to demand certain prisoners, but fearing the Portuguese pirate might escape, kept him guarded on board, while they erected a gibbet on shore, expecting to hang him next day. Bartholomew Portuguez was too much for them, and managed to escape, after stabbing his sentinel, and swimming ashore with the help of two wine-jars, as he was a bad swimmer. He took to the woods, living on wild herbs, and secreted himself for days in the hollow of a tree, while his enemies were searching for him. Eventually he escaped, after travelling some forty leagues, a fortnight after, half starved and exhausted, to Del Golpho Triste. He had on his way made a boat or raft from a plank and some osiers. But at Golpho Triste he met some of his own kind—pirates of his own kind. They naturally sympathised, and gave him a boat and twenty men. Eight days after he accomplished his will. He took the boat to Campechy, and “with an undaunted courage, and without any noise, he assaulted the said ship; those on board thought it was a boat from land that came to bring contraband goods, and so

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<sup>3</sup> This is the chronicler's statement. He meant the *cacao*-nut.

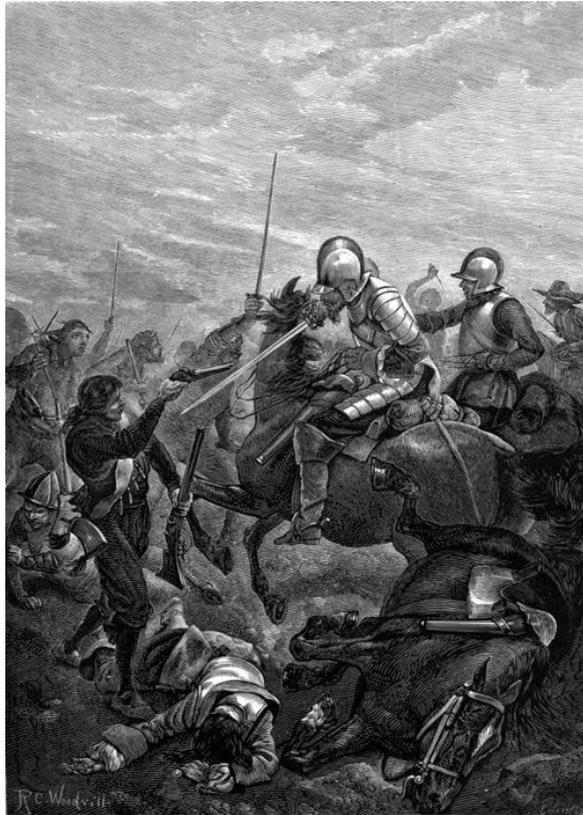
were not in no posture of defence; which opportunity the pirates laying hold of, assaulted them so resolutely, that in a little time they compelled the Spaniards to surrender. Being masters of the ship, they immediately weighed anchor and set sail for the port, lest they should be pursued by other vessels. This they did with the utmost joy, seeing themselves possessors of so brave a ship; especially Portuguez, who by a second turn of fortune was become rich and powerful again, who was so lately in that same vessel a prisoner condemned to be hanged. With this purchase he designed greater things which he might have alone," and so forth. Piracy did not prosper with him in the end, for his vessel was afterwards lost, and he was never fortunate again.

"Not less considerable," wrote Esquemeling, "are the actions of another pirate who now lives at Jamaica, who on several occasions has performed very surprising things. He was born at Groninghen, in the United Provinces. His own name not being known, his companions gave him the name of Roche Brasiliano, by reason of his long residence in Brazil; hence he was forced to fly when the Portuguese took those countries from the Dutch, several nations then inhabiting at Brazil (as English, French, Dutch, and others) being constrained to seek new fortunes.

"This person fled to Jamaica, where, being at a stand how to get his living, he entered into the society of pirates, where he served as a private mariner for some time, and behaved himself so well that he was beloved and respected by all. One day some of the mariners quarrelled with that degree that they left the boat. Brasiliano, following them, was chosen their leader, who, having fitted out a small vessel, they made him captain."

Within a few days after he took a rich plate ship coming from New Spain, and carried it to Jamaica. This action brought him great reputation, and he was, for the time, a great man ashore. He was, however, a terrible brute when drunk—the average condition of the pirate on land—and would run wildly about the streets, insulting, beating, or wounding any one he chanced to

meet. Pleasant Brasiliano!



BRASILIANO'S ESCAPE.

To the Spaniards he was always barbarous and cruel, out of an inveterate hatred against their nation. On several occasions he commanded men to be roasted alive on wooden spits, for not showing hog-yards where he might steal swine. After committing many such cruelties, as he was cruising on the coasts of Campechy, a dismal tempest surprised him so violently that his ship was wrecked upon the coasts, the mariners only escaping

with their muskets and some few bullets and powder, which were the only things they could save. The ship was lost between Campechy and the Golpho Triste; here they got ashore in a canoe, and, marching along the shore with all the speed they could, directed their course towards Golpho Triste, the common refuge of the pirates. On their journey, all very exhausted and hungry, they were pursued by a troop of 100 Spaniards. The pirates were but thirty; yet, seeing their brave commander resolute, they fought bravely, and facing the troop of Spaniards, discharged their muskets on them so dexterously that they killed one horseman almost with every shot. The fight continued for an hour, till at last the Spaniards were put to flight. They stripped the dead, and took from them what was most for their use; such as were not quite dead they despatched with the ends of their muskets.

“Having vanquished the enemy, they mounted on horses they found in the field, and continued their journey, Brasiliano having lost but two of his companions in this bloody fight, and had two wounded. Prosecuting their way, before they came to the port they spied a boat at anchor from Campechy, well manned, protecting a few canoes that were lading wood; hereupon they sent six of their men to watch them, who next morning, by a wile, possessed themselves of the canoes. Having given notice to their companions, they boarded them, and also took the little man-of-war, their convoy. Being thus masters of the fleet, they wanted only provisions, of which they found little aboard those vessels; but this defect was supplied by the horses, which they killed and salted, which by good fortune the wood-cutters had brought with them, with which they supported themselves till they could get better.

“They took also another vessel going from New Spain to Maracaibo, laden with divers sorts of merchandise and pieces of eight, designed to buy cocoa-nuts for their lading home; all these they carried to Jamaica, where they safely arrived, and, according

to custom, wasted all in a few days in taverns and disorderly houses. Some of these pirates will spend two or three thousand pieces of eight in a night, not leaving themselves a good shirt to wear in the morning. My own master," says Esquemeling, "would buy sometimes a pipe of wine, and placing it in the street, would force those that passed by it to drink with him, threatening also to pistol them if they would not. He would do the like with barrels of beer or ale, and very often he would throw these liquors about the streets and wet people's clothes, without regarding whether he spoiled their apparel.

"Among themselves these pirates are very liberal; if any one has lost all, which often happens in their manner of life, they freely give him of what they have. In taverns and alehouses they have great credit; but at Jamaica they ought not to run very deep in debt, seeing the inhabitants there easily sell one another for debt. This happened to my patron, to be sold for a debt of a tavern wherein he had spent the greater part of his money. This man had, within three months before, three thousand pieces of eight in ready cash, all which he wasted in that little time, and became as poor as I have told you."

The history of a pirate is that of many another man made suddenly rich. Brasiliano, after having spent all, naturally went to sea again, and set forth for the coast of Campechy. Fifteen days after his arrival he took a canoe, and went to examine the port, but his fortune failed, and he and all his men were taken and committed to a dungeon. Doubtless they would have all been hanged but for a stratagem of Brasiliano, which saved their lives. He wrote a letter to the governor in the names of his fellow pirates at sea, warning him of their power, and that their blood would be on his head. The governor was frightened out of his wits, and released them on the bare promise that they would not be pirates again. As a nominal punishment, he sent them as drafts on the Spanish galleons, and they went to Spain. They returned, to be worse pirates than ever.

The Spaniards about this period became so tired of sending vessels to sea only to lose them, that they diminished the number considerably. But this was of no avail, for the pirates then turned their attention to the Spanish towns and settlements. One Lewis Scot sacked the city of Campechy, which he almost ruined; another pirate, named Mansvelt, invaded New Granada; while John Davis gave his unwelcome attentions to Nicaragua.

This freebooter, having long been unfortunate in his enterprises, resolved on a desperate expedient. Leaving his ship hidden on the coast, he took eighty out of ninety men which he had in all, and divided them in three canoes. In the dark of night they entered the river leading to the city; proceeding cautiously, they hid themselves by day under the thickly wooded banks. On the third night they arrived at the city, at the outposts of which, on the river, the guard allowed them to pass, as most of them spoke Spanish, and he took them for fishermen. They had with them an Indian guide who had run away from his master in Nicaragua, and he went ashore and speedily despatched the sentinel. The pirate band then entered the city, and knocked softly at the houses of several chief citizens, who, believing them to be friends, opened their doors. The pirates soon convinced them to the contrary, and rifled them of all the money and plate they could find. The churches were pillaged and profaned. Meantime the citizens collected their forces, and the pirates saw that they must get away with the prisoners they had taken; "these they led away, that if any of them should be taken by the Spaniards they might use them for ransom. Thus they got to their ships, and with all speed put to sea, forcing the prisoners, before they let them go, to procure as much flesh as was necessary for their voyage to Jamaica. But no sooner had they weighed anchor when they saw a troop of about 500 Spaniards, all well armed, at the sea-side; against these they let fly several guns, wherewith they forced them to quit the sands and retire, with no small regret to see these pirates carry away so much plate of their churches and

houses, though distant at least forty leagues from the sea.” Davis and his men divided the Spanish coin and jewels, to the value of about ten thousand pounds in English money. The captain was afterwards chosen admiral of seven or eight vessels, and pillaged a town in Florida, named St. Augustine, although it possessed a castle protected by 200 men.

One of the most famous—or, more properly speaking, infamous—pirates of the day was Francis Lolonois, a native of France. “In his youth he was transported to the Caribee Islands, in quality of servant or slave, according to custom, of which we have already spoken. Being out of his time, he came to Hispaniola, where he joined for some time the hunters, before he began his robberies upon the Spaniards, till his unfortunate death.” These are Esquemeling’s words; some of his victims would hardly endorse the latter opinion.

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At first he made two or three voyages as a common mariner, and behaved himself so courageously as to gain the favour of the Governor of Tortuga, Monsieur de la Place, insomuch that he gave him a ship in which he might seek his fortune, which was very favourable to him at first; for in a short time he acquired a considerable amount of wealth.

“But his cruelties to the Spaniards were such that the latter in his time would rather die, or sink fighting, than surrender, knowing they should have no mercy at his hands. But he was overtaken by a reverse of fortune, and lost his ship on the coast of Campechy. The men were all saved, but upon landing, the Spaniards pursued them and killed the greater part, wounding also Lolonois. Not knowing how to escape, he saved his life by a stratagem: mingling sand with the blood of his wounds, he besmeared his face and other parts of his body, and hiding himself dexterously among the dead, continued there till the Spaniards quitted the field.

“They being gone, he retired to the woods, and bound up his wounds as well as he could. These being pretty well healed, he



MAP OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE WEST INDIA ISLANDS.

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took his way to Campechy, having disguised himself in a Spanish habit; here he enticed certain slaves, to whom he promised liberty if they would obey him and trust to his conduct. They accepted his promises, and, stealing a canoe, went to sea with him. Now the Spaniards having made several of his companions prisoners, kept them close in a dungeon, while Lolonois went about the town and saw what passed. These were often asked, 'What has become of your captain?' To whom they constantly answered, 'He is dead;' which rejoiced the Spaniards, who made bonfires, and, knowing nothing to the contrary, gave thanks to God for their deliverance from such a cruel pirate. Lolonois, having seen these rejoicings for his death, made haste to escape, with the slaves above-mentioned, and came safe to Tortuga, the common refuge of all sorts of wickedness, and the seminary, as it were, of pirates and thieves. Though now his fortune was low, yet he got another ship with craft and subtilty, and in it twenty-one men. Being well provided with arms and necessaries, he set forth for Cuba, on the south whereof is a small village called De los Cayos. The inhabitants drive a great trade in tobacco, sugar, and hides, and all in boats, not being able to use ships, by reason of the little depth of the sea.

"Lolonois was persuaded he should get here some considerable prey; but by the good fortune of some fishermen who saw him, and the mercy of God, they escaped him; for the inhabitants of the town despatched immediately a vessel overland to the Havannah, complaining that Lolonois was come to destroy them with two canoes. The governor could scarcely believe this, having received letters from Campechy that he was dead; but at their importunity he sent a ship to their relief, with ten guns and ninety men well armed, giving them this express command, 'that they should not return into his presence without having totally destroyed those pirates.' To this effect he gave them a negro to serve them for a hangman, and orders that they should immediately hang every one of the pirates excepting Lolonois,

their captain, whom they should bring alive to the Havannah. This ship arrived at Cayos, of whose coming the pirates were advertised beforehand, and, instead of flying, went to seek it in the river Estera, where she rode at anchor. The pirates seized some fishermen, and forced them by night to show them the entry of the port, hoping soon to obtain a greater vessel than their two canoes, and thereby to mend their fortune. They arrived, after two in the morning, very nigh the ship; and the watch on board the ship asking them whence they came, and if they had seen any pirates abroad, they caused one of the prisoners to answer that they had seen no pirates nor anything else; which answer made them believe that the pirates had fled upon hearing of their coming.

“But they soon found the contrary, for about break of day the pirates assaulted the vessel on both sides with their two canoes with such vigour that though the Spaniards behaved themselves as they ought, and made as good defence as they could, making some use of their great guns, yet they were forced to surrender, being beaten by the pirates, with sword in hand, down under the hatches. From thence Lolonois commanded them to be brought up one by one, and in this order caused their heads to be struck off. Among the rest came up the negro designed to be the pirates’ executioner. This fellow implored mercy at his hands very dolefully, telling Lolonois he was constituted hangman of that ship, and if he would spare him he would tell him faithfully all that he should desire. Lolonois, making him confess what he thought fit, commanded him to be murdered with the rest. Thus he cruelly and barbarously put them all to death, reserving only one alive, whom he sent back to the Governor of the Havannah, with this message in writing: ‘I shall never henceforth give quarter to any Spaniard whatsoever, and I have great hopes I shall execute on your own person the very same punishment I have done upon them you sent against me. Thus I have retaliated the kindness you designed to me and my companions.’ The governor, much

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troubled at this sad news, swore in the presence of many that he would never grant quarter to any pirate that should fall into his hands. But the citizens of the Havannah desired him not to persist in the execution of that rash and rigorous oath, seeing the pirates would certainly take occasion from thence to do the same, and they had a hundred times more opportunity for revenge than he; that being necessitated to get their livelihood by fishery, they should hereafter always be in danger of their lives. By these reasons he was persuaded to bridle his anger, and remit the severity of his oath.

“Now Lolonois had got a good ship, but very few provisions and people in it; to purchase both which he determined to cruise from one port to another. Doing thus for some time without success, he determined to go to the port of Maracaibo. Here he surprised a ship laden with plate and other merchandise, outward bound to buy cocoa-nuts. With this prize he returned to Tortuga, where he was received with joy by the inhabitants, they congratulating his happy success and their own private interest. He stayed not long there, but designed to equip a fleet sufficient to transport five hundred men and necessaries. Thus provided, he resolved to pillage both cities, towns, and villages, and finally to take Maracaibo itself. For this purpose he knew the island of Tortuga would afford him many resolute and courageous men, fit for such enterprises; besides, he had in his service several prisoners well acquainted with the ways and places designed upon.”

Lolonois gave notice to a large number of the pirates, and gathered together in a little while above 400 men, among whom was then in Tortuga another freebooter, named Michael de Basco, who, by his piracy, had become rich enough to live at ease and go no more abroad, having withal the offer of major of the island. But seeing the great preparations that Lolonois made for this expedition, he joined him, and offered him that if he would make him his chief captain by land (seeing he knew the country very

well, and all its approaches) he would share in his fortunes and go with him. This precious pair of thieves agreed, to the great joy of Lolonois, who knew that Basco had done great things in Europe, and had the repute of being a good soldier. Then they all embarked in eight vessels, that of Lolonois being the greatest, having ten guns.

All things being ready, and the whole company on board, they set sail together about the end of April, being in all about six hundred and sixty persons. They steered for the port of Bayala, north of Hispaniola. Here they took into their company some French hunters, who volunteered, and provided themselves with victuals and necessaries for their voyage.

“From hence they sailed again the last of July, and steered directly to the eastern cape of the isle called Punta d’ Espada. Hereabouts espying a ship from Puerto Rico, bound for New Spain, laden with cocoa-nuts, Lolonois commanded the rest of the fleet to wait for him near Savona, on the east of Cape Punta d’ Espada, he alone intending to take the said vessel. The Spaniards, though they had been in sight two hours, and knew them to be pirates, yet would not flee, but prepared to fight, being well armed and provided. The combat lasted three hours, and then they surrendered. This ship had sixteen guns and fifty fighting men aboard. They found in her 120,000 weight of cocoa, 40,000 pieces of eight, and the value of 10,000 more in jewels. Lolonois sent the vessel presently to Tortuga to be unladed, with orders to return as soon as possible to Savona, where he would wait for them. Meanwhile, the rest of the fleet being arrived at Savona met another Spanish vessel coming from Coman, with military provisions to Hispaniola, and money to pay the garrisons there. This vessel they also took, without any resistance, though mounted with eight guns. In it were 7,000 weight of powder, a great number of muskets and like things, with 12,000 pieces of eight.” [20]

These successes emboldened the pirates, and we find their

next exploit that of taking a town of no inconsiderable size, that of Maracaibo in Venezuela. The island on which it is situated is divided by a gulf or bay from two others; on one was placed a watch-tower, while on the other was a castle, and as the water about was often shallow, with many dangerous sand-banks, vessels had to come in very close to it. Maracaibo, the city or town, had some 3,000 or 4,000 Spanish inhabitants, and about 800 able to bear arms. There was a large church, four monasteries, and one hospital; the trade of the town was largely in tobacco, hides, and to an extent flesh, which they exchanged for cocoa-nuts, oranges, lemons, and other fruits, with a town named Gibraltar, situated some distance in the country on the Lake of Maracaibo. The latter is described as delightfully situated among plantations of sugar, and cocoa, and woods, the timber of which was often large enough for ship and boat building. The whole country abounded in rivers and brooks, while the tobacco grown had a high reputation in Europe, being known as *tobacco de sacerdotes*, or priests' tobacco.

Lolonois arrived at the Gulf of Venezuela, and cast anchor out of sight of the watch-tower already mentioned; next morning he made in for the Lake of Maracaibo, which communicates with the sea, and cast anchor again. Then a number of the men landed to attack the fortress which commanded the bar, and which was merely composed of earthworks. The governor, however, knew of their approach, and had placed an ambuscade to cut them off behind, while he should attack them in front. This the pirates discovered, and manœuvred so successfully and fought so desperately that not a man could retreat to the castle. This done, Lolonois, with his followers, advanced immediately to the fort, and after a desperate fight of nearly three hours completely mastered it, without any other arms than swords and pistols. While this fight was in progress, the routed ambuscade, not being able to get into the castle, retired into Maracaibo in great confusion and disorder, crying out, "The pirates will presently

be here with two thousand men and more!” The city had been formerly sacked by pirates, and the people knew well of what quality was their mercy. There was then a general stampede in boats and canoes to Gibraltar, with such of the portable wealth as could be taken. Arrived there, they spread the dismal news, and there was general dismay. [21]

The castle thus taken by the pirates, they signalled to the ships their victory, that they should come further in without fear of danger. The rest of the day was spent in ruining and demolishing the castle. They nailed<sup>4</sup> the guns, and burnt as much as they could not carry away, burying the dead, and sending the wounded on board the fleet. Next day, very early, they weighed anchor, and steered altogether towards Maracaibo, about six leagues distant from the fort; but the wind failing, they could advance little, being forced to wait for the tide. Next morning they came in sight of the town, and prepared for landing under the protection of their own guns, fearing the Spaniards might have laid an ambuscade in the woods; they put their men into canoes, brought for the purpose, and landed where they thought most convenient, shooting still furiously with their great guns. Of those in the canoes half only went ashore, the other half remaining aboard. They fired from the ships as fast as possible towards the woody part of the shore, but could discover nobody. Then they entered the town, the inhabitants of which had retired to the woods and Gibraltar with their families. Their houses were found well provided with victuals, as flour, bread, pork, brandy, wines, and poultry, with which the pirates fell to, making high havoc; having had no opportunity for four weeks before of filling their stomachs with such good cheer.

“They instantly possessed themselves of the best houses in the town,” says the narrator, “and placed sentinels wherever they thought convenient; the great church serving them for their

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<sup>4</sup> *i.e.*, “Spiked,” as we say now-a-days.

main guard. Next day they sent out 160 men to find out some of the inhabitants in the woods thereabouts; these returned the same night, bringing with them 20,000 pieces of eight, several mules laden with household goods and merchandise, and twenty prisoners, men, women, and children. Some of these were put to the rack to make them confess where they had hid the rest of the goods; but they could extort very little from them. Lolonois, who valued not murdering, though in cold blood, ten or twelve Spaniards, drew his cutlass, and hacked one to pieces before the rest, saying, 'If you do not confess and declare where you have hid the rest of your goods, I will do the like to all your companions.' At last, amongst these horrible cruelties and inhuman threats, one promised to show the place where the rest of the Spaniards were hid; but those that were fled, having intelligence of it, changed place, and buried the remnant of their riches, so that the pirates could not find them out. Besides, the Spaniards flying from one place to another every day, and often changing woods, were jealous even of each other, so as the father durst scarce trust his own son."

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THE STRUGGLE WITH THE PIRATES AT GIBRALTAR.

After the pirates had been fifteen days in Maracaibo they made up their minds to capture Gibraltar, not a task quite so difficult as the taking of that other which guards the portals of the Mediterranean, but still sufficiently troublesome. The inhabitants had received intelligence of their approaching advent, and that they afterwards intended to attempt the capture of Merida, another city of that country, and they therefore informed the governor, who was a brave soldier, and had served in Flanders. His answer was, "he would have them take no care, for he hoped in a little while to exterminate the said pirates;" whereupon he brought a force of 400 well-armed men to Gibraltar, ordering at the same time the inhabitants to arm. He soon had a force of 800 fighting men. With the same speed he raised a battery, mounting twenty guns, and covered with great baskets of earth. In another place he constructed a smaller battery of eight guns, and this done, he barricaded a narrow passage, an approach to the town, through which the pirates must pass; at the same time he opened another, through morasses of dirt and mud, into the wood, totally unknown to the freebooters.

"The pirates, ignorant of these preparations, having embarked all their prisoners and booty, took their way towards Gibraltar. Being come in sight of the place, they saw the Royal Standard hanging forth, and that those of the town designed to defend their houses. Lolonois seeing this, called a council of war, what they ought to do, telling his officers and mariners 'that the difficulty of the enterprise was very great, seeing the Spaniards had had so much time to put themselves in a posture of defence, and had got a good body of men together, with much ammunition; but notwithstanding,' said he, 'have a good courage; we must either defend ourselves like good soldiers, or lose our lives with all the riches we have got. Do as I shall do who are your captain. At other times we have fought with fewer men than we have in our company at present, and yet we have overcome greater numbers than there possibly can be in this town; the more there are, the

more glory and the greater riches we shall gain.' The pirates supposed that all the riches of the inhabitants of Maracaibo were transported to Gibraltar, or at least the greater part. After this speech they all promised to follow and to obey him. Lolonois made answer, 'It is well; but know ye, withal, that the first man who shall show any fear, or the least apprehension thereof, I will pistol him with my own hands!'

"With this resolution they cast anchor nigh the shore, near three-quarters of a league from the town; next day, before sunrise, they landed 380 men, well provided, and armed every one with a cutlass and one or two pistols, and sufficient powder and bullets for thirty charges. Here they all shook hands, in testimony of good courage, and began their march, Lolonois speaking thus:—'Come, my brethren, follow me, and have good courage.' They followed their guide, who, believing he led them well, brought them to the way which the governor had barricaded. Not being able to pass that way, they went to the other newly made in the wood among the mire, which the Spaniards could shoot into at pleasure; but the pirates, full of courage, cut down the branches of trees and threw them on the way, that they might not stick in the dirt. Meanwhile, those of Gibraltar fired with their great guns so furiously that they could scarce hear nor see for the noise and smoke. Being past the wood, they came on firm ground, where they met with a battery of six guns, which immediately the Spaniards discharged upon them, all loaded with small bullets and pieces of iron; and the Spaniards, sallying forth, set upon them with such fury as caused the pirates to give way, few of them caring to advance towards the fort, many of them being already killed and wounded. This made them go back to seek another way, but the Spaniards having cut down many trees to hinder the passage, they could find none, but were forced to return to that they had left. Here the Spaniards continued to fire as before; nor would they sally out of their batteries to attack them any more. Lolonois and his companions not being able

to grimp up the baskets of earth, were compelled to use an old stratagem, wherewith at last they deceived and overcame the Spaniards.

“Lolonois retired suddenly with all his men, making show as if he fled, whereupon the Spaniards, crying out, ‘They flee, they flee! let us follow them!’ sallied out with great disorder to the pursuit. Being drawn to some distance from the batteries, which was the pirates’ only design, they turned upon them unexpectedly, sword in hand, and killed above 200 men, and thus fighting their way through those who remained, they possessed themselves of the batteries. The Spaniards that remained abroad, giving themselves over for lost, fled to the woods; those in the battery of eight guns surrendered themselves, obtaining quarter for their lives. The pirates being now become masters of the town, pulled down the Spanish colours and set up their own, taking prisoners as many as they could find. These they carried to the great church, where they raised a battery of several great guns, fearing lest the Spaniards that were fled should rally and come upon them again; but next day, being all fortified, their fears were over. They gathered the dead to bury them, being above 500 Spaniards, besides the wounded in the town and those who died of their wound in the woods. The pirates had also above 150 prisoners and nigh 500 slaves, many women and children.”

Of their own companions only forty were killed and about eighty wounded, of whom, however, the greater part died through the pestilential air of the place. They put the slain Spaniards into two great boats, and towing them a quarter of a league to sea, they sunk the boats. This done, they gathered all the plate, valuables generally, and merchandise they could, or thought convenient to carry away. “The Spaniards who had anything left had hid it carefully; but the unsatisfied pirates, not content with the riches they had got, sought for more goods and merchandise, not sparing those who lived in the fields, such as hunters and planters. They had scarce been eighteen days on the place when the greater

part of the prisoners died of hunger; for in the town there were few provisions, especially of flesh, though they had some, but no sufficient quantity of flour, and this the pirates had taken for themselves, as they also took the swine, cows, and poultry, without allowing any share to the poor prisoners; for these they only provided some small quantity of mule's and ass's flesh; and many who could not eat of that loathsome provision died of hunger, their stomachs not being accustomed to such sustenance. Only some women were allowed better cheer, but not for the best reasons." Of the prisoners, many also died under the tortures sustained to make them give up their money or jewels; many died, accordingly, who possessed neither, or would not admit the facts.

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After having been in possession of the town four entire weeks, they sent four of their prisoners to the Spaniards that were fled to the woods, demanding of them a ransom of 10,000 pieces; they threatened to reduce it to ashes. The Spaniards were unable or indisposed to bring in a sum so considerable in the stipulated time—namely, only two days—and the pirates fired the town in several places, whereupon the inhabitants begged them to help extinguish the fire, and the ransom should be readily paid. The pirates agreed, but in spite of all their best endeavours one part of the town was ruined. The church belonging to the monastery was burned down. After they had received the sum fixed they carried on board all the riches they had gathered, with a great number of slaves which had not paid the ransom. Thence they returned to Maracaibo, where they found a general consternation in the city, which was not quieted when they demanded 50,000 pieces of eight to be brought on board, or the inhabitants' houses should be sacked anew. Meantime the pirates stripped the great church of all its valuables. At last a compromise was effected, that on payment of 20,000 pieces of eight, and 500 cows, the pirates would depart peaceably. Both these demands being paid, the fleet set sail. But three days afterwards, the townspeople's fears

were renewed at seeing the pirates appear again, and re-enter the port with all their ships. Their alarm subsided when they found that the pirates only required a pilot to take them over the bar and banks at the entrance of the Lake of Maracaibo.

At Hispaniola the freebooters made a division of their gains, according to the order and rank of every one. They found that they had considerably over a *quarter of a million* pieces of eight to share, besides any quantity of rich spoils. Those who had been wounded received their proportion for the loss of their limbs after the first general division. Then they weighed the plate, allowing ten pieces of eight (ten dollars) to a pound. The jewels were frequently, no doubt, either greatly over-valued or under-valued by reason of their ignorance. This done, every one was put to his oath again that he had not concealed anything from the rest or smuggled anything from the common stock. The shares of those who had died in battle or otherwise were carefully given to the proper relatives or friends—honour among thieves with a vengeance! The dividends having been arranged, they started for Tortuga, where these *nouveaux riches* were received with great rejoicings. Two French ships, laden with wine and brandy, &c., had arrived shortly before, and these liquors were comparatively cheap when the pirates sailed into harbour; a week or two afterwards prices had increased wonderfully, and the larger part of the bucaniers had not a dollar to bless themselves wherewith. The governor of the island purchased a ship-load of cocoa from them for about a twentieth part of its worth; and in a week or two the tavern-keepers, gamblers, and loafers, had acquired a good proportion of the riches, so hardly and bravely, albeit so dishonestly, earned.

Lolonois was now the great man of Tortuga, as he brought wealth to the town, and all men flocked to his standard; he had no difficulty in obtaining all the volunteers he desired. He resolved, therefore, on another voyage to Nicaragua, that country, as the reader may be reminded, which in later days has been the scene

of the exploits of Walker the filibuster, and which may some day hold a prominent place in the eyes of the world in connection with a great ship canal between the Atlantic and Pacific. Having promulgated his new programme, some seven hundred men enrolled themselves under him. Of these he put about three hundred on the great prize ship he took at Maracaibo, and the rest on five smaller vessels. Fancy an expedition of seven hundred men starting on such an errand, even in these days! What harm might they not accomplish?



#### LOLONOIS' FIGHT WITH THE SPANIARDS.

The expedition being ready, Lolonois proceeded to a port in Hispaniola to take in provisions, and afterwards to Matamana, on the south coast of Cuba, where he intended to rob the poor turtle-hunters of their canoes. They captured as many as they wanted, to the sorrow of their owners, but to their own satisfaction, as they were always useful in shallow waters, and the port to which they were directing their course came under that category. Hence they steered for the Cape Gracias a Dios, and being at sea were becalmed for a long while, and were carried by the currents into

the Gulf of Honduras. The ship which carried the commander of the expedition could not keep up with the rest, and what was worse, they were running short of provisions, so that they were obliged to send their canoes to the river Xagua, where there were a number of Indians, whom they first killed. After that, as a mere matter of secondary importance, they thought it no harm to carry off the hogs, hens, and millet, of their settlements, which were found in abundance. They resolved further to remain there till the bad weather was over, and pillage all the villages and towns on the coast of the gulf, but were not particularly successful till they came to Puerto Cavallo. Here the Spaniards had two storehouses, where they kept the produce of the country till the arrival of their ships. There was then in the port a Spanish ship of twenty-four guns and sixteen pedreros, or mortar-pieces. This ship was immediately seized by the pirates, and the two storehouses burned with all the rest of the houses there. Many of the inhabitants were made prisoners, and they committed upon them the most inhuman cruelties that ever heathens invented, putting them to the cruellest tortures they could devise. "It was the custom of Lolonois that, having tormented persons not confessing, he would instantly cut them in pieces with his hanger, and pull out their tongues, desiring to do so, if possible, to every Spaniard in the world. It often happened that some of these miserable prisoners, being forced by the rack, would promise to discover the place where the fugitive Spaniards lay hid, which not being able afterwards to perform, they were put to more cruel deaths than they who were dead before. [26]

"The prisoners being all dead but two (whom they reserved to show them what they desired), they marched hence to the town of San Pedro, or St. Peter, ten or twelve leagues from Puerto Cavallo, being three hundred men whom Lolonois led, leaving behind him Moses Van Vin, his lieutenant, to govern the rest in his absence. Being come three leagues on his way, they met with a troop of Spaniards, who lay in ambuscade for

their coming; these they set upon with all the courage possible, and at last totally defeated. Howbeit, they behaved themselves very manfully at first, but not being able to resist the fury of the pirates, they were forced to give way and save themselves by flight, leaving many pirates dead in the place, some wounded, and some of their own party maimed by the way. These Lolonois put to death without mercy, having asked them what questions he thought fit for his purpose.”

There were still some five prisoners not wounded; these were asked by Lolonois, if any more Spaniards remained farther on in ambuscade? They answered there were. Then, being brought before him one by one, he asked if there was no other way to the town but that? this he did to avoid those ambuscades, if possible. But they all constantly answered him they knew none. Having asked them all, and finding they could show him no other way, Lolonois grew outrageously passionate, so that he drew his cutlass, and with it cut open the breast of one of those poor Spaniards, and pulling out his heart began to bite and gnaw it with his teeth, like a ravenous wolf, saying to the rest, “I will serve you all alike if you show me not another way!” The poor wretches promised to show him another way, but averred that it was a most difficult route. He tried it and found that they were right. He was so exasperated that he swore the horrible oath—*Mort Dieu, les Espagnols me le payeront!* Next day he kept his word, for meeting an ambuscade of Spaniards, he attacked them with such fury that few remained to tell the tale. The Spaniards hoped by these ambuscades to destroy the pirates in detail. Later he met another and a stronger party, more advantageously placed, but the pirates attacking them with much vigour, and using fire-balls in great numbers, forced the remnant to flee leaving the larger part killed and wounded. There was but one path that led to the town, and this was very well barricaded, while the settlement was surrounded by planted shrubs of a prickly and pointed nature, probably something of the cactus

variety. The Spaniards, posted behind their defences, plied the pirates with their artillery, and were answered with showers of fire-balls; the latter were for the present unable to advance. A second attack was made, the pirates' orders being not to fire until very close to the enemy; and in this they were successful, as every shot told. The conflict continued raging till night, when the Spaniards hoisted the white flag and desired to parley, the only conditions they required being that the pirates should give the inhabitants quarter for two hours. This was a *ruse* to enable them to carry off and hide their valuables. Granting this request, the pirates marched into the town, and continued there the two hours without committing the least outrage; but the time past, Lolonois ordered that the inhabitants should be followed, robbed of all they had carried away, and made prisoners. They had succeeded, however, knowing the country, in making such good use of their time that the pirates could only capture a few sacks of indigo. Having remained there a few days, committing all kinds of outrages and stealing all they could, they returned to the coast, rejoining some of their companions, who had been engaged in robbing the poor fishermen of the coast, and others who came from Guatemala. A vessel from Spain was daily expected to arrive off this river, and they left two canoes to attack her, whilst they went over to some islands on the other side of the gulf to careen and cleanse their ships and obtain provisions, they knowing well that turtle abounded. They also made a number of ropes and nets from the rind of the macoa-tree, and obtained a quantity of a kind of bitumen or pitch, useful on board ship. In short, these islands would seem to supply nearly all that was required for the seaman's use. [27]

The pirates, having been in the gulf three months, received advice that the expected Spanish ship had arrived, and hastened to the spot where she lay unloading her merchandise. They had previously sent away some of the boats to seek for a smaller vessel, also expected, richly laden with plate, indigo,

and cochineal. Meanwhile the ship's crew, expecting an attack, had prepared for a good defence. Her armament consisted of forty-two guns, and she had on board one hundred and thirty well-armed men. Lolonois simply laughed at all this, and assaulted them with great courage. His own ship had but twenty-two guns. The Spaniards behaved excellently, and forced the pirates to retire momentarily, but Lolonois was still equal to the occasion. Taking advantage of the dense smoke caused by the bad powder of those days, he again attacked the ship, boarded her from all sides, and forced the Spaniards to surrender. They were considerably chagrined to find that their fight had been almost for nothing—piratically considered—for they found on board little more than fifty bars of iron, a small parcel of paper, and some earthen jars of wine.

Lolonois now called a council of war, and stated that he was bound for Guatemala. A division of opinion immediately arose, and he was especially opposed by some of the men who were but “green hands” in the art of piracy, and who had expected long ere this to have become wealthy, or, as the chronicler puts it, had expected “that pieces of eight were gathered as easy as pears from a tree.” Many of these immediately seceded and left the fleet, returning home as best they might. Another section averred that they would rather starve than return without plenty of prize money. The major part did not approve of the proposed voyage, and separated from Lolonois and his adherents. Their ring-leaders, Moses Vanclein and Pierre le Picard, on the voyage home, pillaged a town in Costa Rica, but only gained some seven or eight pounds of native gold.

Lolonois, thus deserted by the larger number of his companions, remained alone in the Gulf of Honduras, where all suffered severely from want of provisions. Roast monkey was their main sustenance. At last, near Cape Gracias a Dios, his ship struck on a sandbank near the little island, one of the group named De las Puertas, and although they threw overboard

the guns, iron, and other weighty things on the ship, she stuck fast, and no art could remove her. They were forced to break her up, and build themselves a boat to get away. The islands were inhabited by some Indians, who are described as being very tall and nimble, running as fast as a fleet horse, and enormously strong; "at diving also," says the chronicler, "they are very dexterous and hardy. From the bottom of the sea I saw them take up an anchor of six hundred-weight, tying a cable to it with great dexterity, and pulling it from a rock." Their arms were of wood, and in place of iron points crocodiles' teeth were often used. They had plantations of bananas, potatoes, and other fruits and vegetables. They occasionally indulged in cannibalism. Two of the men, a Frenchman and a Spaniard, went into the woods, where they lost themselves. A party of Indians pursued them. They defended themselves with their swords, but were at last forced to flee; the nimbler of the two, the Frenchman, escaped, but the Spaniard was taken. Some days after, twelve well-armed pirates, conducted by the above-mentioned Frenchman, reached the place where the Spaniard had been left. Here they found the evidences that the Indians had camped and made a fire, and at a small distance discovered a man's bones well roasted, and with shreds of flesh, ill scraped off, adhering to them. A human hand, with but two fingers remaining, was also found, and they could only conclude that these were the last of the poor Spaniard, as he was never heard of again.

Their boat was now finished, and they determined to make for the river of Nicaragua. She could not hold the number, and to avoid disputes they cast lots who should go or stay. Lolonois and half his men embarked in the long-boat and in the skiff which they had before, the other half remaining ashore. At the river of Nicaragua that ill-fortune assailed the pirate leader which of long time had been reserved for him as a punishment due to the multitude of horrible crimes committed in his wicked and licentious life. Here he met with both Spaniards and Indians,

who, jointly setting upon him and his companions, were killed on the place. Lolonois with those that remained alive, had much ado to escape aboard their boats; yet, notwithstanding this great loss, he resolved not to return to those he had left at the Isle of Puertas without taking some boats such as he sought. To this effect he determined to go on to the coasts of Carthagená; but “God Almighty,” says Esquemeling—“the time of His divine justice being now come—had appointed the Indians of Darien to be the instruments and executioners thereof. These Indians of Darien were esteemed as bravoos, or wild savage Indians, by the neighbouring Spaniards, who never could civilise them. Hither Lolonois came (brought by his evil conscience that cried for punishment), thinking to act his cruelties; but the Indians, within a few days after his arrival, took him prisoner, and tore him in pieces alive, throwing his body limb by limb into the fire, and his ashes into the air, that no trace or memory might remain of such an infamous, inhuman creature. One of his companions gave me an exact account of the tragedy, affirming that himself had escaped the same punishment with the greatest difficulty. He believed also that many of his comrades who were taken in that encounter by those Indians were, as their cruel captain, torn in pieces and burnt alive. Thus ends the history, the life, and miserable death of that infernal wretch Lolonois, who, full of horrid, execrable, and enormous deeds, and debtor to so much innocent blood, died by cruel and butcherly hands, such as his own were in the course of his life.” Those that remained on the island De las Puertas waiting for their companions’ return were later taken off on the ship of another pirate. The united crews, now in number 500, made for the river at Gracias a Dios, which they entered in canoes. They took little provision, expecting to “find”—in the pirate’s meaning, steal—plenty ashore. In this they were disappointed, for the Indians had got notice of their coming, and had fled. They were thus reduced to extreme necessity and hunger, and a few green herbs formed their only

sustenance. After a laborious search in the woods for food, during which time they were reduced to eat their own boots and the leather sheaths of their swords and knives, and at which period they also vowed to sacrifice any Indians they might meet to appease their own appetites—which, fortunately for the Indians, did not happen—their courage oozed out, and they returned to the ships. The greater part of them subsequently perished from hunger and exhaustion, or in the same manner as had their commander Lolonois not long before.

And now to the deeds of another famous freebooter, “who,” as Esquemeling says, “may deservedly be called the second Lolonois, not being unlike or inferior to him either in achievements against the Spaniards or in robberies of many innocent people.” The notorious pirate Captain Morgan now appears upon the scene.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE PIRATES AND BUCANIERS (*continued*).

The Second Lolonois—Captain Henry Morgan—His first Successes—A Pirate Fleet of Seven Hundred Men—Attack on a Cuban Town—Morgan’s Form—Not to be Beaten—Puerto Bello—Morgan’s Strategy—The Castle taken—Extravagant Demands—The Governor of Panama Derided—Return to Jamaica—Their Dissipation—A Fresh Start—Maracaibo re-taken—A Chance for Guy Fawkes—Gibraltar again—Cruel Tortures inflicted on Prisoners—Horrible Brutalities—Arrival of a Spanish

Fleet—Morgan’s Insolence—Letter from the Spanish  
Admiral—“To the Death!”

Captain Henry Morgan was born in Wales; his father was in easy circumstances, as many who bear that name in Wales were and are known to be. Morgan, when young, had no inclination for the calling of his father, and therefore left the country and came to the sea-coast, to seek some other employment more suitable to his aspirations. He volunteered on board a vessel bound for Barbadoes, the captain of which, according to the frequent practice of those times, sold him as soon as he went ashore. “He served his time at Barbadoes, and, obtaining his liberty, betook himself to Jamaica, there to seek new fortunes. Here he found two vessels of pirates ready to go to sea; and being destitute of employment he went with them, with intent to follow the exercises of that sort of people; and he soon learnt their mode of living so exactly that, having performed three or four voyages with profit and success, he agreed with some of his comrades, who had got by the same voyages a little money, to join stocks and buy a ship. The vessel being bought they unanimously chose him captain and commander.”

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With this ship he left Jamaica, and off the coast of Campechy took several prizes, with which he returned triumphantly. He next met an old pirate, Mansvelt by name, who was then engaged in forming and manning a fleet, and who offered Morgan the post of vice-admiral in his expedition, which the latter accepted. There was no nonsense about the piracy of those days; for we read that the freebooters’ fleet consisted of no less than fifteen vessels, great and small, manned by 500 adventurers. They first proceeded to the Isle of St. Catherine, near the coast of Costa Rica, where they landed most of their men, and soon “forced all the forts and castles thereof,” which they instantly demolished, except one, which they garrisoned with 100 men of their own, and all the slaves taken from the Spaniards. With the rest of their

forces they proceeded to a neighbouring island, so close, indeed, that in a few days they made a bridge and carried over all the captured ordnance. Having ruined with fire and sword both the islands, they put to sea again with the intention of pillaging all the towns and villages on the coast of Costa Rica. The Governor of Panama learned of these proceedings, and made preparations to meet the pirates, of which fact they also learned, and they retired, finding the whole country was alarmed. They returned to St. Catherine, where the governor whom they had left in charge—a Frenchman, Le Sieur Simon by name—had made good use of his charge by putting the greater island in an excellent state of defence, while he had cultivated the lesser one to such an extent that he was able to re-victual the fleet. Mansvelt was very much bent on keeping these islands, as they were conveniently situated for piracy, and easily defended. He laid the matter before the Governor of Jamaica, who rejected his plans. He then proceeded to Tortuga for volunteers to man the island with supplies, but here death put an end to his wicked life, leaving all things in suspense. The new Governor of Costa Rica did not approve of the islands remaining in the hands of pirates; but before taking action offered easy terms to Le Sieur Simon, promising him good reward should he give them up. The latter, after some small show of resistance, delivered them up to Spain.

Captain Morgan was now entirely in command of the pirate fleet, and had under his command no less than 700 men, part English and part French, on twelve vessels. A council was called, and some recommended an attempt on the City of Havannah, while others, who had been prisoners there, thought it useless to try any such scheme with less than 1,500 men. They finally resolved to attack the town of El Puerto del Principe, an inland town of Cuba, tolerably near the coast, where the inhabitants were wealthy, and had never yet been attacked by the pirates. They made sail, steering toward the coast nearest that town. At a bay named El Puerto del Santa Maria, a Spanish prisoner on

board the fleet swam ashore by night, and succeeded in reaching the threatened town, where he gave the inhabitants information of the coming attack, and they, of course, immediately began to hide and carry away their riches and movables. The governor immediately enrolled all the males of the town, about 800, and posted part of them in a position where by necessity the pirates must pass, while he made other preparations for hindering them, by cutting down trees and laying them across the roads. He placed ambuscade parties with cannon to harass them on their march.

[31] “Captain Morgan with his men now on the march found the avenues to the town impassable; hereupon they took their way through the wood, traversing it with great difficulty, whereby they escaped divers ambuscades; at last they came to the place from its figure called by the Spaniards La Savanna, or the Sheet. The governor seeing them come, detached a troop of horse to charge them in the front, thinking to disperse them, and to pursue them with his main body; but this design succeeded not, for the pirates marched in very good order at the sound of their drums, and with flying colours. Coming near the horse, they drew into a semicircle, and so advanced towards the Spaniards, who charged them vehemently for a while; but the pirates being very dexterous at their arms, and their governor and many of their companions being killed, they retreated towards the wood, to save themselves with more advantage; but before they could reach it most of them were killed. Thus they left the victory to these new-come enemies, who had no considerable loss of men in the battle, and but very few wounded. The skirmish lasted four hours; after which they entered the town, not without very great resistance of such as were within, who defended themselves as long as possible, and many seeing the enemy in the town shut themselves up in their own houses and thence made several shots upon the pirates, who therefore threatened them, saying, ‘If you surrender not voluntarily, you shall soon see the town in a flame,

and your wives and children torn in pieces before your faces.’ Upon these menaces, the Spaniards submitted to the discretion of the pirates, believing they could not continue there long.”

As soon as the pirates had captured the town, they imprisoned all the Spaniards—men, women, children, and slaves—in several churches, and pillaged all the goods they could find. They then searched the country round about, bringing in daily prisoners, goods, and provision. “With this they fell to making great cheer, after their old custom, without remembering the poor prisoners, whom they let starve in the churches, though they tormented them daily and inhumanly to make them confess where they had hid their goods, money, &c., though little or nothing was left them; not sparing the women and children; giving them nothing to eat, whereby the greater part perished.

“Pillage and provisions growing scarce, they thought convenient to depart and seek new fortunes in other places. They told the prisoners they should find money to ransom themselves, or else they should all be transported to Jamaica; and beside, if they did not pay a second ransom for the town, they would burn every house to the ground.” The Spaniards hereupon nominated among themselves four fellow-prisoners to go and seek for the above-named contributions; but the pirates, to the intent they should return presently with those ransoms, tormented several cruelly in their presence before they departed. After a few days the Spaniards returned, telling Captain Morgan, “We have run up and down and searched all the neighbouring woods and places we most suspected, and yet have not been able to find any of our own party, nor consequently any fruit of our embassy; but if you are pleased to have a little longer patience with us, we shall certainly cause all that you demand within fifteen days;” which Captain Morgan granted. But not long after, there came into the town seven or eight pirates who had been ranging in the woods and fields, and got considerable booty. These brought, amongst other prisoners, a negro, whom they had taken with

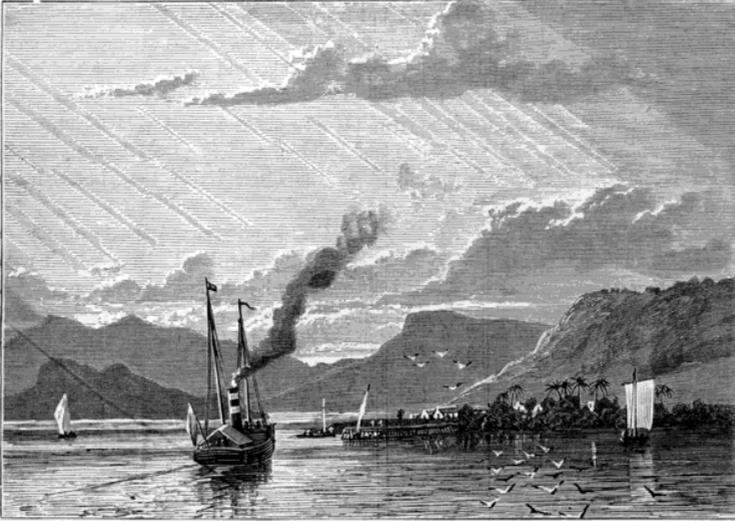
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letters. Captain Morgan having perused them, found they were from the Governor of Santa Iago, being written to some of the prisoners, wherein he told them:—"They should not make too much haste to pay any ransom for their town or persons or any other pretext; but, on the contrary, they should put off the pirates as well as they could with excuses and delays, expecting to be relieved by him in a short time, when they would certainly come to their aid." Upon this intelligence, Captain Morgan ordered all their plunder to be carried aboard; and withal, he told the Spaniards that the very next day they should pay their ransoms, for he would not wait a moment longer, but reduce the whole town to ashes if they failed of the sum he demanded.

"With this intimation Captain Morgan made no mention of the letters he had intercepted. They answered—"That it was impossible for them to give such a sum of money in so short a space of time, seeing their fellow-townsmen were not to be found in all the country thereabouts." Captain Morgan knew full well their intentions, but thought it not convenient to stay there any longer, demanding only of them 500 oxen or cows, with sufficient salt to powder them, with this condition, that they should carry them on board his ships. Thus he departed with all his men, taking with him only six of the principal prisoners as pledges. Next day the Spaniards brought the cattle and salt to the ships, and required the prisoners; but Captain Morgan refused to deliver them till they had helped his men to kill and salt the beeves. This was performed in great haste, he not caring to stay there any longer, lest he should be surprised; and having received all on board, he liberated the hostages."

Captain Morgan was hardly to be disconcerted by any defection on the part of his late allies, and he therefore immediately rallied his remaining men, who swore to stick by him to death. Another pirate captain joined him, and in a few days he had collected a fleet of nine sail, manned by four hundred and sixty fighting men. Morgan immediately steered

for the coast of Costa Rica, keeping his intended plan of action [33] closely locked within his own bosom.



ON THE COAST OF COSTA RICA.

The land was now in sight, and a council of war was called. Morgan informed his company that he intended to plunder Puerto Bello by night, and put the whole city to the sack. He recalled to them the fact that he had kept the matter entirely secret, and that his victims could therefore have had no notice. Some thought that they had not a sufficient number of men to successfully attack the town. Morgan's answer was characteristic. "If our numbers are small," said he, "our hearts are great, and the fewer persons we are, the more union, and the better shares we shall have in the spoil." The attack was settled.

The city or town of Puerto Bello was in those days one of the strongest of the Spanish main, or West Indian isles, Havannah and Carthagen a alone out-ranking it. Two forts defended the

entrance to its harbour; it had a garrison of 300 soldiers; and was inhabited by some 400 families. The merchants did not generally reside there, owing to the unhealthiness of the climate, but stopped at Panama, and brought their commodities over at regular seasons, when the Spanish galleons or slave-ships were expected. Captain Morgan, who knew the neighbouring country thoroughly, anchored his vessels some little distance from the town to be attacked, and leaving a few men on board to bring them into port next day, proceeded with the bulk of his company in boats and canoes. About midnight they reached a place called Estera longa Lemos, where they all went on shore, and marched to the city. They had with them an Englishman who had formerly been a prisoner there, and he with three or four others contrived to seize the sentinel before he had time to give any warning. The latter was brought with his hands bound to Captain Morgan, and closely interrogated as to the strength of the place, with threats of death if he did not speak truly. Then, having gathered all the information they could, they marched up to the castle or fort near the city, and closely surrounded it. Let Esquemeling now describe to us the sequence.

“Being posted under the walls of the castle, Captain Morgan commanded the sentinel whom they had taken prisoner to speak to those within, charging them to surrender to his discretion, otherwise they should all be cut in pieces without quarter. But they, regarding none of these threats, began instantly to fire, which alarmed the city; yet, notwithstanding, though the governor and soldiers of the said city made as great resistance as could be, they were forced to surrender. Having taken the castle, they resolved to be as good as their words, putting the Spaniards to the sword, thereby to strike a terror into the rest of the city. Whereupon, having shut up all the officers and soldiers into one room, they set fire to the powder (whereof they found great quantity) and blew up the castle into the air, with all the Spaniards that were within. This done, they pursued the course

of their victory, falling upon the city, which, as yet, was not ready to receive them. Many of the inhabitants cast their precious jewels and money into wells and cisterns, or hid them in places underground, to avoid as much as possible being totally robbed. One party of the pirates, being assigned to this purpose, ran immediately to the cloisters, and took as many religious men and women<sup>5</sup> as they could find. The governor of the city, not being able to rally the citizens through their great confusion, retired to one of the castles remaining, and thence fired incessantly at the pirates; but these were not in the least negligent either to assault him or to defend themselves, so that amidst the horror of the assault they made very few shots in vain; for, aiming with great dexterity at the mouths of the guns, the Spaniards were certain to lose one or two men every time they charged each gun anew. This continued very furious from break of day till noon; yea, about this time of day the case was very dubious which party should conquer or be conquered. At last, the pirates perceiving they had lost many men, and yet advanced but little towards gaining either this or the other castles, made use of fire-balls, which they threw with their hands, designing to burn the doors of the castles; but the Spaniards from the walls let fall great quantities of stones, and earthen pots full of powder and other combustibles, which forced them to desist. Captain Morgan, seeing this generous defence made by the Spaniards, began to despair of success. Hereupon many faint and calm meditations came into his mind; neither could he determine which way to turn him in that strait. Being thus puzzled he was suddenly animated to continue the assaults by seeing English colours put forth in one of the lesser castles, then entered by his men, of whom he presently afterwards spied a troop coming to meet him, proclaiming victory with loud shouts of joy. This instantly put him on new resolutions of taking the rest of the castles, especially seeing the chiefest citizens were

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<sup>5</sup> Wherever “religious men and women” are mentioned in these old records, the meaning is priests or monks, and nuns.

fled to them, and had conveyed thither great part of their riches, with all the plate belonging to the churches and divine service.

“To this effect he ordered ten or twelve ladders to be made in all haste, so broad that three or four men at once might ascend them. These being finished, he commanded all the religious men and women whom he had taken prisoners to fix them against the walls of the castle. This he had before threatened the governor to do if he delivered not the castle, but his answer was, ‘He would never surrender himself alive.’ Captain Morgan was persuaded the governor would not employ his armed force, seeing the religious women and ecclesiastical persons exposed in front of the soldiers to the greatest danger. Thus the ladders, as I have said, were put into the hands of religious persons of both sexes, and these were forced at the head of the companies to raise and apply them to the walls; but Captain Morgan was fully deceived in his judgment, for the governor, who acted like a brave soldier in the performance of his duty, used his utmost endeavour to destroy whosoever came near the walls. The religious men and women ceased not to cry to him, and beg of him by all the saints of Heaven, to deliver the castle, and spare both his and their lives; but nothing could prevail with his obstinacy and fierceness. Thus, many of the religious men and nuns were killed before they could fix the ladders, which at last being done, though with great loss of the said religious people, the pirates mounted them in great numbers, and with not less valour, having fire-balls in their hands, and earthen pots full of powder; all which things being now at the top of the walls, they kindled and cast in among the Spaniards.

“This effort of the pirates was very great, inasmuch as the Spaniards could no longer resist nor defend the castle, which was now entered. Hereupon they all threw down their arms, and craved quarter for their lives. Only the governor would crave no mercy, but killed many of the pirates with his own hands, and not a few of his own soldiers, because they would not stand

to their arms. And though the pirates asked him if he would have quarter, yet he constantly answered, 'By no means; I would rather die as a valiant soldier than be hanged as a coward!' They endeavoured as much as they could to take him prisoner, but he defended himself so obstinately that they were forced to kill him, notwithstanding all the cries and tears of his own wife and daughter, who begged him on their knees to demand quarter and save his life."

The pirates now gave themselves up to all kinds of debauchery, some of the details of which shall not disgrace these pages. The chronicler says that at this time fifty determined men could easily have re-taken the city. The President of Panama sent a body of men to the rescue, who were met by the pirates and put to flight. He later sent a message full of threats, at which Morgan only laughed, and sent word that he would demolish the forts and burn the town unless he should immediately receive 100,000 pieces of eight (over £20,000), and it was eventually paid. The Governor or President of Panama was puzzled to learn how 400 men, without ordnance, could have taken a town so well fortified as Puerto Bello, and sent to Morgan, asking for some small patterns of his arms. The pirate captain forwarded by the messenger a pistol and some small bullets, and desired the president "to accept that slender pattern of the arms wherewith he had taken Puerto Bello, and keep them a twelvemonth; after which time he promised to come to Panama and fetch them away." The governor returned the presents, sending him back a golden ring, and desiring him not to trouble himself about Panama, as he might obtain a warmer reception than he expected. The results of this expedition comprised a quarter of a million dollars, besides merchandise in silk, linen, and cloth. The tavern-keepers, traders, and gamblers of Jamaica reaped the larger part of these enormous gains.

Morgan's next enterprise, in which he was joined by many other pirate commanders, was against the already unfortunate

city of Maracaibo. A French pirate-ship, carrying thirty-six guns, was then at Jamaica, and Morgan tried to induce the commander and his men to join them. This the French refused; whereupon he invited the captain and several of his men to dine with him, and treacherously made them prisoners.

This unjust action of Captain Morgan was followed by very swift retribution. Captain Morgan, immediately after he had taken these French prisoners, called a council to deliberate what place they should select for this new expedition. It was determined to go to the Isle of Savona, to wait for the fleet then expected from Spain, and take any of the Spanish vessels straggling from the rest. This resolution being made, they began to feast aboard the prize in expectation of their new voyage. They drank many healths and discharged many guns—common signs of mirth among the pirates. Most of the men being drunk—by what accident is not known—the ship was suddenly blown up, with 350 Englishmen, besides the French prisoners in the hold; of whom only thirty men escaped, who were in the main cabin, at some distance from the full force of the powder. Many more, it is thought, might have escaped had they not taken too much wine. The French prisoners were accused of having fired the vessel, and Morgan a little later seized their ship and crew.

“Eight days after the loss of the said ship, Captain Morgan commanded the bodies of the miserable wretches who were blown up to be searched for as they floated on the sea: not to afford them Christian burial, but for their clothes and attire; and if any had gold rings on their fingers these were cut off, leaving them exposed to the voracity of the monsters of the sea. At last they set sail for Savona, the place of their assignation. There were in all fifteen vessels, Captain Morgan commanding the biggest, of only fourteen small guns. His number of men was 960. Few days after they arrived at the Cabo de Lobos, south of Hispaniola, between Cape Tiburon and Cape Punta de Espada. Hence they could not pass, by reason of contrary winds, for three weeks, in



#### BLOWING UP OF THE FRENCH PIRATE SHIP.

spite of every effort to do so. Then Captain Morgan doubled the cape, and spied an English vessel at a distance. Having spoken to her, they found she came from England, and bought of her, for ready money, some provisions they wanted.

“Captain Morgan proceeded on his voyage till he came to the port of Ocoa; here he landed some men, sending them into the woods to seek water and provisions, the better to spare such as he had already on board. They killed many beasts, and among others some horses. But the Spaniards, not well satisfied at their hunting, laid a stratagem for them, ordering three or four hundred men to come from Santo Domingo, not far distant, and desiring them to hunt in all the parts thereabout near the sea, that so if the pirates should return they might find no subsistence. Within few days the pirates returned to hunt, but finding nothing to kill, a party of about fifty straggled farther on into the woods. The Spaniards, who watched all their motions, gathered a great herd of cows, and set two or three men to keep them. The pirates, having spied them, killed a sufficient number; and though the

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Spaniards could see them at a distance, yet they could not hinder them at present; but as soon as they attempted to carry them away they set upon them furiously, crying—‘Mata, mata!’ which is, ‘Kill, kill!’ Thus the pirates were compelled to quit the prey, and retreat to their ships; but they did it in good order, retiring by degrees, and when they had opportunity discharging full volleys on the Spaniards, killing many of their enemies, though with some loss.

“The Spaniards, seeing their damage, endeavoured to save themselves by flight and carry off their dead and wounded companions. The pirates perceiving them flee would not content themselves with what hurt they had already done, but pursued them speedily into the woods, and killed the greatest part of those that remained. Next day Captain Morgan, extremely offended at what had passed, went himself, with 200 men, into the woods to seek for the rest of the Spaniards, but finding nobody, he revenged himself on the houses of the poor and miserable rustics that inhabited those scattering fields and woods, of which he burnt a great number; with this he returned to his ship, somewhat more satisfied in his mind for having done some considerable damage to the enemy, which was always his most ardent desire.”

Captain Morgan having waited impatiently for some of his ships which had not yet joined company, was recommended by a French captain who had served with Lolonois to make an attempt with his present forces—eight ships and about 500 men—on Maracaibo. The Spaniards had built another fort since the action with Lolonois, and when the pirates arrived gave them a very warm reception, which lasted till evening. In the obscurity of the night Morgan and his men crept up to the fort, when they found that the Spaniards had deserted it. They had left, however, a train of powder with match burning, with the intention of playing Guy Fawkes with the pirates, and had not Morgan discovered it in time they would undoubtedly have suffered great loss. The freebooters found a considerable amount of powder and muskets, with which

they furnished the fleet, and they spiked sixteen cannons. Next day they proceeded in boats and canoes to the town, which, with an adjacent fort, was found deserted.

“As soon as they had entered the town the pirates searched every corner, to see if they could find any people who were hid who might offend them unawares; not finding anybody, every party, as they came out of their several ships, chose what several houses they pleased. The church was deputed for the common corps du guard, where they lived, after their military manner, very insolently. Next day after they sent a troop of 100 men to seek for the inhabitants and their goods. These returned next day, bringing with them thirty persons—men, women, and children—and fifty mules laden with good merchandise. All these miserable people were put to the rack, to make them confess where the rest of the inhabitants were and their goods. Among other tortures, one was to stretch their limbs with cords and then to beat them with sticks and other instruments. Others had burning matches placed between their fingers, which were thus burnt alive. Others had slender cords or matches placed about their heads till their eyes burst out. Those who would not confess, or had nothing to declare, died under the hands of those villains. These tortures and racks continued for three whole weeks, in which time they sent out daily parties to seek for more people to torment and rob, they never returning without booty and new riches.

“Captain Morgan having now gotten into his hands about a hundred of the chief families, with all their goods, at last resolved for Gibraltar, as Lolonois had done before. With this design he equipped his fleet, providing it sufficiently with all necessaries. He put likewise on board all the prisoners, and weighing anchor, set sail with resolution to hazard a battle. They had sent before some prisoners to Gibraltar to require the inhabitants to surrender, otherwise Captain Morgan would put them all to the sword without any quarter. Arriving before Gibraltar, the inhabitants received him with continued shooting [38]

of great cannon bullets; but the pirates, instead of fainting hereat, ceased not to encourage one another, saying—‘We must make one meal upon bitter things before we come to taste the sweetness of the sugar this place affords.’ ”

Next day, early in the morning, they landed all their men, and being guided by the Frenchman beforenamed, they marched towards the town, not by the ordinary way, but crossing through woods, which way the Spaniards did not expect they would have come, for at the beginning of their journey they pretended to march the next and open way to the town, hereby to deceive the Spaniards; “but these remembering full well what Lolonois had done but two years before, thought it not safe to expect a second brunt, and hereupon all fled out of the town as fast as they could, carrying all their goods and riches, as also all their powder, and having nailed all the great guns; so as the pirates found not one person in the whole city but one poor innocent man who was born a fool. This man they asked whither the inhabitants had fled, and where they had hid their goods. To all which questions and the like he constantly answered—‘I know nothing, I know nothing!’ but they presently put him to the rack, and tortured him with cords, which torments forced him to cry out—‘Do not torture me any more, but come with me and I will show you my goods and my riches!’ They were persuaded, it seems, he was some rich person disguised under those clothes so poor and that innocent tongue; so they went along with him, and he conducted them to a poor miserable cottage, wherein he had a few earthen dishes and other things of no value, and three pieces of eight, concealed with some other trumpery under ground. Then they asked him his name, and he readily answered, ‘My name is Don Sebastian Sanchez, and I am brother unto the Governor of Maracaibo.’ This foolish answer, it must be conceived, these inhuman wretches took for truth; for no sooner had they heard it but they put him again upon the rack, lifting him up on high with cords, and tying large weights to his feet and neck. Besides

which they burnt him alive, applying palm-leaves burning to his face.” They sent out parties, and captured some prisoners, several of whom were tortured or killed. Among others there was a Portuguese, who was falsely reported by a negro to be very rich. This man was commanded to produce his riches. His answer was that he had no more than 100 pieces of eight in the world, and these had been stolen from him two days before by his servant. The pirates would not believe him, but dragged him to a rack without any regard to his age of sixty years, and stretched him with cords, breaking both his arms behind his shoulders. “This cruelty went not alone, for he not being able or willing to make any other declaration, they put him to another sort of torment more barbarous; they tied him with small cords by his two thumbs and great toes to four stakes fixed in the ground at a convenient distance, the whole weight of his body hanging by these cords. Not satisfied yet with their cruel torture, they took a stone of above 200 pounds and laid it on his belly, as if they intended to press him to death; they also kindled palm-leaves and applied the flame to the face of this unfortunate Portuguese, burning with them the whole skin, beard, and hair. At last, seeing that neither with these tortures nor others they could get anything out of him, they untied the cords, and carried him, half-dead, to the church, where was their corps du guard; here they tied him anew to one of the pillars thereof, leaving him in that condition without giving him either to eat or drink, unless very sparingly and so little that would scarce sustain life, for some days. Four or five being past, he desired one of the prisoners might come to him, by whose means he promised he would endeavour to raise some money to satisfy their demands. The prisoner whom he desired was brought to him, and he ordered him to promise the pirates 500 pieces of eight for his ransom; but they were deaf and obstinate at such a small sum, and instead of accepting it beat him cruelly with cudgels, saying, ‘Old fellow, instead of 500, 5,000 pieces of eight; otherwise you shall here end your life.’ [39]

Finally, after a thousand protestations that he was but a miserable man, and kept a poor tavern for his living, he agreed with them for 1,000 pieces of eight. These he raised, and having paid them, got his liberty, though so horribly maimed, that it is scarce to be believed he could survive many weeks.” Morgan proceeded later to Gibraltar, and his proceedings there are but a repetition of his former acts. And yet in searching the interior he and some of his men were at one time in such straits that a couple of score or so of Spaniards could have annihilated them.

And now they returned to Maracaibo, where an unpleasant surprise awaited them. They learned from a poor old Spaniard that three large Spanish ships had arrived off the bar, and were awaiting the exit of the pirates; and, further, that the castle at the entrance had been repaired, well provided with guns and ammunition, and thoroughly manned. Morgan sent a boat down to find out how far this was true, and the report was that its crew had ventured so near that they were in great danger of being shot; that there were three great ships, mounting respectively forty, thirty, and twenty-four guns. Morgan disguised the apprehension he must have felt, and sent a message, couched in his usual style of braggadocia, demanding a heavy ransom for not putting the city of Maracaibo to the flames. Here follows the answer of the Spanish Admiral:—

*“The letter of Don Alonso del Campo y Espinosa, Admiral of the Spanish Fleet, to Captain Morgan, Commander of the Pirates:—*

“Having understood by all our friends and neighbours the unexpected news that you have dared to attempt and commit hostilities in the countries, titles, towns, and villages belonging to the dominions of his Catholic Majesty, my Sovereign Lord and Master, I let you understand by these lines that I am come to

this place, according to my obligation, near that castle which you took out of the hands of a parcel of cowards, where I have put things into a very good posture of defence, and mounted again the artillery which you nailed and dismounted. My intent is to dispute with you your passage out of the lake, and follow and pursue you everywhere, to the end you may see the performance of my duty. Notwithstanding, if you be contented to surrender with humility all that you have taken, together with the slaves and all other prisoners, I will let you freely pass, without trouble or molestation, on condition that you retire home presently to your own country. But if you make any resistance or opposition [40] to what I offer you, I assure you I will command boats to come from Caraccas, wherein I will put my troops, and coming to Maracaibo, will put you every man to the sword. This is my last and absolute resolution. Be prudent, therefore, and do not abuse my bounty with ingratitude. I have with me very good soldiers, who desire nothing more ardently than to revenge on you and your people all the cruelties and base infamous actions you have committed upon the Spanish nation in America. Dated on board the royal ship named the *Magdalen*, lying at anchor at the entry of the lake of Maracaibo, the 24th April, 1669.

“DON ALONSO DEL CAMPO Y ESPINOSA.”

## CHAPTER IV.

THE PIRATES AND BUCANIERS (*continued*).



### MORGAN'S ATTACK ON MARACAIBO.

Attack resolved—The Fire-ship—Morgan passes the Castle—Off for St. Catherine's—Given up by a Stratagem—St. Catherine's an Easy Prey—Power of Fire—Thirty in Three Hundred Saved—The March on Panama—A Pirate Band of Twelve Hundred—Sufferings on the Way—A Pipe for Supper—Leather and Cold Water—Panama at last—The First Encounter—Resolute Fighting—Wild Bulls in Warfare—Victory for the Pirates—Ruthless Destruction of Property—Cruelty to Prisoners—Searching for Treasure—Dissatisfaction at the Dividend—The last of Morgan.

On receipt of the captain's letter Morgan called his men together and asked them whether they were going to fight or surrender. They answered unanimously that they would fight to the last drop of blood rather than surrender so easily the booty they had obtained with so much danger. "Among the rest one said to Captain Morgan, 'Take you care for the rest, and I will undertake to destroy the biggest of those ships with only twelve men; the manner shall be by making a *brulot*, or fire-ship, of that vessel

we took in the river of Gibraltar, which, to the intent she may not be known for a fire-ship, we will fill her decks with logs of wood, standing with hats and montera caps, to deceive their sight with the representation of men. The same we will do at the port-holes that serve for the guns, which shall be filled with counterfeit cannon. At the stern we will hang out English colours, and persuade the enemy she is one of our best men-of-war going to fight them.' This proposition was approved. Attempts were afterwards made to compromise with Don Alonso, but he would not listen to them, and sent them a peremptory message, which, simply translated, meant that they must give in, or give up. [41]

“No sooner had Captain Morgan received this message from Don Alonso than he put all things in order to fight, resolving to get out of the lake by main force, without surrendering anything. First, he commanded all the slaves and prisoners to be tied and guarded very well, and gathered all the pitch, tar, and brimstone they could find in the whole town for the fire-ship above-mentioned. Then they made several inventions of powder and brimstone with palm-leaves well anointed with tar. They covered very well their counterfeit cannon, laying under every piece many pounds of powder; besides, they cut down many outworks of the ship, that the powder might exert its strength the better; breaking open also new port-holes, where, instead of guns, they placed little drums used by the negroes. Finally, the decks were handsomely beset with many pieces of wood, dressed up like men, with hats or monteras, and armed with swords, muskets, and bandeleers.” [42]

The fire-ship being fitted, they prepared to proceed to the entry of the port. All the prisoners were put into one great boat, and in another all the women were placed, with the plate, jewels, and other rich things; into others they put the bales of goods, merchandise, and bulky articles. Each of these boats had twelve armed men aboard; the *brulot* had orders to go before the rest of the vessels, and presently to fall foul of the great ship.



CAPTAIN HENRY MORGAN.

(From Captain C. Johnson's "Lives of Famous Highwaymen,  
Pirates, &c.")

All things being ready, Captain Morgan exacted an oath of his comrades, making them promise to defend themselves to the last drop of blood without demanding quarter; promising, withal, that whoever behaved himself thus should be well rewarded.

With this resolution they set sail to meet the Spaniards. On April 30th, 1669, they found the Spanish fleet riding at anchor in the middle of the entry of the lake. "Captain Morgan, it being now late and almost dark, commanded all his vessels to an anchor, designing to fight even all night if they forced him to it. He ordered a careful watch to be kept aboard every vessel till morning, they being almost within shot, as well as within sight, of the enemy. The day dawning, they weighed anchor and sailed again, steering directly towards the Spaniards, who, seeing them move, did instantly the same. The fire-ship, sailing before the rest, fell presently upon the great ship and grappled her, which the Spaniards (too late) perceiving to be a fire-ship, they attempted to put her off, but in vain; for the flame seizing her timber and tackling, soon consumed all the stern, the fore-part sinking into the sea, where she perished. The second Spanish ship perceiving the *Admiral* to burn, not by accident, but by industry of the enemy, escaped towards the castle, where the Spaniards themselves sunk her, choosing to lose their ship rather than to fall into the hands of those pirates. The third, having no opportunity to escape, was taken by the pirates."

The pirates were, we can well believe, rejoiced at this easy victory, and they now attempted to take the castle. This was thoroughly well garrisoned and provided, whereas they had nothing but muskets and a few hand grenades. They consequently failed; the Spaniards gave them volley after volley, and they at last retired, with a loss of thirty killed and as many wounded. The attack was not renewed. From a pilot who was taken prisoner the following day Captain Morgan learned that the expedition, which had been sent out by the Supreme Council of State in Spain, consisted of six well-equipped men-of-war, with instructions to

root out the English pirates. It had been organised in Spain, upon the receipt of the news of the loss of Puerto Bello and other places, after fruitless representations had been made to the King of England, who simply disclaimed any connivance with the pirates. Two of the principal vessels had returned to Spain, being considered too large for the enterprise, and one had been lost in a gale. This pilot entered the service of Captain Morgan, and informed him that in the ship which was sunk there was a great quantity of treasure, and that he could see for himself that the Spaniards, in boats, were endeavouring to rescue some of it. Morgan again sent a message to the admiral, who had escaped to the castle, demanding a ransom, or he would fire Maracaibo. This was at first, of course, indignantly refused, and the pirate chief renewed his threats, when the Spanish settlers, down-hearted at their constant ill-fortune, consented to pay the sum of 20,000 pieces and 500 head of cattle, though the admiral, Don Alonso, sternly objected.

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Morgan, in spite of his successes, rather feared passing the castle at the entrance of the lake, and he endeavoured, by means of the prisoners he held, to secure his escape, by sending some of them to Don Alonso with a promise to give them all up if he would not fire, or hang them if he did. A deputation of prisoners waited on the admiral, urging his consent; but Don Alonso told them, "If you had been as loyal to your king in hindering the entry of these pirates as I shall do their going out, you had never caused these troubles, neither to yourselves nor to our whole nation, which hath suffered so much through your pusillanimity. In a word, I shall never grant your request, but shall endeavour to maintain that respect which is due to my king according to my duty." Thus the poor wretched prisoners had to return to Morgan, and report the failure of their mission. His reply was, in his usual vein, that he would find the means of accomplishing his object in spite of Don Alonso.

The stratagem employed was as follows:—During the day that

they hoped to escape after dark they put a number of their men in canoes, and rowed towards the shore, as if they intended to land. There they hid themselves among the trees and by lying down in the boats. Then the canoes returned to the ships, two or three men rowing in each, and the rest remaining at the bottom concealed. Thus much only could be observed from the castle, and the ruse was repeated several times, the impression given being that the pirates intended to scale the walls by night from the land. This caused the Spaniards to place most of their greater guns on the land side, with the principal part of the garrison, leaving the side towards the sea almost destitute of defence. Night being come they weighed anchor, and by moonlight, without setting sail, the tide gently took them towards the entrance near the castle. Having arrived off the latter, they spread their sails with all speed. The Spaniards, perceiving this, brought their guns over to the sea side, but the pirates, being favoured by this loss of time and also with a good breeze, escaped almost scatheless. Just as they were departing, Morgan ironically saluted the castle with a volley from seven of his largest guns.

His next expedition, in which he was joined by many other pirates, assembled on the south side of Tortuga on October the 24th, 1670, when a council of ways and means was convened, the principal lack being in provisions. This, however, was to them a small matter, and they resolved to rob and rifle the towns and settlements of the mainland. Four vessels were despatched on this errand to the River de la Hacha, where a village was situated which was usually well provided with corn. Meanwhile, another party was despatched into the woods, and the hunters were very successful. The rest remained in the ships to clean and re-fit them. The river expedition was becalmed off the coast, which gave the Spaniards ashore time to hide and take away their goods. A large ship from Carthagena was lying in the river, laden with maize (Indian corn), ready to depart. The pirates soon made short work of this vessel, the crew of which was easily



CAPTAIN MORGAN'S ESCAPE FROM MARACAIBO.

mastered. The Spaniards peppered them from a battery when they landed, but the freebooters drove them back to a fortified village, whence, after some little resistance, the former were driven into the woods. They captured, tortured, and robbed a number of these unfortunate settlers, who at length were glad to get rid of them by paying a ransom of 4,000 bushels of maize. Morgan had begun to despair of their return, when they arrived with the captured ship and an enormous supply of the needed corn.

Captain Morgan having divided the maize, and the flesh which the hunters brought in, among the ships according to their number of men, he departed, having inspected beforehand every ship. "Thus he set sail, and stood for Cape Tiburon, where he resolved to determine what enterprise he should take in hand. No sooner were they arrived, but they met some other ships newly come to join them from Jamaica; so that now their fleet consisted of thirty-seven ships, wherein were 2,000 fighting men, beside mariners and boys.

"Captain Morgan having such a number of ships, divided the whole fleet into two squadrons, constituting a Vice-Admiral and other officers of the second squadron distinct from the first. To these he gave letters patent, or commissions to act all manner of hostilities against the Spanish nation, and take of them what ships they could, either abroad at sea or in the harbours, as if they were open and declared enemies (as he termed it) of the King of England, his pretended master. This done, he called all his captains and other officers together, and caused them to sign some articles of agreement betwixt them, and in the name of all. Herein it was stipulated that he should have the hundredth part of all that was gotten to himself; that every captain should draw the shares of eight men for the expenses of his ship besides his own. To the surgeon, besides his pay, 200 pieces of eight for his chest of medicaments. To every carpenter, above his salary, 100 pieces of eight. The rewards were settled in this voyage much

higher than before: as, for the loss of both hands, 1,800 pieces of eight, or eighteen slaves; for one leg, whether right or left, 600 pieces of eight, or six slaves; for a hand as much as for a leg; and for the loss of an eye 100 pieces of eight or one slave. Lastly, to him that in any battle should signalise himself, either by entering first any castle, or taking down the Spanish colours and setting up the English, they allotted fifty pieces of eight for a reward. All which extraordinary salaries and rewards to be paid out of the first spoil they should take, as every one should occur to be either rewarded or paid.” The first captain who should take a Spanish vessel was to receive the tenth part of its value. One of three cities was to be attacked—Carthagena, Panama, or Vera Cruz; and after a council had been held the lot fell on Panama. They resolved to first visit the Isle of St. Catherine, there to obtain guides for the enterprise.

As soon as Captain Morgan approached the island he sent one of his best sailing vessels to examine the entrance of the river, and see whether there were any foreign ships there, and next day they anchored in a neighbouring bay, where the Spaniards had built a battery, which made no resistance. Morgan landed about 1,000 men, and marched them through the woods, where they discovered another deserted battery, the Spaniards having retired to the smaller and adjacent island, which was thoroughly fortified. As soon as the pirates got in range the Spaniards opened a furious fire upon them, and the former were that day compelled to retreat to a hungry camp, as they had come utterly unprovided, while about midnight the rain somewhat damped their ardour. They passed a miserable and shelterless night; nor did the weather improve next day, when they found in the fields an old lean and diseased horse, which they killed and ate, but this was not anything like sufficient to satisfy the cravings of their hunger, as it afforded only a morsel each for a part of them, some being compelled to go entirely without. But nothing could daunt Morgan, and he had the audacity to send a canoe with a flag of

truce to the Spanish governor, telling him that he would put the Spaniards to the sword, without quarter, if they did not instantly submit.

In the afternoon the canoe returned with this answer:—"That the governor desired two hours' time to deliberate with his officers about it, which having passed he would give his positive answer." This time elapsed, the governor sent two canoes with white colours, having on board two persons to treat with Captain Morgan; but, before they landed, they demanded of the pirates two men as hostages. These were readily granted by Captain Morgan, who delivered up two of his captains for a pledge of the security required. The Spaniards then announced that they had resolved to deliver up the island, not being provided with sufficient forces to defend it against a fleet. Morgan was asked to use a stratagem of war, for the better saving of their credit, which was as follows:—That he would come with his troops by night to the bridge that joined the smaller island to the principal one, and there attack the fort of St. Jerome; that at the same time all his fleet would draw near the castle of Santa Teresa and attack it by land, landing in the meantime more troops near the battery of St. Matthew; that these troops being landed, should by this means intercept the governor as he endeavoured to pass to St. Jerome's fort, and then take him prisoner, making pretence as if they had forced him to deliver the castle, and that he would lead the English into it under colour of being his own troops. That on both sides there should be continual firing carried on, but without bullets, or at least that they should be fired only into the air, so that no side might be hurt. That thus having obtained two such considerable forts, the chiefest of the isle, he need not take care for the rest, which must fall of course into his hands.

These propositions were granted by Captain Morgan, and, soon after, he commanded the whole fleet to enter the port, and his men to be ready to assault that night the Castle of St. Jerome. Thus the false battle began, with incessant firing from both the

castles against the ships, but without bullets, as was agreed. Then the pirates landed, and assaulted the lesser island by night, which they took, with both the fortresses, forcing the Spaniards, in appearance, to fly to the church.

St. Catherine's thus became an easy prey to Morgan and his followers, and the first few days were simply spent in riotous feasting. The prisoners which they had taken numbered 459 souls; and besides all kinds of plunder they secured no less than thirty thousand pounds of powder, together with large quantities of other ammunition. The fortresses were, with one exception, demolished.

[47] Morgan's next enterprise was against the important city of Panama. He took with him 1,200 men, five boats laden with artillery, and thirty-two canoes. But the Chagres river of the time was very like that of to-day—a shallow stream, except in the freshet season—and after a few days of tedious progress, they left it, preferring to continue their journey by land. On this trip a pipe of tobacco was the only supper that many of them could obtain, while a piece of leather, washed down by a draught of muddy water, formed, by comparison, a splendid meal.

On the ninth day of that tedious journey, Captain Morgan marched on while the fresh air of the morning lasted, a common practice in very hot countries. The way was now more difficult than before; but after two hours' march they observed some Spaniards in the distance, who watched their motions. They endeavoured to catch some of them, but could not, as they would suddenly disappear, and hide themselves in caves among the rocks, unknown to the pirates. At last, ascending a high hill, the latter saw in the distance the blue waters of the Pacific, then known as the South Sea. This happy sight, as it seemed the end of their labours, caused great joy among them; they could see, also, one ship and six boats, which were sailing from Panama, and proceeded to the Islands of Torvoga and Tavogilla; then they came to a valley, where they found cattle in abundance, of which

they killed a number. There, while some killed and flayed horses, cows, bulls, and asses, others kindled fires, and got wood to roast them; then cutting the flesh into convenient pieces, or gobbets, they threw them into the fire, and, half burnt or roasted, they devoured them with greedy appetite. Such was their hunger, they behaved as though they were rather cannibals than Europeans, “the blood many times running down from their beards to their waists.”

A little while after they came in sight of the highest steeple in Panama; and one can imagine their satisfaction. All their trumpets were sounded, and drums beat. Then they pitched their camp for that night; the whole army waiting with impatience for the morning, when they intended to attack the city. During the evening fifty horse appeared, who came out of the city on the noise of the drums and trumpets, to observe the enemy’s position, and came almost within musket-shot of the army. Those on horseback hallooed to the pirates, and threatened them, saying, “Perros! nos veremos!”—that is, “Ye dogs! we shall meet ye!” They then returned to the city, except only seven or eight horsemen, who hovered about to watch the pirates. “Immediately after the city fired, and ceased not to play their biggest guns all night long against the camp, but with little or no harm to the pirates, whom they could not easily reach. Now also the 200 Spaniards, whom the pirates had seen in the afternoon, appeared again, making a show of blocking up the passages, that no pirates might escape their hands. But the pirates, though in a manner besieged, instead of fearing their blockades, as soon as they had placed sentinels about their camp, opened their satchels, and, without any napkins or plates, fell to eating very heartily the pieces of bulls’ and horses’ flesh which they had reserved since noon. This done they laid themselves down to sleep on the grass, with great repose and satisfaction, expecting only with impatience the dawning of the next day.

“The tenth day, betimes in the morning, they put all their

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men in order, and, with drums and trumpets sounding, marched directly towards the city; but one of the guides directed Captain Morgan not to take the common highway, lest they should find in it many ambuscades. He took his advice, and chose another way through the wood, though very irksome and difficult. The Spaniards, perceiving the pirates had taken another way they scarce had thought of, were compelled to leave their barricades and batteries, and come out to meet them. The Governor of Panama put his forces in order, consisting of two squadrons, four regiments of foot, and a large number of wild bulls, which were driven by a large number of Indians, with some negroes and others to help them.”

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The pirates, now upon their march, came to the top of a low hill, whence they had a prospect of the city and champaign country underneath. Here they found the forces of the people of Panama in battle array to be so numerous that they were rather alarmed. Much doubting the fortunes of the day, most of them wished themselves at home, or at least free from the obligation of fighting at that moment, but it was obvious that they must either fight resolutely or die; for no quarter could be expected from an enemy on whom they had committed so many cruelties. They divided themselves into three battalions, sending in advance two hundred bucaniers, who were good shots. Descending the hill they marched directly towards the Spaniards, who waited for their coming. As soon as they approached, the Spaniards began to shout and cry, “Viva el Roy!” (“God save the King!”) and immediately their horse moved against the pirates; but the fields being full of quagmires, soft under foot, they could not wheel about as they desired. The two hundred bucaniers who went before, each putting one knee to the ground, began the battle briskly with a full volley of shot; the Spaniards defended themselves courageously, doing all they could to disorder the enemy. Their infantry endeavoured to second the cavalry, but were constrained by the pirates to leave

them. Finding themselves baffled, they attempted to drive a number of half-wild bulls against them behind, to put them into disorder; but the cattle ran away frightened with the noise of the battle; some few broke through the English companies, and only tore the colours in pieces, while the bucaniers shot every one of them dead.

The battle having continued two hours, the greater part of the Spanish horse was routed, and almost all killed; the rest fled, which the foot seeing, and finding that they could not possibly prevail, they discharged the shot they had in their muskets, and throwing them down, fled away, every one as he could. The pirates could not follow them, being too much harassed and wearied with their long journey. Many, not being able to fly whither they desired, hid themselves temporarily among the shrubs of the sea-side, but very unfortunately, for most of them being found by the pirates were instantly killed, without any quarter. Some priests were brought prisoners before Captain Morgan, but he was deaf to their cries, and commanded them all to be pistoled, which was done. Soon after they brought a captain to him, whom he examined very strictly as to the forces of Panama. He answered, their whole strength consisted in four hundred horse, twenty-four companies of foot, each of one hundred men complete; sixty Indians and some negroes, who were to drive two thousand wild bulls upon the English, and thus, by breaking their files, put them into a total disorder; besides, that in the city they had made trenches and raised batteries in several places; and that at the entry of the highway leading to the city, they had built a fort mounted with eight great brass guns, defended by fifty men. The pirates were now, however, both elated by their successes and furious at their losses, and that same day the city fell completely into their hands. Strict injunctions were given to the freebooters not to even taste the wine they found, as the captain feared that a considerable amount of debauchery must ensue after the privations they had endured.

He gave out, however, that he had been informed that the wine was poisoned. Captain Morgan, as soon as he had placed the necessary guards, commanded twenty-five men to seize a large boat, which had stuck in the mud of the port, for want of water, at a low tide. The same day, about noon, he fired privately several great edifices of the city, nobody knowing who was the author of the outrage; the fire increased so that before night the greater part of the city was in flames. Captain Morgan pretended that the Spaniards had done it, finding that his own people blamed him for the action. Many of the Spaniards, and some of the pirates, did what they could either to quench the flames, or, by blowing up houses with gunpowder, and pulling down others, to stop it, but almost in vain, for in less than half an hour it consumed a whole street. All the houses of the city were then built of cedar.



BURNING OF PANAMA.

Next day Captain Morgan despatched away two troops, of 150 men each, to seek for the inhabitants who had escaped. Above 200 prisoners, men, women, and slaves, were taken. Three other boats were also taken. But all these prizes they would willingly have given for one galleon, which miraculously escaped, richly laden with the king's plate, jewels, and other precious goods of the best and richest merchants of Panama; a number of nuns also had embarked with them all the ornaments of their church, consisting of gold, plate, and other things of great value. "The strength of this galleon was inconsiderable, having only seven guns and ten or twelve muskets, and very ill provided with victuals, necessaries, and fresh water." They subsequently took a tolerably rich prize, having on board 20,000 dollars in coin. [50]

February 24th, 1671, Captain Morgan departed from Panama, or rather from the place where Panama had once stood.<sup>6</sup> The spoils included 175 beasts of burden, laden with silver and gold, besides about 600 prisoners, men, women, children, and slaves.

When the march began, the cries and shrieks of the unfortunate prisoners were renewed, which did not worry Captain Morgan. They marched in the same order as before, one party of the pirates in the van, the prisoners in the middle, and the rest of the pirates in the rear, by whom the miserable Spaniards were abused, punched, and thrust in their backs and sides, to make them walk faster. A beautiful and virtuous lady, the wife of a merchant, was led prisoner by herself, between two pirates. Her lamentations pierced the skies, seeing herself carried away into captivity, often crying to the pirates, and telling them "that she had given orders to two religious persons, in whom she had relied, to go to a certain place, and fetch so much as her ransom did amount to; that they had promised faithfully to do it, but having obtained the money, instead of bringing it to her, they had employed it another way, to ransom some of their own

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<sup>6</sup> The city site was almost immediately afterwards moved to a spot, four miles off, where the present Panama stands to-day.

and particular friends.” This Captain Morgan found to be true, and he gave the lady her liberty; otherwise he had designed to transport her to Jamaica. But he detained the monks as prisoners in her place, using them according to their deserts. Many of the prisoners ransomed themselves later, while others were taken to Jamaica and sold. About half-way across the Isthmus Morgan had his men searched, going through the form himself. This was to see whether any one had secreted valuables for his own use. The French pirates of Morgan’s expedition took great offence at this, but they were forced to submit. At Chagres the dividend was made, and there was a considerable amount of dissatisfaction, his own companions telling him to his face that he had reserved the best jewels for himself. It appears likely that he had done so, and at all events, at this period he suddenly sailed away from the larger part of his pirate-associates, and left them in the lurch. Indeed, afterwards, some of them suffered great privations before they reached the common rendezvous in Jamaica.

Many of Morgan’s former associates vowed to murder him if they could catch him, believing that he had enriched himself greatly at their expense. He, for the nonce, settled in Jamaica, and married the daughter of a wealthy man. Long after this the pirates sought means to punish him, and hearing that he intended to retire to the island of St. Catherine, vowed among themselves to waylay him on the voyage. An unexpected incident saved Morgan. At this very crisis a new governor (Lord Vaughan) arrived at Port Royal, Jamaica, bringing a royal order for the successful bucanier to be sent to England, to answer the complaints of the King of Spain, in regard to the depredations made on his subjects. Of his trial little or nothing is known, but he was soon after knighted by Charles II., and appointed Commissioner for the Admiralty at Jamaica! Furthermore, in the autumn of 1680, the Earl of Carnarvon, then Governor of Jamaica, returning to England, left the *ci-devant* pirate as his deputy, and Morgan seized the opportunity to hang many of his old comrades! In the next reign

he was thrown into prison—wherefore, precisely is not known, and his final fate is uncertain. So much for the vicissitudes of a pirate's life.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE PIRATES AND BUCANIERS (*continued*).

The Exploits of Captain Sawkins—Three Ships attacked by Canoes—Valiant Peralta—Explosion on Board—Miserable Sight on Two Ship's Decks—Capture of an Empty Ship—Dissatisfaction among the Pirates—Desertion of many—Message from the Governor of Panama—The Pirate Captain's Bravado—His Death—Fear inspired on all the Southern Coasts—Preparations for punishing and hindering the Bucaniers—Captain Kidd—His first Commission as Privateer—Turns Pirate—The Mocha Fleet—Almost a Mutiny on Board—Kills his Gunner—Capture of Rich Prizes—A Rich Ransom derided—Grand Dividend—Kidd deserted by some of his Men—Proclamation of Pardon—Kidd excepted—Rushes on his Doom—Arrested in New York—Trial at the Old Bailey—Pleadings—Execution with Six Companions.

Among the great bucaniers of the seventeenth century were Captains Coxon, Harris, Bournano, Sawkins, and Sharp, of the exploits of only one or two of whom we shall have space to speak. On one of their principal expeditions they started with nine vessels, having on board 460 men, and, after a desertion of two of the ships' companies, had still three-fourths of the

number left. Their march from the coast of Darien—the point of destination being the unfortunate city of Panama—presented similar difficulties to those already experienced by Morgan, and the narration of them would be, therefore, tedious. On the way they took the town of Santa Maria, but did not obtain much booty. From thence they proceeded by river, in thirty-five canoes and a boat, to the Pacific Ocean. At the mouth of the river, and on the rocks outside, some of them were shipwrecked, and for a time the company became separated, although almost all of them were able afterwards to rejoin. On the morning of April 23rd, 1680 (St. George's Day), they arrived within sight of the city of Panama, and also in full view of some Spanish men-of-war ready for the fray, as they immediately weighed anchor and sailed towards them. Some of the canoes were sailing faster than the boats, and there was every fear that the former would be run down by the ships. When the fight commenced, the pirates had only sixty-eight men to contend against 228, Biscayans, mulattoes, and negroes.



VIEW OF PANAMA.

Captain Sawkins's canoe, and also that on which was the narrator of the fight, were much to leeward of the rest, so that one of the Spanish ships came between the two and fired on both, wounding, with these broadsides, five men in the two canoes. But the commander paid dearly for his passage between them, as he was not quick in coming about again, and making the same way; for the pirates killed, with their first volley, several of his men upon the decks. Thus they got also to windward, as the rest were before. The admiral of this armadilla (or little fleet) came up with them instantly, scarce giving time to charge, thinking to pass by them all with as little damage as the first of the ships had done. But, as it happened, it turned out much the worse for him; for they were so fortunate as to kill the man at the helm, so that his ship ran into the wind, and her sails lay aback. By this means they all had time to come up under her stern, and, firing continually into his vessel, they killed all that came to the helm; besides which slaughter they cut asunder his mainsheet and brace with their shot. At this time the third vessel was coming to the aid of their general. Hereupon Captain Sawkins, who had changed his canoe and had gone into one of the boats, left the admiral to four canoes (for his own was quite disabled), and met the captain of the second ship. "Between him and Captain Sawkins," says the chronicler, "the dispute was very hot, lying aboard each other, and both giving and receiving death as fast as they could charge. While we were thus engaged the first ship tacked about, and came up to relieve the admiral; but, we perceiving it, and foreseeing how hard it would go with us if we should be beaten from the admiral's stern, determined to prevent his design. Hereupon two of our canoes, to wit, Captain Springer's and my own, stood off to meet him. He made up directly towards the admiral, who stood upon the quarter-deck waving unto him with a handkerchief so to do; but we engaged him so closely in the middle of his way, that had he not given us the helm, and made away from us, we had certainly been on [52]

board him. We killed so many of the men that the vessel had scarce men enough left alive, or unwounded, to carry her off; yet, the wind now blowing fresh, they made shift to get away from us, and save their lives.

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“The vessel which was to relieve the admiral being thus put to flight, we came about again upon the admiral, and all together gave a loud halloo, which was answered by our men in the periagua (large boat), though at a distance from us. At that time we came so close under the stern of the admiral, that we wedged up the rudder; and withal killed both the admiral himself and the chief pilot of his ship; so that now they were almost quite disabled and disheartened likewise, seeing what a bloody massacre we had made among them with our shot. Hereupon, two-thirds of his men being killed, and many others wounded, they cried for quarter, which had several times been offered to them, and as stoutly denied till then. Captain Coxon boarded the admiral, and took with him Captain Harris, who had been shot through both his legs as he boldly adventured up along the side of the ship. This vessel being thus taken we put on board her all our wounded men, and instantly manned two of our canoes to go and aid Captain Sawkins, who had now been three times beaten from on board Peralta, such valiant defence had he made; and, indeed, to give our enemies their due, no men in the world did ever act more bravely than these Spaniards.

“Thus coming close under Peralta’s side, we gave him a full volley of shot, and expected to have the like return from him again; but on a sudden we saw his men blown up that were abaft the mast, some of them falling on the deck and others into the sea. This disaster was soon perceived by their valiant captain Peralta; but he leaped overboard, and, in spite of all our shot got several of them back into the ship again, though he was much burnt in both his hands himself. But as one misfortune seldom cometh alone, meanwhile he was recovering these men to reinforce his ship withal and renew the fight, another jar of powder took fire

forward, and blew up several others upon the fore-castle. Among this smoke, and under the opportunity thereof, Captain Sawkins laid them on board, and took the ship.”

Soon after they were taken the narrator went on board Captain Peralta’s vessel to see what condition they were in, and a miserable sight it was; for there was not a man that was not either killed, desperately wounded, or horribly burnt with powder. Their dark skins were frequently turned white, the powder having torn it from their flesh and bones. On the admiral’s ship there were but twenty-five men alive out of eighty-six. Of these twenty-five men only eight were able to bear arms, all the rest being desperately wounded and by their wounds totally disabled to make any resistance, or defend themselves. Their blood ran down the decks in whole streams, and scarce one place in the ship was found that was free from blood.

Having possessed themselves of these two vessels, Captain Sawkins asked the prisoners how many men there were on board the greatest ship, lying in the harbour of the island of Perico, as also on the others that were something smaller. Captain Peralta hearing these questions, dissuaded him as much as he could, saying that in the biggest alone there were three hundred and fifty men, and that he would find the rest too well provided for defence against his small number. But one of the men who lay dying upon the deck contradicted Peralta as he was speaking, and told Captain Sawkins there was not one man on board those ships that were in view, for they had all been taken out of them to fight the pirates, in the three vessels just taken. These words were credited as proceeding from a dying man; and steering their course to the island they went on board them, and found, as he had said, not one person there. The largest of the ships, which was called *La Santissima Trinidad*, they had set on fire. They had also made a hole in her, and loosened her fore-sail. But they quenched the fire with all speed, and stopped the leak. This being done they put their wounded men on board her, and made her for

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the present their hospital.

Having surveyed their own loss, they found eighteen of their men had been killed in the fight, and twenty-two wounded. The three captains against whom they had fought had been esteemed by the Spaniards the bravest in all the “South Seas”; neither was their reputation undeserved, as may easily be inferred from the narrative given of the engagement. As the third ship was running away from the fight, she met with two more coming out to their assistance; but gave them so little encouragement that they turned back and dared not engage the pirates. The fight began about half an hour after sunrise, and by noon the battle was finished. Captain Peralta, while he was their prisoner, would often break out into admiration of their valour, and say that surely “Englishmen were the most valiant men in the whole world, who endeavoured always to fight openly, whilst all other nations invented all the ways imaginable to barricade themselves, and fight as close as they could.”

Other vessels were shortly afterwards taken. But in spite of their successes, there was dissatisfaction among some of the pirates, and Captain Coxon was openly branded as a coward by some of them, for the small part he had taken in the engagement. He immediately deserted with seventy of the men. Soon afterwards other pirates, however, joined the forces.

Eight days after their arrival at Tavoga (now called Toboga), they took a ship that was coming from Truxillo, and bound for Panama. In this vessel they found two thousand jars of wine, fifty jars of gunpowder, and fifty-one thousand pieces of eight. This money had been sent from that city to pay the soldiers belonging to the garrison of Panama. From the prize they had information that there was another ship coming from Lima with one hundred thousand pieces of eight more, which vessel was to sail ten or twelve days after them, and which, they said, could not be long before she arrived at Panama. Within two days after this intelligence they took another ship laden with flour from

Truxillo, and the men on this prize confirmed what the first had told them, and said that the rich vessel might be expected there in the space of eight or ten days.

While they lay at Tavoga the President or Governor of Panama sent a message by some merchants to them to know what they came for. To this message Captain Sawkins made answer that “he came to assist the King of Darien, who was the true lord of Panama and all the country thereabouts, and that since he had come so far it was reasonable that they should have some satisfaction. So that if he pleased to send five hundred pieces of eight for each man and one thousand for each commander, and would not any further annoy the Indians, but suffer them to use their own power and liberty, as became the true and natural lords of the country, that then they would desist from further hostilities, and go away peaceably; otherwise, that he should stay there, and get what he could, causing the Spaniards what damage was possible.” From the Panama merchants they learned there lived there as Bishop of Panama, one who had formerly been Bishop of Santa Martha, and who had been prisoner to Captain Sawkins when he took the place about four or five years before. The captain having received this intelligence sent two loaves of sugar to the bishop as a present. The next day the merchant who carried them, returning to Tavoga, brought the captain a gold ring, and a message to Captain Sawkins from the President above mentioned, to know farther of him, since they were Englishmen, “From whom they had their commission, and to whom he ought to complain for the damages they had already done them?” To this message Captain Sawkins sent back for an answer, “that as yet all his company were not come together, but that when they were come up, they would come and visit him at Panama, and bring their commissions on the muzzles of their guns; at which time he should read them as plain as the flame of gunpowder could make them.” But Sawkins’s bravado never came to anything, and he was shortly afterwards killed at Puebla [55]

Nueva.

But the impression made by the pirates' deeds had spread far and wide. Some time afterwards, when Captain Sharp, who succeeded Sawkins, and had made several captures in the meantime, took a vessel of the Spanish armada on that coast (not the Great Armada, gentle reader; the word simply signifies "fleet") the captain proved to them in a speech how the fame and fear of the pirates had pervaded the South Pacific, and what preparations had been made to resist them. He said, "Gentlemen, I am now your prisoner of war by the overruling providence of Fortune; and, moreover, am very well satisfied that no money whatsoever can procure my ransom, at least for the present, at your hands; hence I am persuaded it is not my interest to tell you a lie, which if I do, I desire you to punish me as severely as you think fit. We heard of your taking and destroying our armadilla and other ships at Panama, about six weeks after that engagement, by two several barks which arrived here from thence; but they could not inform us whether you designed to come any farther to the southward, but rather desired we would send them speedily all the help by sea that we possibly could; hereupon we sent the rumour of your being in these seas to Lima, desiring they would expedite what succour they could send to join with ours. We had at that time in our harbour two or three great ships, but all of them very unfit to sail; for this reason, at Lima, the Viceroy of Peru pressed three large merchant-ships, into the biggest of which he put fourteen brass guns, into the second ten, and in the other six. Unto these he added two barks, and put 750 men on board them all. Of this number of men they landed eight score at Point St. Helen, all the rest being carried down to Panama, with design to fight you there. Besides these forces two other men-of-war, bigger than the afore-mentioned, are still lying at Lima, and fitting out with all speed to follow and pursue you. One of these men-of-war is equipped with thirty-six brass guns, and the other with thirty; these ships, besides their complement

of seamen, have 400 soldiers added to them by the viceroy. Another man-of-war belonging to this number, and lesser than the afore-mentioned, is called the *Patache*. This ship carries twenty-four guns, and was sent to Arica to fetch the king's plate from thence; but the viceroy having received intelligence of your exploits at Panama, sent for this ship back from thence in such haste that they came away and left the money behind them. Hence the *Patache* now lies at the port of Callao, ready to sail on the first occasion, or news of your arrival thereabout; they having for this purpose sent to all parts very strict orders to keep a good look-out on all sides, and all places along the coast. Since this, from Manta, they sent us word that they had seen two ships at sea pass by that place; and from the Goat Key also we heard that the Indians had seen you, and that they were assured that one of your vessels was the ship called *La Trinidad*, which you had taken before Panama, as being a ship well known in these seas. From hence we concluded that your design was to ply and make your voyage thereabouts. Now this bark wherein you took us prisoners being bound for Panama, the Governor of Guayaquil sent us out before her departure, if possible, to discover you; which, if we did, we were to run the bark on shore and get away, or else to fight you with these soldiers and fire-arms that you see. As soon as we heard of your being in the seas we built two forts, the one of six guns, and the other of four, for the defence of the town. At the last muster taken, in the town of Guayaquil, we had there 850 men of all colours; but when we came out we left only 250 men that were actually under arms." The story of Sharp and others of the pirates, after this, shows that the Spanish preparations had a very decided effect on the spoils they were able to acquire. Their gains were small; and apart from the dangers of the sea, a number barely escaped being massacred ashore at the Island of Plate. When they attempted to return by the Straits of Magellan, they were tempest-tossed and sorely tried. They could not find the entrance to the straits, and eventually rounded America by

what is described as “an unknown way.” That unknown route was unmistakably *viâ* Cape Horn.

Among the notorious pirates probably no one is better known in England than Captain Robert Kidd, whose trial and execution formed the subject of many once popular ballads. He commenced life in the king’s service, and had so far distinguished himself, that we find him in the first month of 1695 receiving a commission from His Majesty William III. to command a “private” man-of-war to “apprehend, seize, and take” certain American pirates. The privateer was actually fitted out at the expense of Lord Bellamont, at one time Governor of Barbadoes, and others, who knew the wealth that the pirates had acquired; and they obtained the king’s commission, partly with the view of keeping the men under better command, and also to give their enterprise some sort of sanction of legality. Kidd sailed for New York, where he engaged more men, increasing his officers and crew to a total of 150. Each man was to have one share in any division of spoil, while he reserved for himself and owners forty shares. This vessel was the *Adventure* galley, of thirty guns.

After calling at Madeira and the De Verde Islands for provisions and necessaries, he set sail for Madagascar, then a rendezvous of the Indian Ocean pirates. After cruising on that and the Malabar coasts, where he was not at first successful in meeting with any of the pirate vessels, he touched at a place called Mabbee, on the Red Sea, where he helped himself to a quantity of the natives’ corn, without offering payment. Hitherto he had acted strictly in his capacity as a legalised privateer, but he now began to show his true colours. The Mocha fleet was expected shortly to pass that way, and when he proposed to his crew that they should attack it, one and all agreed. He thereupon sent a well-manned boat to reconnoitre, which returned in a few days with the news that there were fourteen or fifteen ships about to sail. It will be understood that the Mocha fleet had nothing to do with American pirates, but was a commercial fleet, in this case

consisting of English, Dutch, and Moorish vessels, convoyed by a vessel or vessels of war, in the fashion of those days. The man at the masthead soon announced its approach, and Kidd, getting into the midst of the vessels, fired briskly at a Moorish ship. Two men-of-war, however, bore down upon him, and knowing he was not a match for them, Kidd reluctantly put on all sail, and ran away. Shortly afterwards he took a small vessel belonging to Moorish owners, the master being an Englishman, whom he forced into his service as pilot. He used the men brutally, having them hoisted by the arms and drubbed with a cutlass, to find out whether or no any valuables were on board. As there was next to nothing to be found, he seized some quantity of coffee and pepper, and let the vessel go. When he touched shortly afterwards at a Moorish port, he found that he was suspected, and soon after this he discovered that many places along the coast had become alarmed. A Portuguese man-of-war was despatched after him, and met him; he fought her gallantly for about six hours, when he again became convinced that prudence, in his case, was the better part of valour, and made good his escape. [57]

Not long after this he encountered a Moorish vessel, having for master a Dutch "schipper." Kidd chased her under French colours, and hailed her in the same language. A Frenchman on board answered, when he was told, "you are the captain," meaning, "you must be." Kidd's reason for this was that he held, in addition to his commission against pirates, one called a "commission of reprisal" against French vessels. At this time he seems to have been almost doubtful as to his course of action, for while he took the cargo of the last-named ship, he refused to attack a Dutch vessel which he met some time afterwards. In this case there was almost a mutiny on board, a majority being in favour of attack. Many threatened even to man a boat and seize her, which Kidd prevented by swearing that if they did they would never come on board his ship again. His gunner shortly afterwards reproached him with this matter, and

said that he had ruined them all. Kidd, whose career might have ended much sooner than it did, if the mutinous ones had been so disposed, was equal to the emergency. Politely calling his gunner “a dog,” he raised a bucket and broke it over the unfortunate man’s skull, who died a day after. A Portuguese prize of tolerable value, containing Indian goods, jars of butter, bags of rice, wax, &c., was taken shortly afterwards, and this put the crew in better humour, which was vastly increased when he fell in with the *Quieda Merchant*, a richly-laden Moorish ship of 400 tons, having for master an Englishman named Wright. Kidd chased her under French colours, and took her without a struggle. There were hardly any Europeans on board, but there were a number of Armenian merchants. The pirate at first proposed that they should pay a ransom, and that he would let them depart in peace. They offered a sum something under £3,000, at which he laughed, and seized the vessel, selling the cargo at various points, where he also left the crew. When the division of the spoil was made, each man netted about £200, while his forty shares amounted to a total of £8,000. In spite of these enormous gains he was not above cheating some poor natives shortly afterwards, who up to that time had been accustomed to look upon even pirates as fair dealers in petty matters.

With the *Quieda Merchant* and *Adventure* he sailed once more for Madagascar, where he, unfortunately for himself, met with some Englishmen who knew him. Among them was a pirate named Culliford. When they met, they told him that they had been informed he was sent out to take them and hang them. Kidd laughed at their fears, and told them that they might look upon him as a brother, pledging them in wine. The *Adventure* was now old and leaky, and Kidd shifted his guns and stores to the prize. Here he acted fairly to his men, by dividing such of the cargo, &c., which was available; a number of them returned the compliment by deserting him, others remaining in the country, and some going on board Captain Culliford’s ship.

At Amboyna, where he touched soon afterwards, he learnt that his proceedings were understood in England, and that he had been declared a pirate. The fact was that questions had been asked in Parliament regarding the commission which had been given to him, and those who had fitted out the vessel. The discussion seemed to Lord Bellamont to bear hardly on him, and after Kidd's execution, he published a pamphlet defending his course. But to stop the piracy so common in those days, a free pardon was offered to those pirates who had been engaged in the Eastern African waters who should surrender their persons any time prior to the 30th April, 1699. Kidd and Avery, the latter of whom we shall hereafter meet, were excepted distinctly in the proclamation. When Kidd left Amboyna he most certainly did not know this fact, or he would not have rushed into the lion's jaw. Trusting to his money, and his influence with Lord Bellamont, he sailed for New York, where on arrival he was arrested with other of his companions, and sent to England for trial.

A solemn session of Admiralty was that which met at the Old Bailey, in May, 1701, when Captain Kidd and nine others were arraigned for piracy and robbery on the high seas. All were found guilty except three, who were proved to have been apprentices. Kidd was also tried for the murder of his gunner, and found guilty. The men pleaded variously, and two of them had undoubtedly surrendered themselves within the time limited by the proclamation. Colonel Bass, the Governor of West Jersey (now the state of New Jersey, adjoining that of New York), corroborated this statement. It was shown that they had not surrendered to a commission of four specially sent over for the purpose, and they were condemned to die. This was, as far as the writer can judge, a hard case. Another seaman, Darby Mullins, said in his defence that he served under the king's commission, and had no right to disobey any commands of his superior officer; that, in fact, the men were never allowed to question his

authority, because it would destroy all discipline; and that even if unlawful acts were committed, the officers were the persons to answer it, not the men. He was answered that serving as he did only entitled him to do that which was lawful, not that which was unlawful. He replied that the case of a seaman must be bad indeed, if he were punished in both cases, for obeying and for not obeying his officers, and that if he were allowed to dispute his superior's orders, there would be no such thing as command on the high seas. This ingenious defence availed him nothing; he had taken a share of the plunder, and had mutinied, showing no regard to the commission; and further, had acted in accordance with the customs of pirates and freebooters. The jury brought him in guilty with the rest.

Kidd's defence was not strong, as a matter of legal argument. He insisted that he had been more sinned against than sinning. He said that he went out on a laudable employment, and had no occasion, being then in good circumstances, to go a pirating; that the men had frequently mutinied, and that he had been threatened in his own cabin, and that ninety-five deserted him at one time and set fire to his boat, so that he was disabled from bringing his ship home, or the prizes he took, to have them regularly condemned, which prizes, he said, were taken under virtue of his commission, they having French passes (false). A witness, Colonel Hewson, spoke highly of his previous reputation for bravery. So much of his own statement was doubtful or false that he was found guilty. When the judge put on the black cap, Kidd stood up and said: "My lord, it is a very hard sentence. For my part I am the most innocent person of them all, and have been sworn against by perjured persons." A week after the bodies of Kidd and six of his men were seen by the passers-by on the river, hanging high, suspended by chains, a warning especially to the seamen of and entering to the port of London not to turn pirates.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE PIRATES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Difference between the Pirates of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries—Avery's brief Career—A Captain all at Sea—Capture of his Ship—Madagascar, a Rendezvous for Pirates—A Rich Prize—The Great Mogul's Ship taken—Immense Spoils—The Great Mogul's Rage—Avery's Treachery—His Companions abandon their Evil Ways—The Water-rat beaten by Land-rats—Avery dies in abject Poverty—A Pirate Settlement on Madagascar—Roberts the Daring—Sails among a Portuguese Fleet, and selects the best Vessel for his Prey—His Brutal Destruction of Property—His End—Misson and Caraccioli—Communitic Pirates—Their Captures—High Morality and Robbery combined—Their Fates.

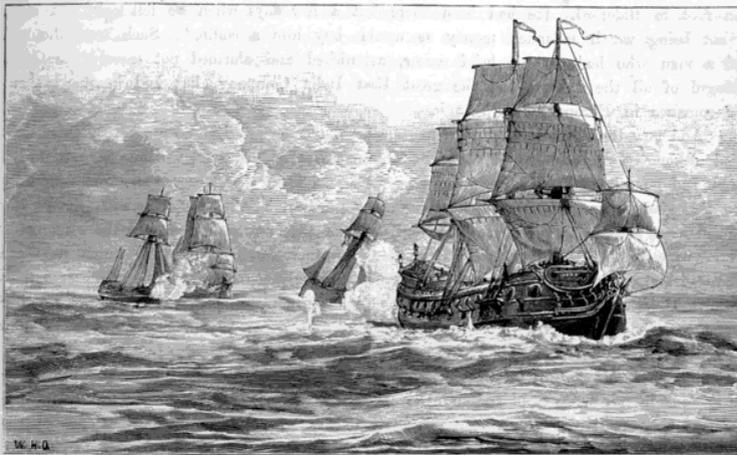
As we have seen, the seventeenth century presented innumerable examples of piracy on a grand scale. The eighteenth presents no examples of formidable organisations; on the contrary, each pirate, as a rule, worked for himself, and relied on the unaided strength of himself and crew. An example is afforded by Avery. Captain Avery's brief career was, piratically considered, brilliant enough. In 1715 we find him mate of a vessel starting from Bristol, and designed for a privateer. The commander, Captain Gibson, was a convivial sailor, fond of his bottle, and in port was usually found ashore. On the evening on which the event about to be described took place, he was on board, but having taken his usual dose or doses of strong liquor, had retired to his berth. The crew not in the secret were also below, leaving on deck only a few conspirators with whom Avery had made a compact. At the

time agreed some other conspirators came off in a long-boat, and Avery hailed them, and was answered in the following terms: “Is your drunken boatswain aboard?”—the watch-word previously arranged. Avery replied in the affirmative, and the boat, manned by sixteen stout fellows, came alongside, and in a few minutes the hatches were secured, and the ship put to sea. There were several vessels in port, and a Dutch skipper was offered a considerable reward to pursue Avery, but he declined. When Captain Gibson awoke he rang his bell, and Avery and one of the men going into the cabin, found him only half awake. He inquired what was the matter with the ship: “Does she drive? What weather is it?” He thought she was still in port. “No, no,” answered Avery; “we are at sea.” “At sea!” said the captain. “How is that?” “Come, come,” said Avery, “put on your clothes, and I’ll let you into a secret. You must know that I am captain now, and this is my cabin; therefore you must walk out!” He then explained his intentions of proceeding to Madagascar on a piratical venture. The captain was terribly frightened, but Avery reassured him by saying that he could either go ashore, or, if he chose to make one of them, and keep sober, he might in time be raised to the dignity of lieutenant. Gibson preferred the former alternative, and, with four or five men of the same mind, was put on shore.

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Avery sailed for Madagascar, where he was joined by two sloops, the sailors on board which were themselves well inclined to his enterprise, having just before run away with the vessels from the East Indies. They sailed in company, and off the mouth of the Indus the man at the masthead espied a sail, and they gave chase. She was evidently a fine tall vessel, possibly an East Indiaman. She proved something better, for, when they fired a shot at her, she hoisted Mogul colours, and appeared ready for a fight. The sloops first attacked, with Avery for a support. The men of the sloops attacked on either quarter, and boarded her; she immediately afterwards struck her colours. She was one of the Great Mogul’s own ships, having on board many distinguished

persons of his own court, including one of his daughters, going on a pilgrimage to the Holy City, Mecca. They were carrying with them rich offerings to present at the shrine of Mahomet. They were travelling in full Eastern magnificence, with retinues and slaves, immense sums of money, jewellery, and plate. The spoil which they obtained was immense, and after rifling the ship of everything valuable, the pirates allowed her to depart. The news soon reached the Great Mogul, and he was so enraged that he threatened to extirpate the English on the Indian coast. The East India Company had enough to do to pacify him, and only succeeded in doing so by promising to use every endeavour to punish the pirates. Avery's name and fame soon after reached Europe, and, as might have been expected, all kinds of wild fables were circulated concerning him.



AVERY CHASING THE GREAT MOGUL'S SHIP.

On the voyage to Madagascar Avery proposed to the commanders of the sloops that the treasures taken should be collectively stored on board his own ship, as being by far the strongest and safest place, until an opportunity should occur for a division on land. They acceded, and the treasure was brought on board, and, with what he had, deposited in three great chests. Avery having got it on his own ship, suggested to his men that they had now on board sufficient to make them all happy, and he proposed that they should immediately make for some country where they were not known, and where they might live in plenty. They soon understood his hint, and pressing on all sail, left the sloops' crews to curse their perfidy. They proceeded to America, and at the Island of Providence, then newly settled, divided the spoils, and Avery pretending that his vessel had been an unsuccessful privateer, sold her readily. He then purchased a sloop, in which he and his companions sailed, and most of them landed on various parts of the American coasts, and settled. They dispersed over that country.

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Avery, however, had carefully concealed the greater part of the jewels and other valuable articles, so that his riches were considerable. Arriving at Boston he was almost induced to settle there; but as the greater part of his wealth consisted of diamonds, he feared that if he attempted to dispose of them at that place he should certainly be arrested as a pirate. He resolved, therefore, to sail for the north of Ireland, where he dispersed his men, some of whom obtained the pardon of King William, and eventually became peaceable Irish settlers.

He found, however, that it was as difficult to dispose of his diamonds in Ireland, without rendering himself suspected, as in Boston. It, therefore, occurred to him that Bristol might be a likely place to suit his purpose, and he accordingly proceeded to Devonshire, having previously made arrangements to meet one of his friends at Bideford. The so-called friend introduced him to others, and the latter persuaded him that the safest plan would

be to place his effects in the hands of some wealthy merchants who would make no inquiry as to how he came by them. One of these persons informed him that he knew merchants who would not bother him with inquiries, and Avery, falling easily into the trap, assented to this proposal. Accordingly the merchants who had been named paid him a visit at Bideford, where, after protestations of honour and integrity on their part, he delivered his diamonds and gold to them. After giving him a little money for his immediate support, they departed.

The old pirate changed his name, and lived quietly at Bideford, so that no notice was taken of him. The first sum of money he had received from the supposed merchants was soon spent, and for some time he heard nothing from the latter, though he wrote to them repeatedly. At length they sent him a small supply, but it was not sufficient to pay his debts. He therefore resolved to go at once to Bristol and have a personal interview with the merchants themselves. However, on arriving there he met with a mortifying repulse; for when he desired them to account with him, they silenced him by threatening to disclose his real character; thus proving themselves as good land-rats as he had been a water-rat. [62]

Avery went again to Ireland, and from thence solicited the merchants very strongly, but to no purpose, so that he was reduced to utter beggary. Next we find him on board a trading vessel working his passage over to Plymouth, from whence he travelled on foot to Bideford. He had been there but a few days when he fell sick, and died, "not being worth as much money as would buy him a coffin." Such was the end of a man who had, in his brief career, astonished and alarmed not merely the Great Mogul of all the Indies, and the great East India Company, but had become a hero of romance in Europe.

And now to return to the unfortunate sloops. Their provisions were nearly exhausted, and although fish and fowl were readily obtainable at Madagascar, whither they returned, they had no salt to cure them for a long voyage. They therefore made an

encampment on the coast, where they were joined by other piratical Englishmen who had selected the island as a permanent place of settlement. When the pirates first settled there many of the native princes were very friendly, and the former, having fire-arms, which in those days the latter had not, often joined in the inter-tribal wars, carrying terror wherever they went. Half a dozen pirates with a small native army would put a much larger number of the enemy to flight, and they were therefore great personages, and were almost worshipped.

By these means they became in a little time very formidable, and such prisoners as they took in war were employed in cultivating the ground, and the most beautiful of the women they married; nor were they contented with one wife, but often adopted the practice of polygamy. The natural result was, that they separated, each of them choosing a convenient place for himself, where he lived in princely style, surrounded by his family, slaves, and dependents. Nor was it long before jarring interests excited them to draw the sword against each other, and they appeared in the field of battle, at the head of their respective clans as it were. In these civil wars their number and strength were very soon greatly lessened.

These pirates, in the strange manner elevated to the dignity of petty princes, and being destitute of honourable principles, used their power with the most wanton barbarity. The most trifling offences were punished with death; the victim was led to a tree, and instantly shot through the head. The negroes at length, exasperated by continual oppression, formed the determination to exterminate their masters in the course of a single night; and this was not apparently a very difficult matter to accomplish, so much were they divided. Fortunately, however, for them, a negro woman who was partial to them ran twenty miles in three hours, and warning them of their danger, they were united in arms to oppose the negroes before the latter had assembled. This narrow escape made them more cautious. By degrees the original stock

of course died out, and when Captain Woods Rodgers called there about thirty years after, there were only eleven of them left, [63] surrounded by a numerous progeny of half-breed children. The circumstance will remind our readers of the descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty* on Pitcairn Island.

A little later we find a remarkable pirate on the field of action. Captain Bartholomew Roberts seems at first to have been really averse to the line of life to which he afterwards took so kindly. When his commander, Captain Davis, a pirate, died, the crew, in solemn conclave, selected Roberts. He accepted the dignity, and told them that "since he had dipped his hands in muddy water, and must be a pirate, it was better being a commander than a private." Very shortly afterwards he captured two vessels, the first Dutch and the second English. The crew of the latter joined him, and emptied and burned the vessel. On the Brazilian coast they were not successful, but among the West Indian Islands they encountered a fleet of forty-two sail of Portuguese ships, waiting for two men-of-war to convoy them. Roberts, with his one little vessel, determined to have one or more of them, and he sailed among the fleet, keeping the larger part of his men concealed. He steered his ship almost alongside one of them, hailed her, and ordered her master to come on board quietly, threatening to give no quarter if the least resistance were made, or even if a signal of distress were displayed. The Portuguese, perceiving a sudden flash of cutlasses on board the pirate ship—a *coup de théâtre* arranged by Roberts—submitted at once. The newly-fledged pirate saluted the captain courteously, and told him that he should go scot-free if he indicated which was the richest ship in the fleet. He gladly pointed to a large vessel, and, although very much superior in size and apparent strength to his own, made towards her, carrying with him the poor Portuguese captain, for reasons which will at once appear. Coming alongside, Roberts made his unwilling prisoner ask in Portuguese how Seignior Capitano did, and to invite him on board, as he had a matter of

great importance to impart. He was answered in the affirmative, but Roberts perceiving an unusual movement on board, and expecting that they meant to give him a broadside, forestalled them by pouring in a shower of shot, and then grappled, boarded, and took her. She proved herself a rich prize, laden with tobacco, sugar, skins, and a goodly number of golden moidores. Roberts was not long in securing the better part of her cargo, and speedily sailed away.

After touching at various points, they sailed for Newfoundland, entering the harbour of Trepassi with the black flags flying, and drums and trumpets sounding. The original account says that there were twenty-two “ships” lying there, but it probably means large fishing boats. The men aboard abandoned them, and the pirates burnt or sunk them all, besides doing enormous damage ashore. Roberts here took a small Bristol vessel, which he fitted and manned for his own service. Shortly afterwards he destroyed ten French “ships” (probably meaning, as before, large fishing boats) on the banks of Newfoundland, and after that a number of prizes of more value. At Martinique it had been the custom of Dutch traders, when they approached the island, to hoist their jacks. Roberts knew the signal, and imitated it, and the poor people believing that a profitable market was at hand, vied with each other who should first row out to the ship. As they one by one approached he fired into and sunk them, determined to do them as much damage as possible. This was in retaliation; he had heard that some cruisers had been sent out to punish him.

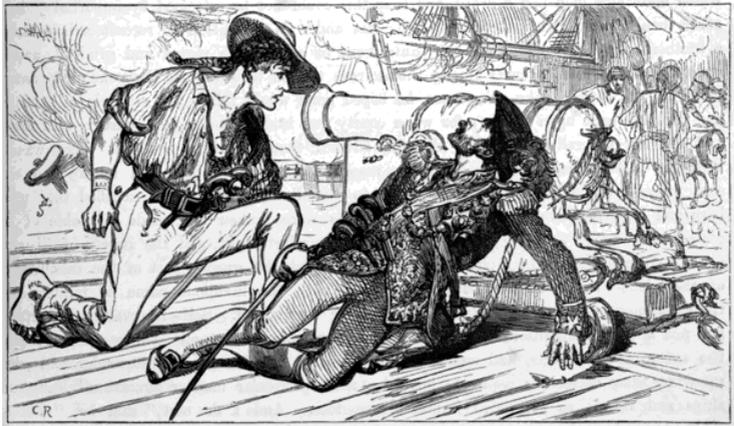
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But the end of this brute was at hand. One morning, soon after leaving Martinique, while he was at breakfast, he was informed that a man-of-war was at hand. He took little notice, and his men were undetermined whether she was a Portuguese ship or a French vessel. As she came nearer, she, however, hoisted English colours, and proved to be the *Swallow*, a man-of-war of no inconsiderable size. Roberts knew his danger, but determined to get clear, or die in the attempt. A man on board, who was

a deserter from the *Swallow*, informed him that she sailed best upon the wind, and that the pirate-ship should, therefore, go before it. The resolution was made to pass close to the *Swallow* under all sail, and to receive her broadside before they returned a shot; if seriously injured, to run on the shore to which they were close; or, should both fail, to blow up together, and balk the enemy. The greater part of his men were at this time drunk, for they had captured a quantity of liquor not long before, and their brandy-courage was likely to prove of the Dutch order. Roberts was determined to die game, and dressed himself in his best uniform—a rich crimson damask waistcoat and breeches, and a red feather in his hat, a gold chain and diamond cross, two pairs of pistols in a silk sling hung over his shoulders, and his sword in hand. In short, he was just the typical kind of showy pirate of whom boys delight to read.

The *Swallow* approached, and poured in her fire; Roberts hoisted the black flag, and passed her with all sail. But for a fatal mistake he might have got clear away; but either by bad steering, or in not keeping his vessel before the wind, she again came up very near him. He was preparing for action, when a grape-shot struck him directly in the throat, and he fell back dead on the tackles of a gun. The man at the helm, one Stephenson, not at first thinking he was wounded, swore at him, and upbraided him as a coward; but, almost immediately afterwards, when he found that his captain was indeed dead, burst into tears, and wished himself dead. The pirate-ship almost immediately surrendered. His men threw his body overboard, with all his finery and arms on, as he had repeatedly ordered during his lifetime. Thus, at about forty years of age, perished a brave and daring, though utterly reckless and unprincipled, man, who, under better auspices, might have been of the greatest service to his country.

One of the most remarkable pirates of the century was Captain Misson, who commenced life in the French navy. When on leave at Rome he met one Caraccioli, a priest, who had imbibed some



### DEATH OF “CAPTAIN” ROBERTS.

peculiar religious and social views, and who was afterwards, through his influence, admitted on board the man-of-war on which he was then serving. Both on several occasions showed a considerable amount of bravery. Caraccioli was a very ambitious man, and freely aired his peculiar ideas before both his friend Misson and the crew. His social views were of the communistic order; he believed that every man had as much right to that which would properly support him as to the air he breathed, and that wealth and poverty were both wrong, and that the world needed remodelling. It will be understood that he considered himself one of the men to do it, and was by no means strict in his regard for the rightful property of others. In a word, he meant to reform as much of the world as possible by means of piracy!

So far, however, both men were serving in the legitimate navy of France, but an opportunity occurred of which they made the most. Off Martinique, their vessel, the *Victoire*, encountered an English man-of-war, the *Winchelsea*, and a smart engagement followed, during which the French captain and his four principal

officers were killed. The master (presumably the navigating officer) would have struck, but Misson took up the sword, ordering Caraccioli to act as lieutenant, and, encouraging his men, fought for three hours, when the powder-magazine of the *Winchelsea* exploded, and only one man, who died shortly afterwards, was saved for the moment. After this unexpected termination, Caraccioli came to Misson, saluting him as captain, and, in a very French manner, reminding him what Mahomet and Darius had become from very small beginnings, showed him how he might become sovereign of the Southern Seas, and enjoy a life of liberty. Misson, who probably did not need a great deal of convincing, agreed, and calling all hands together, told them that any who would not follow his fortunes should be set ashore at places whence they might easily return to France, but recommended them to adopt the freebooter's life. One and all cried, "Vive le Capitaine Misson et son Lieutenant le savant Caraccioli," and the *Victoire* was at once transformed from a vessel of the royal navy of France to a pirate-ship.

The crew selected their officers; and then came the question as to what colours they should fight under. The boatswain advised black, as the most terrifying. Caraccioli strenuously opposed this, saying that they were no pirates, but men who were resolved to assert that liberty which nature had given them, and own no subjection to any one, further than for the common good of all; that they would wage war on the immensely rich, and defend the wretched. In short, he defined his mission as a kind of piratical knight-errantry. He was to be the Don Quixote of the ocean. He advised that, as they did not proceed upon the same grounds with pirates, who were men of dissolute lives and no principles, they should not adopt their colours. "Ours," said he, "is a brave, a just, an innocent, and a noble cause—the cause of liberty." He advised a white ensign, with the motto "For God and liberty" inscribed upon it. The valuable property on board was put under lock and key, for the general benefit. When the plate belonging to the late

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captain was going to the chest, the men unanimously voted it for Misson's use. Misson then spoke to the assembled crew; and the observations of this moral robber are worthy of note. He said that, "since they had resolved unanimously to seize upon and defend their liberty, which ambitious men had usurped, and that this could not be esteemed by impartial judges other than a brave and just resolution, he was under an obligation to recommend to them a brotherly love to each other, the banishment of all private piques and grudges, and a strict agreement and harmony among themselves; that in throwing off the yoke of tyranny, of which the action spoke abhorrence, he hoped none would follow the example of tyrants, and turn his back upon justice; for when equity was trodden under foot, misery, confusion, and distrust naturally followed. He also advised them to remember that there was a Supreme Being, the adoration of whom reason and gratitude prompted us to, and our own interest would engage us ... to conciliate; that he was satisfied that men born and bred in slavery, by which their spirits were broken and made incapable of so generous a way of thinking; who, ignorant of their birthright, and the sweets of liberty, dance to the music of their chains—which was, indeed, the greater part of the inhabitants of the globe—would brand this generous crew with the invidious name of pirates, and think it meritorious to be instrumental in their destruction. Self-preservation, therefore, and not a cruel disposition, obliged him to declare war against all such as should refuse the entry of their ports, and against all who should not immediately surrender and give up what their necessities required; but in a more particular manner against all European ships and vessels as concluded implacable enemies. And I do now," said he, "declare such war, and at the same time recommend to you, my comrades, a humane and generous disposition towards your prisoners, which will appear by so much more the effects of a noble soul, as we are satisfied we should not meet the same treatment should our ill-fortune, or more properly

our disunion, or want of courage, give us up to their mercy.”

And strangest of all to tell, the pirate kept very closely to his creed. If he took a small vessel, he would often let it go, after taking from the crew their ammunition, or some comparatively trifling matters; he was generous with his prisoners, and always spared life, except in open fighting. Compared with some of the pirates whose lives have been recorded in these pages he was an angel of light. Perhaps nothing will better exemplify this than his conduct after taking a large Dutch ship, the *Nieuwstadt*, which had on board seventeen slaves and some gold-dust. He ordered them to be clothed, and told his men that trading in those of our own species could never be right. He ordered them to be divided among the messes, that they might sooner learn the French language. The Dutch prisoners soon developed their latent tendencies for hard swearing and drinking; and Misson found that his own men were becoming demoralised. He addressed them all on board, and gave them a most serious lecture on the sin of swearing.

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Vessel after vessel was taken by him, the commanders of which were generally patted on the back by Misson for their gallant defence, and always treated with courteous hospitality. His greatest prize, among dozens of others, was a Portuguese vessel of fifty guns. The vessels were locked together. His crew found that instead of having it all their own way, they were vigorously attacked. Expecting no quarter, they contended fiercely, cleared the decks, and a number followed the Portuguese on board their own ship. Misson seeing this called out, “*Elle est à nous; à l’abordage!*” and a crowd of his men boarded. He engaged the captain, struck him so that he fell down the main-hatch, and the Portuguese almost immediately struck. Misson lost fifty-six men, and netted nearly £200,000 for himself and crew.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The account is derived from a French source, and although in all probability veracious in most points, cannot be implicitly believed. For this reason the

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PIRATES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Mary Read, the Female Pirate—As Male Servant, Soldier, and Sailor—Her Bravery and Modesty—The Pirate Vane—No Honour among Thieves—Delivered to Justice—The brief Career of Captain Worley—The Biter Bit—A more than usually Brutal Pirate—Captain Low's Life of Villainy—His Wonderful Successes—An unfortunate Black Burned to Death—Torture of a Portuguese Captain—Of Two Portuguese Friars—The Results of Sympathy—Low's Cupidity Defeated by a Portuguese—Eleven Thousand Moidores dropped out of a Cabin Window—An Unpunished Fiend.

One of the most remarkable pirates of the century under review was, strange as it may appear, a female! Mary Read acted first as a male page, then volunteered as a sailor, was afterwards a cadet in a Flanders regiment, and eventually returned to the sea to become a pirate. Her first impersonation of a boy was undertaken at her mother's command. The latter had been twice married, and a son born of the first husband had died. When the poor woman was in great destitution she thought of that husband's mother, who was in easy circumstances, and passed off her second child Mary as a boy, thereby obtaining some pecuniary assistance. In the army Mary Read is said to have behaved with great bravery, and when she retired she married a young Fleming who had been a comrade in the field. They set up a restaurant, or tavern, and for a time flourished in their business, but the husband dying

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author has not gone further into the most romantic story of this high-principled pirate. Misson is said to have later gone down with his vessel, while Caraccioli was killed in an affray with natives.

suddenly, and peace being concluded, she was obliged to seek some other employment, and after a short lapse of time we find her a sailor on a vessel bound to the West Indies. This ship was captured by English pirates, and Mary was found to be the only English person on board, so they detained her, letting the rest go, after they had stripped the vessel of all they wanted. This was her first introduction to such company, and it is said that in after life she stated that it was compulsion and necessity which led her to follow the career of a pirate, and not any desire on her part. But some of her actions looked as though she had taken rather kindly to that unlawful profession. [68]



THE FEMALE PIRATES. (*From an Old Print.*)

When the royal pardon was granted to all pirates in the West Indies who should abandon their mode of life before a given date, the crew with whom Mary was serving availed themselves of it, and for some little time afterwards we find Mary working on a privateer. The crew on this vessel soon after mutinied, and turned her into a pirate ship, on which Mary is said to have behaved with

almost ferocious bravery. When the vessel was at last captured, she, with another female pirate, named Anne Bonney, and one male, were the last three on deck, the others having fled below. Mary on this occasion is said to have fired a pistol among the cowardly sailors, killing one and wounding another. It is just to her to say that in her intercourse with others she was modest to the last degree, and her sex was undiscovered by the sailors. In fact, the before-named Anne Bonney, thinking Mary Read was a handsome young man, fell violently in love with her, and the latter was obliged to disclose her sex. She was a strong, robust woman, and although the course of life she had undertaken made her practically a criminal of the worst description—a robber and a murderer—she had, if all accounts are true, many very good qualities. Captain Rackam, another pirate, not knowing at the time her sex, asked her one day why she—or, as he thought, he—had chosen a life so dangerous, and one which exposed her to the risk of being hanged at any time. She answered that as to the hanging she thought it no very great hardship, “for were it not for that every cowardly fellow would turn pirate, and so infest the seas, while men of courage might starve; that if it were put to her choice she would not have the punishment less than death, the fear of which kept some dastardly rogues honest; that many of those who are now cheating the widows and orphans, and oppressing their poor neighbours who have no money to obtain justice, would then rob at sea, and the ocean would be as crowded with rogues as the land.” Curious argument! Mary Read came near tasting the quality of hanging when at last she was captured, but an illness, fortunately for herself, intervened, and she died a natural death. Woman’s mission in life rarely takes her to sea as a practical sailor.

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A prominent pirate of the seventeenth century was Captain Charles Vane, the details of whose career would, however, read much like some already given in the lives of earlier freebooters. One incident at the end of his life is presented, to show how

much distrust often existed among the pirates themselves. Vane was at last wrecked on a small uninhabited island near the Bay of Honduras; his vessel was completely lost and most of his men drowned. He resided there some weeks, being reduced to great straits.

While Vane was upon this island a ship put in there from Jamaica for water, the captain of which, one Holford, an old pirate, happened to be an acquaintance of Vane's. He thought this a good opportunity to get off, and accordingly applied to his friend; but Holford absolutely refused him, saying to him, "Charles, I can't trust you on board my ship unless I carry you as a prisoner, for I shall have you caballing with my men, knocking me on the head, and running away with my ship pirating." Vane made all the protestations of honour in the world to him; but it seems Captain Holford was too intimately acquainted with him to place any confidence in his words or oaths. He told him he might easily get off if he had a mind to it. "I am going down the bay," said he, "and shall return hither in about a month; and if I find you upon the island when I come back, I will carry you to Jamaica and there hang you!" "How can I get away?" answered Vane. "Are there not fishermen's dories upon the beach? Can't you take one of them?" replied Holford. "What!" replied Vane; "would you have me steal a dory, then?" "Do you make it a matter of conscience?" replied Holford, "to steal a dory, when you have been a common robber and pirate, stealing ships and cargoes, and plundering all mankind that fell in your way? Stay here if you are so squeamish;" and he left him to consider the matter.

After Captain Holford's departure another ship put into the small island, on her way home, for some water. None of the company knowing Vane, he easily passed his examination, and so was shipped for the voyage. One would be apt to think that Vane was now pretty safe, and likely to escape the fate which his crimes had merited; but here a cross accident happened which

ruined all. Holford, returning from the bay, was met by this ship, and the captains being very well acquainted with each other, Holford was invited to dine aboard, which he did. As he passed along to the cabin he chanced to cast his eye down in the hold, and there saw Charles Vane at work. He immediately spoke to the captain, saying, "Do you know whom you have aboard there?" "Why," said he, "I shipped the man the other day at an island where he had been cast away, and he seems to be a brisk hand." "I tell you," replied Captain Holford, "it is Vane, the notorious pirate." "If it be he," replied the other, "I won't keep him." "Why, then," said Holford, "I'll send and take him aboard, and surrender him at Jamaica." This being settled, Captain Holford, as soon as he returned to his ship, sent his mate, armed, to Vane, who had his pistol ready cocked, and told him he was his prisoner. No man daring to make opposition, he was brought aboard and put into irons; and when Captain Holford arrived at Jamaica he delivered up his old acquaintance to justice, at which place he was tried, convicted, and executed, as was, some time before, Vane's companion, Robert Deal, who was brought thither by one of the men-of-war. "It is clear," says the original narrator, "from this how little ancient friendship will avail a great villain when he is deprived of the power that had before supported and rendered him formidable."

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Another pirate of the same period was Captain Worley, who commenced business by leaving New York, in September, 1718, in a small open boat, with eight men, six muskets, a few pounds of biscuit and dried tongues, and a keg of water. He took first a shallop laden with household goods and plate, and later three sloops. He was becoming formidable enough to cause uneasiness to the authorities, who despatched two armed sloops after him. Worley saw them off the coast of Virginia, and believing that they were two vessels bound for the James River, hastened to get into its mouth first. Meantime the inhabitants of James Town, supposing that all three were pirates, made every preparation

ashore to defend themselves. Their surprise must have been great indeed when they saw the pirates were fighting among themselves. Worley had waited in the entrance of the river, with the black colours flying, when he discovered that the approaching vessels hoisted English colours, and that he was entrapped. The pirate and his men fought bravely, and when the action was over Worley and only one man out of twenty-five survived. As they would probably have died of their wounds in a short time they were brought ashore in irons, and hanged almost immediately. Worley's career as a pirate had lasted less than five months.

Yet another example. Captain Edward Low had, as a boy, shown peculiarly brutal qualities. He had bullied, and in low games had cheated, every one he could, so that it was not surprising that when grown to man's estate he developed into a successful but specially obnoxious villain. After sundry vicissitudes he had entered among the company of a ship bound to Honduras for logwood, and when arrived there was employed in bringing it on shore in command of a party of twelve armed men. One day the boat came alongside the ship just a little before dinner-time, and Low desired that they should remain for the meal, while the captain wanted them to make one more trip, and offered them a bottle of rum. Low and some of the men became enraged, and the former took a loaded musket and fired at the captain, missing him, but injuring another man. They then ran away with the boat, and only next day took a small vessel, on which they hoisted the black flag.

Fortune now constantly favoured him, and he was joined by many others. At the Azores he captured a French ship of thirty-four guns, taking her with his own two vessels. Entering St. Michael's roadstead, he captured seven sail without firing a gun. He then sent ashore to the governor for water and provisions, promising to release the vessels if his demands were conceded, and burn them if they were not. The request was instantly granted, and six of the vessels were returned. But a French vessel

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being among them, they took away all her guns and men, except the cook, whom they said, “being a greasy fellow, would fry well.” The brutes then bound the unfortunate wretch to the mast, and set fire to the ship.

“The next who fell in their way was Captain Garren, in the *Wright* galley, who, because he showed some inclination to defend himself, was cut and mangled in a barbarous manner. There were also two Portuguese friars, whom they tied to the foremast, and several times let them down before they were dead, merely to gratify their ferocious dispositions. Meanwhile, another Portuguese beholding this cruel scene expressed some sorrow in his countenance, upon which one of the wretches said he did not like his looks, and so giving him a stroke across the body with his cutlass he fell upon the spot. Another of the miscreants aiming a blow at a prisoner missed his aim, and struck Low upon the under jaw. The surgeon was called, and stitched up the wound; but Low finding fault with the operation, the surgeon gave him a blow which broke all the stitches, and left him to sew them himself. After he had plundered this vessel some of them were for burning her, as they had done the Frenchman; but instead of that, they cut her cables, rigging, and sails to pieces, and set her adrift to the mercy of the waves.”

On another occasion he had taken a fine Portuguese vessel, but could not find the treasure, and he accordingly tortured some of the men to make them inform him. He was told that during the chase the captain had hung a sack containing eleven thousand moidores out of the cabin window, and that when they were taken he had cut the rope, and let it drop to the bottom of the sea. One can imagine Low’s rage. He ordered the unfortunate captain’s lips to be cut off and broiled before his eyes. He then murdered him and the whole crew in cold blood. The narrative of Low’s career is one continuous succession of such stories; nor can the writer discover that he met with punishment in this world.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## PAUL JONES AND DE SOTO.

Paul Jones, the Privateer—A Story of his Boyhood—He joins the American Revolutionists—Attempt to Burn the Town and Shipping of Whitehaven—Foiled—His Appearance at St. Mary's—Capture of Lady Selkirk's Family Plate—A Letter from Jones—Return of the Plate several years after—A Press-gang Impressed—Engagement with the *Ranger*—A Privateer Squadron—The Fight off Scarborough—Brave Captains Pearson and Piercy—Victory for the Privateers—Jones dies in abject Poverty—A Nineteenth Century Freebooter—Benito de Soto—Mutiny on a Slave Ship—The Commander left ashore and the Mate Murdered—Encounters the *Morning Star*—A Ship without a Gun—Terror of the Passengers—Order to spare no Lives—A terrified Steward—De Soto's commands only partially observed, and the Ship saved—At Cadiz—Failure of the Pirate's Plans—Captured, Tried, and Hanged at Gibraltar.

A celebrated character now appears on the scene; and the writer must avow that Paul Jones has hardly been treated fairly in many works of fiction<sup>8</sup> and so-called history. He was not a pirate in the true sense of the word, although very generally regarded as such, but was a privateer, employed by colonies rebelling against the mother country.

John Paul—for such was his real name—was born on the estate of Lord Selkirk, near Kirkcudbright, Scotland, in 1728, his father being head gardener. Young Paul worked with his father for some length of time, and there is a story recorded [72]

<sup>8</sup> The best known of which is "The Pilot," in which he is the prominent character.

of the elder Paul which showed him to possess a good sense of humour. In the gardens were two summer-houses, exactly alike in build and size. One day Lord Selkirk, while strolling about the walks, observed a young man locked up in one of the summer-houses and looking out of the window. In the other house young Paul appeared, looking out of the corresponding window. His lordship inquired why the lads were confined, to which the gardener replied, "My lord, I caught the rascal stealing your lordship's fruit." "But," said the nobleman, "there are two of them. What has your son done? is he also guilty?" "Oh no, please your lordship," old Paul coolly replied, "I just put him in for the sake of symmetry!" But it appears that afterwards young Paul got himself in serious trouble, and deserved to have been locked up in some stronger place than a summer-house, and on other grounds than symmetry, and after some specially knavish trick he was dismissed from his employment, and almost immediately took to a seafaring life. He speedily rose to be mate, and soon after master.

In 1777, when the rupture broke out between America and Great Britain, he was in New England, and he immediately enlisted among the revolutionists, who appointed him commander of the *Ranger* privateer, mounting eighteen guns and several swivels, and manned with a picked crew of 150 hardy men.

In the course of the following winter he put to sea, and made two captures, which were sold in a French port, and in 1778 made an attempt to burn and destroy the town and shipping of Whitehaven. Having got near the land, he kept cautiously in the offing, but at midnight, having proceeded nearer, he despatched his boats with thirty daring sailors. A little battery at the entrance of the harbour was easily taken, and the small garrison made prisoners before they could raise an alarm, and the guns spiked. The vessels inside were laying close together at low water, and as no enemy was expected there were no watches

kept. The privateers deposited combustibles, trains of powder, and matches, ready primed, on the decks and about the rigging, and all was ready for the signal to be given, when a commotion and loud knocking was heard in the main street, and crowds came running to the piers, attracted by the lights which were being hastily thrown on the ships by the enemy. The attacking party could only just manage to get away and back to the ship, when, on the muster being called, one man was missing. He it was who, either from hopes of great reward, or, let us hope, from some purer motive of humanity, had started the alarm, and saved both town and shipping, for only one vessel was seriously scorched.

Paul Jones therefore left Whitehaven: the expedition had been a most complete failure. He next made for the harbour of Kirkcudbright, at the entrance of the river Dee—on which that “jolly miller” once lived of whom we sing. A little distance from the sea the Dee expands into an estuary, in which is the island of St. Mary, the very place on which Lord Selkirk’s castle and estate stood. Early in the morning the privateer, with her guns and generally warlike appearance, had been observed, but her character was not known. Few vessels of size ever entered the river, and in this case she was supposed to be an English man-of-war, possibly bent on “impressing” men for the navy, and as the male population there, as elsewhere, objected strongly to being torn away from their families and employments, a number of them hid themselves, as did, indeed, Lady Selkirk’s men-servants, who obtained temporary leave of absence. A boat from the privateer landed a number of men immediately, who strolled about leisurely, without having apparently any special object in view, and later returned to the ship. The alarm of those who watched their movements from a distance had hardly subsided when the boat, with a strong body of armed men, again put in for shore. [74]

“They did not now stroll about as before, but forming in regular order, marched directly to the castle; and then, for the first time, a



PAUL JONES AND LADY SELKIRK.

suspicion of the real character of such unexpected and unwelcome guests was excited. Lady Selkirk and her children were then the only members of the family resident in the castle. Her ladyship had just finished breakfast when she received a summons, but under considerable apprehensions of danger, which were not abated upon a nearer approach to inspection of the party, whose ferocious appearance and ragged dress too plainly betokened their hostile purpose; and, as it now appeared plunder was their chief object, the worst might be expected should any resistance be offered. The diversity of arms with which the party were equipped further confirmed the bad opinion entertained of the marauders. These consisted of muskets, pistols, swords, &c., and one fellow bore an American tomahawk over his shoulder. There were two officers in command of the party: the one rude in language and rough in his manner; the other, on the contrary, was not only courteous and respectful, but even apologised to her ladyship, regretting the unpleasant duty in which it was unfortunately his lot to appear as the principal.

“The first inquiry was for the appearance of Lord Selkirk; and on being assured that he was not in that part of the country they expressed considerable disappointment. After a short pause, the officer who had treated her ladyship with the most respect said he must request the production of all the plate which was in her possession. She answered that the plate which was in the castle was small in quantity, but, such as it was, they should have it.

“Accordingly the whole was laid before them—even the silver teapot which was used at breakfast, and which had not been since washed out. The officer on receiving it ordered his men to pack it all, again respectfully apologising for his conduct on this occasion, which he called a dirty business, and then taking his leave of her ladyship, he retired with his party, and returned to his ship, leaving the family not a little pleased at their escape from a worse fate, which they apprehended. Still, however, as the ship did not immediately get under weigh, her ladyship, entertaining

fears of a second visit, lost no time in sending off her children, and removing to a place of security whatever property was likely to induce them to pay her another visit.” In a few hours she was gratified by seeing the privateer getting under weigh, and proceeding to sea without offering any further violence. Lady Selkirk received, a few days after, a letter from Jones, written in a romantic and almost poetical style, in which he entreated her ladyship’s pardon for the late affront, assuring her that, so far from having been suggested or sanctioned by him, he had exerted his influence in order to prevent its taking place; but his officers and crew had insisted on the enterprise, in the hope of getting possession of the person of Lord Selkirk, for whose ransom they anticipated a considerable sum might be realised. This, Jones declared, was the object of their first visit, in which having failed, they began to murmur on their return on board, and insisted on their landing again and plundering the castle; he was therefore reluctantly obliged to give his assent. He added that he would endeavour to buy the plunder they had so disgracefully brought away, and transmit the whole, or such as he could obtain, to her ladyship.

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“Several years elapsed without hearing anything from Jones, and all hope of realisation of his promises had vanished; but in the spring of the year 1783, to the great and agreeable surprise of her ladyship, the whole of the plate was returned, carriage paid, precisely in the same condition in which it had been taken away, and to every appearance without having ever been unpacked, the tea-leaves remaining in the silver teapot, as they were left after breakfast on the morning of the plunderers’ visit to the castle.” It is hardly to be doubted that Jones was sincere in this matter, and that the real state of the case was that he had spoken before the others of Lord Selkirk’s estate and his early experiences, until they had become inflamed with a desire to plunder the castle, and, if possible, secure the person of that nobleman, with the hope of obtaining a large ransom. This, at first sight the most piratical

act of Paul's life, really shows him to advantage, and that he had some humanity left for his early associates. Lord Selkirk himself received the news in London, with a few additions, to the effect that his castle had been burned to the ground and his family taken prisoners. Those were not the days of special correspondents and telegraphy. About half-way on his journey he, however, obtained a more correct version of the affair.

Jones now made for the Irish coast, where in the Belfast Loch he burned or captured several fishing-boats. A sloop-of-war, the *Drake*, under the command of Captain Burden, was lying there. The commander thought that the *Ranger* was a merchantman, and sent off a boat's crew to impress some of her men for the navy. Jones allowed them to come on board, and then impressed *them!* He did not, however, wish to risk an engagement just then, and therefore put about and crowded on all sail. Captain Burden, finding that his boat did not return, at last suspected something wrong, gave chase, and, coming up with the privateer, opened a sharp fire. The night was so dark that the firing could not be continued with any prospect of success. Next morning the engagement was renewed, and at the end of over an hour's gallant fighting on both sides—by which time Captain Burden, his first lieutenant, and some of the crew, being killed, and more disabled, and the ship much damaged—the *Drake* surrendered to the *Ranger*. Jones took his prize into Brest—and communicated his success to Dr. Franklin,<sup>9</sup> then the American diplomatic agent in Paris.

In the following winter we find Jones in command of a frigate, the *Bonne Homme Richard*, of forty guns, with a complement of 370 men, having under him another frigate, the *Alliance*, of nearly equal size, a brig, and a cutter, all acting in the service of the American Congress. A French frigate, the *Pallas*, also formed one of the squadron. Some of his first essays were

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<sup>9</sup> Few readers will need reminding that the same Dr. Franklin was the celebrated philosopher.

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failures. Landing a boat's crew on the coast of Kerry to take some sheep, the farmers and people defended their property bravely, and the aggressors were sent to Tralee gaol. So, when he conceived the bold idea of burning the shipping in Leith harbour, a gale blew his ship to sea. It is said that laying off Kirkaldy, Jones sent a summons to the townspeople to make up a ransom, or he would fire the town. A number of the inhabitants had collected on the beach, among whom was a venerable minister, who offered up a prayer to the Almighty, and exhorted the people to courage and trustfulness. Soon after the wind increased to the gale above-mentioned, and the privateer had to be let go before the wind. Not long previous to this, however, Jones had captured several prizes, all of which were sent to French ports.

But off Scarborough Jones and his squadron fell in with a British convoy of merchantmen from the Baltic, under escort of H.M.S. *Serapis* (forty-four guns), in the command of Captain Pearson, and the *Countess of Scarborough* (twenty guns), Captain Piercy. The result was a brilliant engagement, in which the British captains behaved most gallantly, although the privateer force was in excess of their own. Captain Pearson, while a prisoner on the *Pallas*, communicated a full account to the Lords of the Admiralty, of which the following narrative contains some verbatim extracts:—

On the 23rd September, 1799, the privateer squadron and the two English ships were in sight of each other. Captain Pearson's first anxiety was to get between the merchant-ships he was convoying and the privateers, which he successfully accomplished. Shortly after the action commenced the muzzles of the guns of the *Serapis* and *Alliance* actually touched each other. "In this position," wrote Captain Pearson, "we engaged from half-past eight till half-past ten, during which time, from the great quantity and variety of combustible matter which they threw upon our decks, cabins, and, in short, into every part of the ship, we were on fire no less than ten or twelve times in

different parts of the ship, and it was with the greatest difficulty and exertion imaginable, at times, that we were able to get it extinguished. At the same time the largest of the two frigates kept sailing round us during the whole action, and raking us fore and aft, by which means she killed or wounded almost every man on the quarter and main decks. At half-past nine, either from a hand-grenade being thrown in at one of our lower deck ports or from some other accident, a cartridge of powder was set on fire, the flames of which, running from cartridge to cartridge all the way aft, blew up the whole of the officers and crew that were quartered abaft the mainmast; from which unfortunate circumstance all those guns were rendered useless for the remainder of the action.

“At ten o’clock they called for quarter from the ship alongside, and said they had struck. Hearing this, I called upon the captain to say if they had struck, or if he asked for quarter, but receiving no answer after repeating my words two or three times, I called for the boarders, and ordered them to board, which they did; but the moment they were on board her they discovered a superior number lying under cover, with pikes in their hands, ready to receive them, on which our people retreated instantly into our own ship, and returned to their guns again until half-past ten, when the frigate coming across our stern, and pouring her broadside into us again without our being able to bring a gun to bear on her, I found it in vain, and in short impracticable, from the situation we were in, to stand out any longer with any prospect of success. I therefore struck; our mainmast at the same time went by the board.

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“The first lieutenant and myself were immediately escorted into the ship alongside, when we found her to be an American ship-of-war, called the *Bonne Homme Richard*, of forty guns and 375 men, commanded by Captain Paul Jones; the other frigate which engaged us to be the *Alliance*, of forty guns and 300 men; and the third frigate, which engaged and took the *Countess of*



PAUL JONES.

*Scarborough* after two hours' action, to be the *Pallas*, a French frigate, of thirty guns and 274 men; the *Vengeance*, an armed brig of twelve guns and seventy men: all in Congress service, under the command of Paul Jones. They fitted and sailed from Port l'Orient the latter end of July, and then came north. They have on board 300 English prisoners, which they have taken in different vessels in their way round since they left France, and have ransomed some others. On my going on board the *Bonne Homme Richard* I found her in the greatest distress, her quarters and counter on the lower deck being entirely drove in, and the whole of her lower deck guns dismantled; she was also on fire in two places, and six or seven feet of water in her hold, which kept increasing upon them all night and next day, till they were obliged to quit her. She had 300 men killed and wounded in the action. Our loss in the *Serapis* was also very great." Captain Pearson concludes with a proper tribute to the bravery of Captain Piercy, who with his small frigate had engaged the *Pallas*, a much larger vessel, and to the men in general. The honour of knighthood was afterwards conferred on Captain Pearson, while Piercy and the officers were suitably promoted. The Royal Exchange Insurance Company presented both captains with services of plate. It need not be said that Paul Jones was for the nonce a much-appreciated man in America. [78]

His subsequent career does not possess much interest for the general reader. He was, in 1786, employed in diplomatic service, and he crossed the Atlantic with despatches for London in the then remarkable time of twenty-two days, and, having performed his duty, he remained a few hours only, and then immediately started on the return voyage. American go-a-headedness was fast developing at that early period. When peace was concluded he entered into the service of Russia for a short period, after which he was in Paris at the period of the Revolution. Here he sought, but failed in obtaining, employment in the French navy; and he soon became a man as dejected and downcast as he had once

been buoyant and resolute. He died in abject poverty; and he would hardly have been decently interred but for the sympathy of a friend, who succeeded in raising a small subscription for the purpose.

The full history of piracy would occupy a small library of volumes, and would possess many elements of sameness in its full narration. In the present volume only leading examples can be given, for space would fail us to record the crimes committed by Algerian, Spanish, Indian, Chinese, and other pirates, many of them in times not long gone by. But the example of unbridled brutality and villainy about to be presented could not be omitted in any fair account of the subject. Sad to say, it occurred in this present century of general enlightenment. The career of the infamous Benito de Soto is the subject of the following pages.<sup>10</sup>

Benito de Soto was a Portuguese sailor, and up to the year 1827 appears to have followed the ordinary avocations of his profession. In the above year a slaver was being fitted out for a voyage to the coast of Africa. In the horrible traffic in which the vessel was engaged a strong crew was required, and, among a considerable number of sailors, De Soto was engaged. It was the intention of the captain to run to a part of the African coast not usually visited, where he hoped to obtain them cheaper than elsewhere, or perhaps get them by force. His crew consisted principally of French, Spanish, and Portuguese renegades, who made no objection to sail with him on his evil voyage.

The captain of the slave-ship arrived at his destination, and obtained a considerable number of natives, who were closely batted down in the hold. One day he went ashore to make arrangements for completing his cargo, when the mate, who was a bold, reckless, and thoroughly unprincipled man, and who had perceived in Benito de Soto a kindred spirit, proposed to the latter a design he had long contemplated for running away with the

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<sup>10</sup> The narrative is derived from one of two most graphic letters by the author of "The Military Sketch-book."

vessel and becoming a pirate. De Soto at once agreed to join in the mutiny, and declared that he had himself been contemplating a similar enterprise. The pair of rogues shook hands, and lost no time in maturing the plot. A large part of the crew joined in the conspiracy, but a number held out faithfully to the captain, and the mate was despairing of success, when De Soto took the matter in hand, thoroughly armed the conspirators, declared the mate captain, and told the others, "There is the African coast: this is our ship; one or other must be chosen by every man on board within five minutes." The well-disposed would not, however, join the mutinous, and they were immediately hustled [79] into a boat, and left to the mercy of the waves with one pair of oars. Had the weather continued calm the boat would have made the shore by dusk; but unhappily a strong gale of wind set in shortly after her departure, and she was seen by De Soto and his gang struggling with the billows and approaching night at a considerable distance from the land. All on board agreed in opinion that the boat could not live, as they flew away from her at the rate of ten knots an hour, under close-reefed topsails, leaving their unhappy messmates to their inevitable fate. Those of the pirates who were afterwards executed at Cadiz declared that every soul in the boat perished. A drunken revel reigned on board that night. The mate soon proved a tyrant; and De Soto, who had only waited for the opportunity, shot him while in a drunken sleep, and constituted himself commander. The slaves were taken to the West Indies, and a good price obtained for them; one, a boy, De Soto reserved for himself. That boy lived to be a witness against him, and before he left Cadiz saw the full penalty of the law executed on his brutal master.

The pirates now commenced their villanous designs in good earnest, and plundered a number of vessels. Amongst others they took an American brig, and having secured all the valuables on board, hatched down all hands in the hold except one poor black man—probably the cook—who was allowed to remain on deck

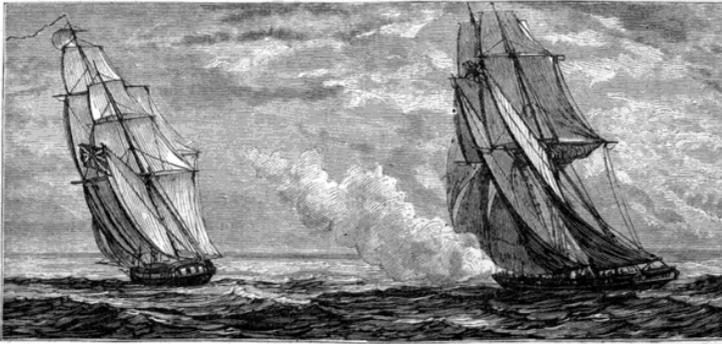
for the special purpose of affording by his tortures the horrible amusement De Soto and his fellow fiends desired. The heart sickens at the remainder of the story. They set fire to the brig, and then lay to at a short distance to observe the progress of the flames, knowing that a number of their fellow-creatures were being roasted to death in the hold. The poor African ran from rope to rope, now clinging to the shrouds, even climbing up to the mast-head, till he fell exhausted in the flames, and the tragedy was over.

Exploit after exploit, marked by heartless butchery, followed, and culminated in the event which led to their overthrow. It was an evil day when they met, off the Island of Ascension, the *Morning Star*, a vessel then on her voyage from Ceylon to England, having on board a valuable cargo and a number of passengers, civilian and military, the latter principally invalided soldiers. There were also several ladies on board. De Soto at first took her for a French ship, but when he was assured that she was English he said with glee, "So much the better, we shall find the more booty," and ordered the sails squared for the chase.

His vessel, the *Defensor de Pedro*, was a fast sailer, but for some time could not gain much on the *Morning Star*, and De Soto broke out in almost ungovernable fits of rage. When his poor little cabin-boy came to ask him whether he would have his morning cup of chocolate, he received a violent blow from a telescope as his reward. While the crew were clearing the decks for action he walked up and down with gloomy brow and folded arms, maturing his plan of attack; and woe to the man who interrupted his meditations! But when he found that he was gaining on his intended victim he became calm enough to eat his breakfast, and then sat down to smoke a cigar.

And now they had gained sufficiently on the other ship to enable De Soto to fire a charge of blank cartridge for the purpose of bringing her to. This, however, had no effect, although he hoisted British colours; and he then shouted out, "Shoot the

long gun, and give it her point-blank!" The shot was fired, but [80] fell short of its aim, and the gunner was cursed as a bungler. He then ordered them to load with canister-shot, and, waiting till he was abreast of the vessel, discharged the gun himself with fatal accuracy, while one of his men ran down the falsely-displayed British colours, and De Soto then himself hauled up the Columbian colours, and cried out through the speaking-trumpet for the captain to come on board.



#### DE SOTO CHASING THE "MORNING STAR."

One can imagine the alarm on the *Morning Star* among the helpless passengers, when they found that their captain had neither guns nor small arms. Although there were twenty-five soldiers on board and a commanding officer, they were all cripples or feeble invalids. The captain was, as will afterwards appear, a brave and true officer, but by a general council, hurriedly held, he was advised to allow one of the passengers to volunteer for the service of going on board the pirate ship. It may be imagined how he was received. When they found that he was not the captain, they beat him, as well as the sailors with him, in a brutal manner, and then sent him back with the message that if the captain did not instantly come on board they would blow

the ship out of the water. This, of course, decided the captain, and he immediately put off in a boat, with his second mate, three sailors, and a boy, and was rowed to the pirate ship. On going on board, De Soto, who stood near the mainmast, cutlass in hand, desired the captain to approach, while the mate was ordered to go forward. Both of these unfortunate individuals obeyed, and were instantly massacred.

A number of the pirates—picked men—were ordered to descend into the boat, Barbazan, De Soto's right hand in villainy, accompanying them. To him the leader gave his orders to spare no lives, and sink the ship. The pirates were all armed alike, each carrying a brace of pistols, a cutlass, and a long knife. Their dress consisted of coarse chequered cotton, and red woollen caps. They were all athletic men, and evidently suited for their sanguinary work. A man stood by the long gun with a lighted match, ready to support the boarding, if necessary, with a shot that would sweep the deck. The terror of the poor females and most of the rest on the *Morning Star* may well be imagined; nor could the fears of the former be allayed by the vain hopes which some expressed that the pirates would simply plunder the vessel and then leave them. Vain hopes indeed, for the pirates commenced cutting right and left immediately they boarded. The villains were soon masters of the decks. "Beaten, bleeding, terrified, the men lay huddled together in the hold, while the pirates proceeded in their work of pillage and brutality. Every trunk was hauled forth; every portable article of value heaped for the plunder: money, plate, charts, nautical instruments, and seven parcels of valuable jewels, which formed part of the cargo; these were carried from below on the backs of those men whom the pirates selected to assist them, and for two hours they were thus employed, during which time De Soto stood on his own deck watching the operations, for the vessels were within a hundred yards of each other." The scene in the cabin was one of unbridled license; the passengers were stripped of their clothes, while the females were

locked up together in the round-house on deck.

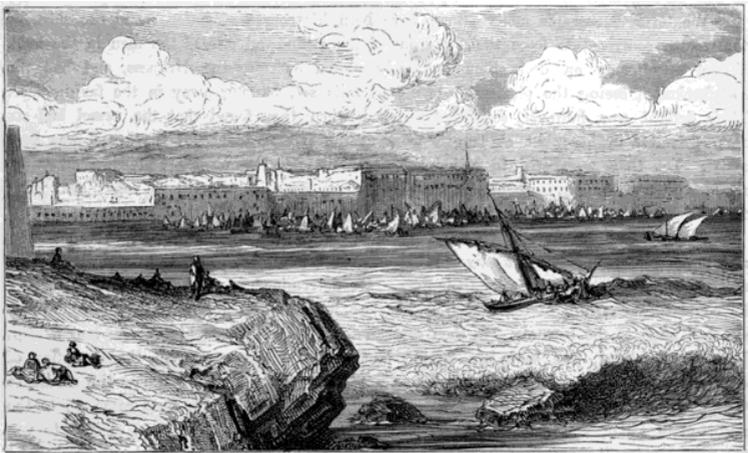
The steward was detained, to serve the pirates with wine and eatables, and their labours being now concluded, they held high revel, preparatory to carrying out the diabolical orders of their leader. A more terrible group of ruffians, the poor steward afterwards declared, could not well be imagined. In one instance his life was in great jeopardy, when one of the pirates demanded to know where the captain had kept his money. He might as well have asked him to perform a miracle; but pleading the truth was of no use, and a pistol was snapped at his breast, which, fortunately, missed fire. He re-cocked, and presented it, when the weapon was struck aside by Barbazan, who possibly thought that the services of the steward might yet be required. The females were afterwards ordered into the cabin, and treated with great brutality. [82]

Whether Barbazan had any spark of humanity left in his bosom, or whether it was a forgetfulness of the orders given to him by De Soto, caused by the wine he had taken, is not known, but after a series of outrages, he contented himself by ordering his men to fasten the women in the cabin, heap lumber on the hatches of the hold, and bore holes in the ship below the water-line. This may seem strange mercy, but it left some chance, if by any possibility any of those on board could get free and stop the leaks. His orders, it will be remembered, had been to put all to death, as well as sink the ship.

Whatever Barbazan's motives may have been, his course of action saved the ship, for the women contrived to force their way out of the cabin, and release the men in the hold. When they came on deck they anxiously peered out into the darkness, and had the satisfaction of seeing the pirate-ship, with all sails set, bearing away in the far distance. Their delight was, however, somewhat checked when they found that the vessel had six feet of water in her; but at length work at the pumps told, and the vessel was kept afloat. Yet they were still in a helpless condition,

for the pirates had sawn away the masts and cut the rigging. Fortunately, however, they fell in with a vessel next day: their troubles were over, and they were brought in safety to England.

To return to De Soto. It was only next morning that he learned that the crew and passengers had been left alive. This excited his utmost rage, and he declared that now there could be no security for their lives. He determined to put back, but providentially he could find no trace of the vessel, and at last he consoled himself with the belief that she had gone to the bottom. He then set sail for Europe, and on his voyage met a brig, boarded, plundered, and sank her, having first murdered the crew, with the exception of one individual, whom he took with him as a pilot, as he professed to know the course to Corunna. As soon as he had come within sight of that port, De Soto came up to the unfortunate sailor, and said, "You have done your duty well, and I am obliged to you for your services." He then immediately shot him dead, and flung his body overboard! Polite and humane De Soto!



CADIZ.

At Corunna he obtained papers under a false name, sold most of his ill-gotten spoils, and set sail for Cadiz, where he expected to easily dispose of the remainder. The winds were favourable and the voyage good till he was actually in sight of the famed old Spanish port, off which he arrived in the evening. He therefore determined to lay to, intending to reach his anchorage in the morning, when the wind shifted, culminating in a gale, which blew right on land. He exerted all his seamanship to weather a point that stretched outwards, but his lee-way carried him towards the land, and the vessel became an utter wreck. Soto soon arranged a plan. They were to pass themselves off as honest men to the authorities of Cadiz; Soto was to take upon himself the office of mate to an imaginary captain, and thus obtain their sanction in disposing of the vessel. In their assumed character the whole proceeded to Cadiz, and presented themselves before the proper officers of the marine. Their story was listened to with sympathy, and for a few days everything went on to their satisfaction. Soto had succeeded so well as to conclude the sale of the wreck with a broker for the sum of one thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars. The contract was signed, but, [83] fortunately, the money was not yet paid, when suspicion arose, from some inconsistencies in the pirates' account of themselves, and six of them were arrested by the authorities. De Soto and one of the crew instantly disappeared from Cadiz, and succeeded in arriving at the neutral ground before Gibraltar, and six more made their escape to Caracas.

De Soto's companion wisely kept to the neutral ground at Gibraltar, while he foolishly ventured into the city, his object being to obtain money for a letter of credit he had obtained at Cadiz. The former man was the only one of the whole gang who escaped punishment.

De Soto secured his admission into Gibraltar by a false pass, and took up his residence at a low tavern in one of the narrow lanes in which the place abounds. "The appearance of this house,"

says the writer of the interesting letter from which this account is derived, “was in grim harmony with the worthy Benito’s life. I have occasion to pass the door frequently at night, for our barrack, the casement, is but a few yards from it. I never look out at the place without feeling an involuntary sensation of horror....

“In this den the villain remained for a few weeks, and during this time he seemed to enjoy himself as if he had never committed a murder. The story he told Bosso of the circumstances was that he came to Gibraltar on his way from Cadiz to Malaga, and was merely awaiting the arrival of a friend.

“He dressed expensively, generally wore a white hat of the best English quality, silk stockings, white trousers, and blue frock coat. His whiskers were large and bushy, and his hair was black, profuse, long, and curled. He was deeply browned with the sun, and had an air and gait expressive of his bold, enterprising, and desperate mind. Indeed, when I saw him in his cell and at his trial, although his frame was attenuated almost to a skeleton, the colour of his face a pale yellow, his eyes sunken, and his hair closely shorn, he still exhibited strong traces of what he had been, still retained his erect and fearless carriage, his quick, fiery, and malevolent eye, his hurried and concise speech, and his close and pertinent style of remark.” After he had been confronted in court with a dirk that had belonged to one of his victims, a trunk and clothes taken from another, and the pocket-book containing the handwriting of the *Morning Star’s* ill-fated captain, and which were proved to have been found in his room; and when the maid-servant had proved that she found the dirk under his pillow, and again when he was confronted by his own black slave boy between two wax lights, the countenance of the villain appeared in its true nature, not depressed or sorrowful, but diabolically ferocious; and when Sir George Don passed the just sentence of the law upon him his face was a study of concentrated venom.

The wretched man persisted up to the day of his execution in asserting his innocence; but the certainty of his doom seemed to

make some impression on him, and he at last made an unreserved confession of his crimes, giving up to the keeper a razor-blade which he had secreted in his shoes for the avowed purpose of committing suicide. The narrator of his life seems to have believed that he was really penitent.

On the day of his execution he walked firmly at the tail of the fatal cart, gazing alternately at the crucifix he held in his hand and at his coffin, and repeated the prayers spoken in his ears by the attendant clergyman with apparent devotion. The gallows was erected fronting the neutral ground, and he mounted the cart as firmly as he had walked, holding up his face to heaven in the beating rain, apparently calm and resigned. Finding the halter too high for his neck, he boldly stepped upon his coffin and placed his head in the noose, bidding adieu to all around him. Thus died Benito de Soto, the pirate of the nineteenth century, whose crimes had hardly been exceeded by the freebooters of any previous period. [84]

## CHAPTER IX.

### OUR ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS.

The Latest Arctic Expedition—Scene at  
 Portsmouth—Departure of the *Alert* and *Discovery*—Few  
 Expeditions really ever pointed to the Pole—What we know  
 of the Regions—Admitted and unadmitted Records—Dutch  
 Yarns—A Claimant at the Pole—Life with the  
 Esquimaux—A Solitary Journey—Northmen Colony—The  
 Adventurer kindly treated—Their  
 King—Sun-worshippers—Believers in an Arctic Hell—The

Mastodon not extinct—Domesticated Walruses—The whole  
story a nonsensical *Canard*.

On the afternoon of May 29th, 1875, the old town of Portsmouth presented in an unusual degree that gala aspect which it can so readily assume at short notice. It is true that it was the official anniversary of Her Majesty's birthday, and a military review had been announced; but granting full credit to the loyalty of Hants, there was still something to be explained, for visitors had crowded into the town by tens and tens of thousands, and the jetties, piers, and shores presented the aspect of a popular holiday, so lined were they with well-dressed and evidently expectant masses of people. The shipping in the harbour and out to Spithead displayed the flags of the whole signalling code, while from the flag-posts of every public, and hundreds of private, buildings, the coastguard stations, forts, and piers, depended a perfect wealth of bunting. What was the cause of this enthusiasm?

In the dockyard a quieter scene explained the reason. Two vessels, of no great size, and which at any other time would not have attracted special attention, were lying, with full steam up and bows pointed to the stream, ready for immediate departure. They bore the names of the *Alert* and *Discovery*, and were about to start on a prolonged Arctic voyage. On the jetty the relatives and friends of some 120 officers and blue-jackets were assembled to bid the last farewell, the last God-speed to men about to encounter many known and unknown dangers in a field of action where peril is the daily concomitant of existence. We can well believe that the fate of Franklin and his gallant band—in numbers almost literally identical with the two ships' companies about to depart—*would* recur to the minds of some, and that many a mother prayed that night, and later—

“O Heaven, my child in mercy spare!  
O God, where'er he be;  
O God, my God, in pity spare

My boy to-night at sea!"

We shall not attempt to depict a scene familiar to all who have voyaged or who know much of seaport life, although this was a special case.



CAPTAIN NARES CONDUCTING H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES OVER THE *ALERT* AT PORTSMOUTH.

[85]

“A sailor’s life must be  
Spent away on the far, far sea,  
And little of him his wife may see,”

Sings Dr. Bennett; and the partings were not confined to mother or wife, but were shared by many a father, brother, sister, and sweetheart, who were nevertheless proud of the service in which their sailor-boy was to be engaged. Still prouder were they as, at four o'clock, the vessels steamed out of the harbour; "such cheers upon cheers rent the air" as, said our leading journal, "were never before heard in Portsmouth," while "an unbroken mass of waving hats and fluttering handkerchiefs" extended on the jetties, piers, and shore away to and beyond the breakwater. The ships of war and the training ship *St. Vincent* presented a sight not soon to be forgotten, covered as they were by living masses from bulwarks to sky-sail yards of actual and embryo comrades in the service, delighting to honour these adventurous men, departing for unknown seas and for an unknown period of time. If there were any of those croakers present who tell us that the service has gone to the dogs, and that the "true British sailor" is no more, they must have been silenced; while the enthusiasm of those who had come from far and near to witness the departure of the expedition was but one more example of that special interest always displayed by England in all matters pertaining to geographical discovery. The same love of adventure, and the spirit to do and dare, which characterise our voyagers and travellers, permeates very largely the masses of those who stay at home, for they are Britons still.

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The expedition, under the command of Captain Nares, the departure of which we have briefly described, was, as we all know, distinctly organised for the exploration of the polar region, and with the hope of reaching the North Pole itself. One point in this connection is often overlooked, thereby leading to grave mistake, and it may fairly be considered before entering upon the narration of this Arctic voyage. There are those among us who, being "nothing if not practical," aver that too many voyages have been instigated for the discovery of the North Pole, which is to them a worthless aim. The answer to such croakers is direct. Of



SIR GEORGE NARES.

the hundreds of expeditions, British and foreign, despatched to the Arctic regions, very few indeed have been organised for that discovery, or even for the exploration of the polar region proper. Those instituted with that special object, as will be hereafter shown, scarcely exceed a dozen in number. Strange as it may seem, commerce was for a long period almost the only motive for Arctic exploration. The larger part of the earlier attempts at north-west and north-east passages were instigated with the distinct object of reaching the Orient—China, India, and the Spice Islands—for commercial purposes, by what seems now-a-days a most roundabout if not utterly ridiculous manner, but which at the time appeared quite comprehensible and defensible. The rich productions of the countries named in those days reached us overland; and not till the very close of the fifteenth century, when Vasco di Gama doubled the Cape of Good Hope, was a comparatively easy sea-route found to Eastern Asia. The opening of extensive fisheries, the fur-trade, reported mineral discoveries, and, in a limited degree, colonisation, have been

among the main causes in bygone days of hundreds of Arctic voyages, the organisers whereof cared nothing for the North Pole. The many Arctic expeditions of the present century have been mainly instituted for geographical discovery and scientific research; and, as we all know, a number of them would not have had their being but for the sad tragedy which involved the search for Franklin and his ill-starred companions. Now-a-days, indeed, as the writer has elsewhere said,<sup>11</sup> “we have no need for an icy route to Cathaia; we have no expectation of commercial advantage from the exploration of the North Pole.” The solution of a most important geographical problem was the aim of Captain Nares’ expedition, as it was that of *several*, but *not*, as will be proved, that of *many* previous ones. If it ever is to be done, England should do it.

It will be interesting, and somewhat important, to note briefly, before entering on the consideration of the great Arctic voyages, just how much and how little we know about the polar region proper. The undiscovered region covers an area of scarcely less than a million and a half square miles; while between explored points on either side it is in certain directions as much as 1,500 miles across. Parry, in 1827, reached by a mixed boat and sledge journey as high a latitude as 82° 45' N., while Captain Hall, the American, succeeded in *taking his vessel*, in 1871, as high as 82° 16' N. in Smith’s Sound. As we shall hereafter see, both these exploits have now been beaten by the expedition under Captain (now Sir George S.) Nares. In general terms, we may say that the vast tract between 70° and 80° of north latitude has been pretty thoroughly explored on the European and American sides of the polar region, while much less is known of the same latitudes on the Asiatic side. How much of the in-lying region is land, or how far covered with water, has yet to be determined. In spite of the very positive utterances of many explorers and scientists,

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<sup>11</sup> “Heroes of the Arctic.” Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge.



DEPARTURE OF THE "ALERT" AND "DISCOVERY"  
FROM PORTSMOUTH.

all we really know is that there *is* much open water, or at all events ice-covered water, and that it *may* extend to the Pole. No weight whatever can be attached to the once popular “open polar sea” theory, which rested principally on the statements of those who had, after reaching given points, been unable to see anything but open water before them. How would that wiseacre be esteemed, who, looking seaward from different parts of our coast, saw nought but ocean, and thereon immediately built a theory that no land existed in the direction of his gaze? America must be swept from *his* map entirely, while even Continental Europe would have a poor chance—except on a fine day, and even then from but a few points of our south coast.

Whilst the claims of Parry, Hall, and Nares, as the three explorers who have approached nearer the Pole than any others, must be admitted by all authorities, we may note *en passant* that other and stronger claims have been put forth in days gone by. The Hon. Daines Barrington, somewhat of an authority in his day, read before the Royal Society, late in the last century, a series of papers devoted to polar subjects,<sup>12</sup> in which he records the cases of whalers and others who were said to have almost reached the North Pole. He cites with some substantiatory evidence the case of a Dutch ship-of-war, superintending the Greenland fisheries, which had reached the latitude of 88° N., or within 120 miles of the Pole. He gives the case of an English captain—one Johnson, or Monson (Buffon records the same case)—who had also reached 88° N. He further offers us the “Relation of Two Dutch Masters” to one Captain Goulden, who asserted that they had reached 89°, and caps the climax with a “Dutch relation” to a Mr. Grey, in which the Hollander claims to have been within half a degree (thirty geographical miles) of the Pole. These claims were seriously discussed at the time, and were not put forward by an ignorant or careless writer. Nevertheless, no credit is given

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<sup>12</sup> These papers, with others, were published in a small work bearing the title, “The Possibility of Approaching the North Pole Asserted, &c.”

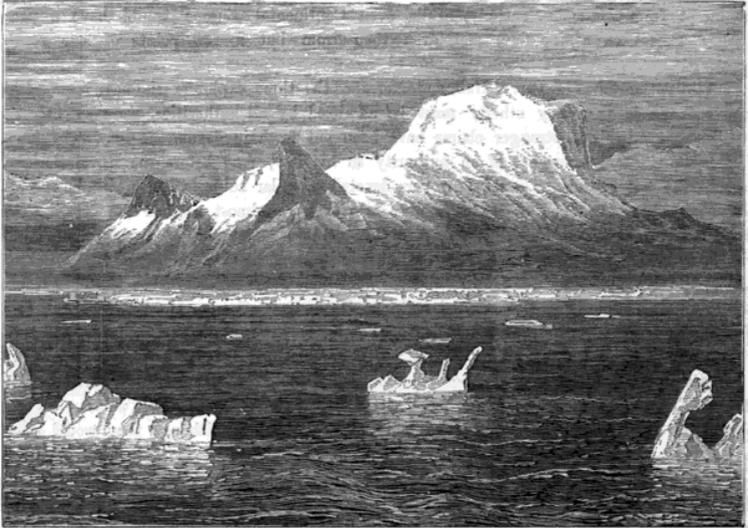
to them by present Arctic authorities, although they would seem to deserve some little examination and attention.

One other claim to the discovery of a continent immediately surrounding the North Pole remains to be considered, albeit not seriously. It has been very naturally ignored here, but was calmly discussed some years since in America, where it was first published. The present writer presents it in a condensed form simply as a novelty; it is only too evidently a sailor's "yarn," invented by some one familiar with Arctic works, or possibly with the Arctic regions themselves. But as it will serve to enliven our narrative at this juncture, the reader will pardon its introduction.

The editor of the following narrative commences by stating that a log, squared and much water-soaked, was found floating in Hudson's Bay in the year 1866 by an American sailor. On examination, a small piece of wood was discovered to be morticed in its side, and this being picked out, a manuscript, written on skin sewn together with sinews, was found enclosed in a seal-skin cover. The story inscribed on it was in substance as follows. The writer begins by stating that he has discovered a new continent at the Pole. Being desirous of leaving England, he had shipped before the mast on the *Erebus*, under the command of Sir John Franklin. He had done so under an assumed name, his true name being William North. Describing briefly the events preceding Franklin's death, he goes on to say that they abandoned the ships in April, 1848, Captain Crozier hoping to reach Hudson's Bay (Territory is meant, presumably), their provisions being exhausted. All but himself perished, and he lay on the snow insensible till rescued by some Esquimaux, with whom he lived for several years. From observations he became convinced there was a habitable land further north. The birds and animals often came in large numbers from that direction, and then suddenly returned. The Indians all had a superstitious fear of going far north, and none who did so were ever seen again. It was supposed

[88]

that they perished of cold and starvation; but more than one old Esquimaux told him that they were killed by the inhabitants beyond the mountains.



#### CAPE DESOLATION.

“As I could never get back to England,” says he, “even if I had desired, I concluded to push to the north, and reach the North Pole or perish in the attempt.” No one would go with him, so he went alone, taking two dogs and a boat which he had rigged on runners. The Indians said that he would never return.

“This was on the Greenland shore, as far north as the ice mountains, known to navigators as the glaciers. [‘Ice rivers’ would be the more appropriate term; but the story is evidently written by a half-educated man.] It was the early spring of 1860, according to my reckoning; the season was the most favourable I had ever seen, and in two months I must have travelled fully



MAP OF THE NORTH POLAR REGIONS.

[larger version]

six hundred miles, myself and the dogs living on game and seals killed by the way.

“My theory was that I should suddenly emerge into a warm and fertile country as soon as I should reach the point at which, according to all the books, the earth was flattened, and on which the sun in summer never sets. It seemed to me that if the sun should remain for six months above the horizon, without any nights, the effect would be to give a very warm climate. I had a good silver watch, of which I had always taken the greatest care, and I kept a record of every day, so that I should not lose my reckoning. I will not dwell on the perils and privations of my journey, except to say that with streaming eyes I had killed my faithful dogs to save me from starvation, when on the 20th of June, 1860, according to my calendar, I passed out of a crevice or gorge between two great walls of ice, just in time to escape death from a falling mass larger than a ship, into an open space of table-land, from which I could see below me, and stretching away as far as the eye could reach, a land more beautiful than England or any other country I had ever seen.”

The narrator says that his feelings becoming calmer after the surprise he had experienced, he descended the mountain, at the foot of which was a village, where the people were celebrating a festival or carnival. Overcome by the heat and excitement, he fainted, and some time afterwards found himself closely guarded

in the house of some priests, where, however, he was kindly treated. The curious things which he had in his possession convinced them that their prisoner was worth keeping alive. He explained their use by signs, in which they were greatly interested. The watch pleased them the most, and they easily understood the division of time. When he drew a figure of the earth, with the parallels of latitude and longitude, pointing out the positions of the various countries, including their own, they were greatly astonished, and treated him with increased kindness.

He was taken before their chief—the Jarl—who lives in a stone palace, built as solidly as the pyramids. “Glass is unknown, and curtains or draperies take its place in the windows. Oil-lamps are used, except in the palaces of the nobility and in public places, where an electric light, much brighter than gas, is substituted.” Precious stones, gold, and silver, abound. “The Jarl drives out with four large moose, or mastodon, attached to his chariot, which are harnessed in pairs, the inside horns of each being cut so that they will not interlock. His pleasure barge is drawn by walruses.” Barges and boats were commonly drawn by domesticated seals and walruses. Their arts and productions are described in detail, and are about the same as those of Northern Europe a thousand years ago. The people are numerous, and live in peace and happiness. The sun is their great spirit; shut in by eternal snow and ice, although their own climate is not very severe, they naturally look upon cold as the essence of all that is evil, and ice as its embodiment. When the genial rays of the sun disperse the ice and snow they worship and rejoice. And carrying out the same idea, the infernal regions are stated to be cold, not hot. We all remember the worthy divine in the north of Scotland, who knowing that he could not terrify his shivering congregation by depicting the terrors of fire, painted in its place an Arctic Hell. So Dante, in “The Divine Comedy,” makes the frozen Lake of Cocytus a place where the traitors to kindred and country endure a new torment. So again Shakespeare, in the

well-known soliloquy—

“Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;  
 To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;  
 This sensible warm motion to become  
 A kneaded clod; and the de-lighted<sup>13</sup> spirit  
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
 In thrilling regions of thick-ribbèd ice.”

The narrator goes on to say that it is usual to make ice idols or ice demons for their carnivals; and ice palaces like those often constructed in Russia are also common in winter. He further says that Greenland extends to the Pole and far beyond it, and ends his narrative by stating that at the date on which he writes—May 22nd, 1861—he had been eleven months on the polar continent, and had no desire to leave it.

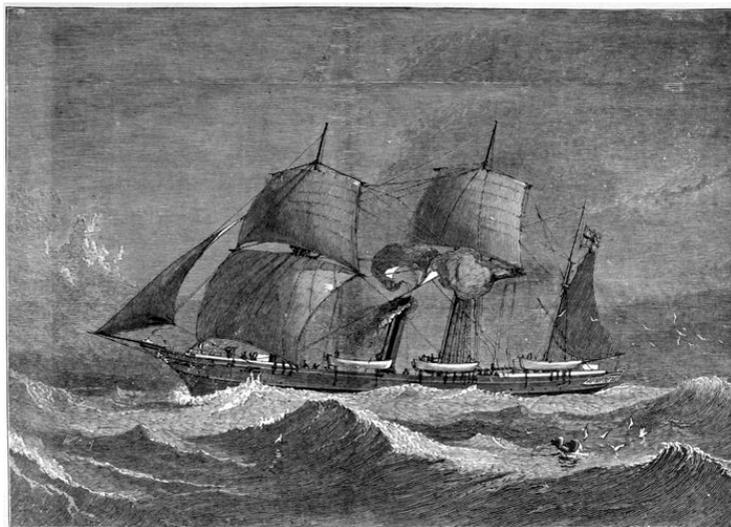
So much for a *canard*, amusing at least from the mock earnestness of the writer. But that a detached colony of descendants from the Northmen *might* be found at some more distant point of Greenland with which we are at present not familiar, is at least possible, and that the climate of the Pole is comparatively temperate has been the belief of some authorities, although, most assuredly, the intense cold experienced by the expedition under Captain Nares at the high latitude attained will not bear out the assertion.

## CHAPTER X.

### CRUISE OF THE “PANDORA.”

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<sup>13</sup> *De-lighted*—*i.e.*, deprived of light.



THE ARCTIC YACHT *PANDORA*.

The Arctic Expedition of 1875-6—Its Advocates—The *Alert* and *Discovery*—Cruise of the *Pandora*—Curious Icebergs—The First Bump with the Ice—Seal Meat as a Luxury—Ashore on a Floe—Coaling at Ivigtut—The Kryolite Trade—Beauty of the Greenland Coast in Summer—Festivities at Disco—The Belles of Greenland—A novel Ball-room—The dreaded Melville Bay—Scene of Ruin at Northumberland House—Devastation of the Bears—An Arctic Graveyard—Beset by the Ice—An Interesting Discovery—Furthest Point attained—Return Voyage—A Dreadful Night—The Phantom Cliff—Home again.

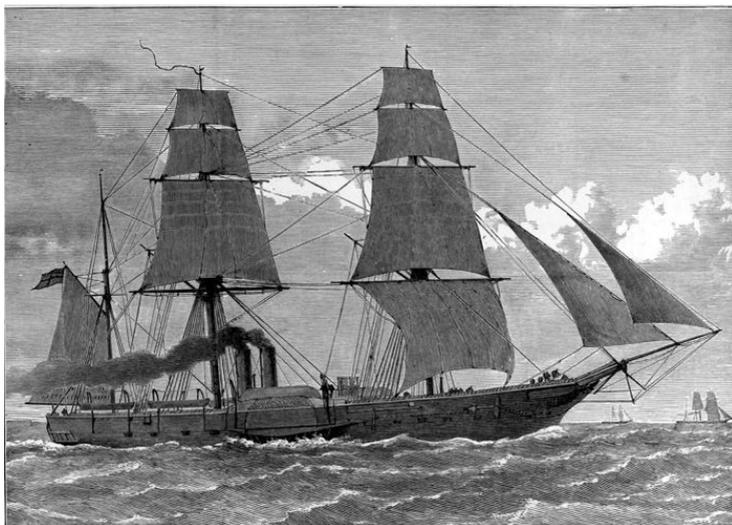
The Arctic expedition of 1875-6 has been the subject of very general interest, and has led to much comment and some adverse criticism. With the latter we have little or nothing to do. If a certain amount of disappointment exists regarding the still undiscovered Pole, let the reader remember that no Arctic expedition whatever has yet fulfilled all the promises and hopes of its youth, and that our brave seamen *have* taken our flag to a higher point than ever attained before. Britain is again foremost, and the names of Nares and Markham stand worthily by the side of Hall and Parry. The conditions under which they made their success were, in some respects, of unparalleled difficulty and hardship.

The renewal of English enterprise in the direction of the Pole was not due to sudden caprice, but was greatly stimulated by the generous rivalry of other nations. Several members of the Royal Geographical Society, prominent among whom were the late Admiral Sherard Osborne and Sir Roderick I. Murchison, so long the president of the body, advocated it with all their strength and might, while that noble-hearted lady, the late Lady Franklin, took the deepest interest in its promotion.

Their representations had due effect on the Government; the necessary votes were passed, and the expedition organised. The

vessels employed were probably as well adapted for Arctic navigation as any that have left our shores for that purpose. The *Alert* is a royal navy steam sloop of 751 tons and 100 horse-power, and was greatly strengthened for her intended voyage. The commander of the expedition, Captain Nares, who had only just been recalled from the memorable voyage of the *Challenger*, was a man of considerable experience, and had been in Arctic service previously. With him was associated Commander A. H. Markham, who had a considerable amount of previous Arctic experience. The second vessel of the expedition, the *Discovery*, had been a Dundee steam whaler, was purchased by the Government, and put under the command of Captain H. F. Stephenson. The total complement of officers and crews on the two vessels consisted of 120 men, the very pick of the navy and whaling marine, many of whom had served in polar seas before. A store ship, the *Valorous*, accompanied them to Greenland, and returned safely in time to enable Mr. Clements R. Markham, a relative of Captain Markham's, who had made a trip on her, to lay before the British Association meeting at Bristol, on August 31st, the earliest news from the expedition. On the voyage to Disco they had encountered heavy weather; but on arrival there it was considered that it would prove a favourable season for Arctic exploration. The *Valorous*, having transferred the stores, &c., intended for the use of the Arctic ships, had parted company on July 16th, leaving the expedition in good health and excellent spirits.

For the present let us leave them to pursue their researches in the polar regions while we speak of the expedition which followed close in their wake, and, indeed, was partly intended to be the means of a last communication with them. We refer to the interesting voyage of the *Pandora*, which brought home very late news from them, and which, considering the brief time in which it was made, deserves to be chronicled as a most successful "dash" into the Arctic regions.



THE ARCTIC STORE SHIP *VALOROUS*.

The *Pandora* was bought from the Navy Department by Captain Allen Young, and specially fitted out by him for Arctic navigation. This was no small matter. Although built for a gunboat, she had to be considerably strengthened. Heavy iron beams and knees were put in amidships, to increase her resisting powers to a squeeze or “nip” in the ice; her hull was enveloped in an outer casing of American elm four and a half inches thick, to strengthen her sides; her bows were encased in solid iron. These changes, while injuring her sailing qualities somewhat, enabled her to work her way among ice, where an ordinary ship would be crushed like an egg-shell. She was a small barque-rigged vessel, of 438 tons register, with steam-power which could on emergencies be worked up to 200 horse-power. The crew and officers numbered thirty men, all told. She was provisioned for eighteen months.

“The promoters of our expedition,” says Mr. J. A. MacGahan, who accompanied it as correspondent of the *New York Herald*, and has since collected his notes in a most interesting book,<sup>14</sup> “were Captain Allen Young, on whom fell the principal burden and expense; Mr. James Gordon Bennett, whom I had the honour to represent; Lieutenant Innes Lillingston, R.N., who went as second in command; and the late Lady Franklin. She had insisted on contributing to the expenses of the expedition, almost against Captain Young’s wishes, who felt by no means confident of doing anything that would entitle him to accept her willing contribution.” It will be remembered that Captain Young had been navigating officer with the memorable McClintock expedition in 1857-9, and that during that time he had made many perilous sledge-journeys. A representative of the Dutch royal navy, Lieutenant Beynen, accompanied them, and was sent out by his Government to report on the expedition, and gain experience in Arctic navigation. Probably, at some future time

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<sup>14</sup> “Under the Northern Lights.” By J. A. MacGahan.

Holland may resume the thread of Arctic exploration where it was dropped by Barentz, the old Dutch navigator, 300 years ago.

On the morning of the 28th of July they arrived in sight of Cape Farewell, and were surrounded on all sides by a field of floating ice. The horizon was white with it, while near the ships great pieces, of every imaginable shape and size, went drifting by in dangerous proximity. There were old castles with broken ruined towers, battlements, and loopholes; castellated fortresses; cathedrals with fantastic Gothic carving, and delicate tracery, and triumphal arches. The narrator says that the animal and vegetable kingdoms were represented by huge mushrooms with broad drooping tops, supported on a single slender stem, and great masses of ice-foliage that crowned groups of beautifully-carved columns, like immense bread-fruit trees, covered with ice. There were swans with long slender necks gracefully poised in the water; there were dragons, lions, eagles; in short, almost every fantastic form that could be imagined, sparkling and gleaming in the bright morning sun. In the path of the vessel great flat pieces, or floes, presented themselves, and grew closer and thicker together, with but very narrow channels of water between them. At last they came to a place where there was no passage at all, unless they went two or three miles out of their route. [94]

Toms, the old gunner, who was out with Captain Young in the *Fox*, was on the bridge conducting the vessel's course, and instead of going around they drove straight at the floe. What had been taken by some on board for a solid field of ice was in reality two large floes joined together at one spot, and thus forming a narrow isthmus only a few feet wide. It was this isthmus that old Toms was going to charge. The wind in the course of the morning had sprung up from the east, and they had it, consequently, on the starboard quarter. The *Pandora* was coming smoothly along under reefed topsails, at the rate of about five knots. In a moment her prow plunged into the ice with the force of a battering-ram. There was a loud crash; the ship quivered and shook; the masts,

with the sails pulling at them, bent and creaked; the ice rolled up before her in great blocks, that fell splashing in the water, and the *Pandora* stopped quite still for the moment, completely jammed. But it was for a moment only. Her sharp iron prow had quite demolished the neck of ice, and it only remained to squeeze herself between the floes into clear water beyond. She wriggled through like an eel, and then shot gaily forward, as though eager for another encounter.

“That was rather a hard bump, Toms, wasn’t it?” said somebody.

“Oh, bless you! that’s nothing,” replied the old sea-dog, with a smile. “We’ll have harder ones nor that before we gets through the north-west passage.” And so they did, as the narrative abundantly shows.

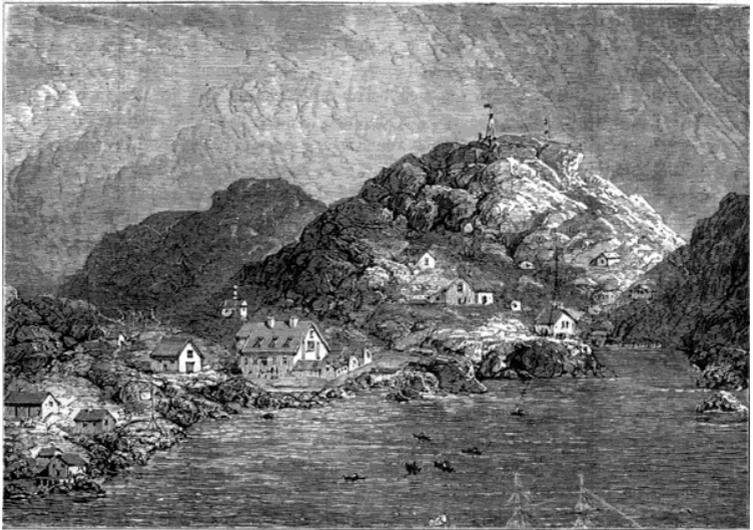
The seals, with their round smooth heads just barely above the surface, are described as looking like plum-puddings floating in the water. As they had been living on salt provisions for twenty days, a great longing for fresh meat came over them. Seal’s liver with bacon is said to form an excellent dish. On one occasion they had nearly killed a seal, when a man was sent after it to finish the business. His weight, when he arrived on the floe, broke the ice, and both fell in together. The seal was lost, but happily the sailor was rescued. Later they were more successful. The officers took to the seal-flesh most kindly, but the sailors were by far too dainty to feed on such unusual food. It is a curious fact that men on Arctic expeditions will often refuse to touch seal or walrus meat, as well as preserved or tinned beef and mutton. The result is the scurvy, which often enough proves fatal.

Captain Young, on the way up to Ivigtut, a little Danish settlement on the west coast of Greenland, brought his vessel alongside a large floe on which five seals were observed, apparently asleep. Thirty gun-barrels were soon levelled on the hapless animals, which lay quite still as the ship came up,

apparently unconscious of their danger. As about two hundred rounds were fired, and yet three of the seals got away, their bravado was partially excusable. One of those killed was perfectly riddled with shot. This animal takes a great deal of killing unless hit exactly in the brain. Soon the ship was moored to the floe, and the officers and men were out to secure their game. On this floating island of ice they found a little lake of water, and having been on short allowance for some days, they hailed it with delight. They took a long drink first of all, then a run over the island and a good roll in the snow, as pleased as schoolboys out for a holiday. After this the ship was watered, amid a great amount of fun and frolic, everybody being so glad to stretch their legs. At Ivigtut the officers went on shore to visit the few Danes of the colony while the vessel was being coaled, and an amusing account is given of the hospitality extended to them. The chronicler mentions very particularly an insinuating drink called "banko," which was ordinarily mingled with layers of sherry, and sometimes claret and sherry. It had a mild, pleasant taste, quite disproportionate to the powerful effects it produced. The governor had entertained the officers of the *Tigress* when she came here in search of the crew of the *Polaris*, Captain Hall's vessel, and they had also drunk banko punch till some of them had been observed to stir it up with their cigars for tea-spoons, and then to express astonishment at the cigars appearing damp! It is at this settlement that the kryolite mines are worked by a Danish company. The mineral is used for a variety of purposes, but principally for making soda, and in the United States for preparing aluminium. McClintock's little steam yacht, the *Fox*, so celebrated in Arctic history in connection with the Franklin search, is now in the employ of this Company. [95]

The Greenland coasts at this season are described as beautiful in the extreme, a broken, serrated line of high, rugged mountains rising abruptly out of the water to a height of 3,000 feet. Over these the sun and atmosphere combine to produce the most

fantastic effects of colour, while ever and anon glimpses of that mighty sea of ice which has overwhelmed Greenland are to be caught. Captain Young, in his progress up the coasts was met by several kyacks—skin canoes—whose occupants had travelled, or rather voyaged, fifteen miles at sea merely to barter their fish for tobacco, biscuit, or coffee. “Imagine a man getting into a canoe and paddling across the English Channel from Dover to Boulogne or Calais in order to sell half-a-dozen trout!” They were thoroughly drenched with the water dashing over them, but had very little in the kyacks, so closely does the skin jacket they wear fit the round hole in the top of the canoe. They were rewarded with a glass of rum, and sold about fifty-five pounds of delicious fish for half a pound of tobacco and a couple of dozen small sea biscuits.



DISCO.

At Disco they were again warmly welcomed by the Danes; and if MacGahan has not been carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, the young ladies must indeed be something delightful. He avers that their small hands and feet would make an English or American girl die with envy, and that they dance like sylphs. Of one he says, gushingly, "It was a pure delight to watch her little feet flitting over the ground like butterflies, or humming-birds, or rosebuds, or anything else that is delicate and sweet and delightful. It was not dancing at all: it was flying; it was floating through the air on a wave of rhythm, without even so much as touching ground." What more could be said after this? He states, however, that they were all very well behaved. They allowed the men not even a kiss or a squeeze of the hand, and knew as well how to maintain their dignity and keep people at a proper distance as any other young ladies. They are all good Christians and church-going people, belonging, as do all the Esquimaux of Greenland, to some form of the Lutheran faith, to which they have been converted by the mild and beneficent influence of the kindly Danes. [96]

The ball-room in which their first entertainment was given was rather small for forty or fifty people to dance in, being only twelve feet by fifteen. It was also, perhaps, a little dark, being lighted by only one small window, for as it was broad daylight at ten o'clock in the evening at that period it was not thought worth while to bring in candles. The ceiling was barely six feet high, and in fact the festive hall was no other than the workshop of Disco's lonely carpenter, which had been cleaned out for the occasion. Over its "dore" the inscription shown in the above illustration was found, intimating that it would "opn" at 8 o'clock. [97]

At Upernavik, the last Danish station at which the *Pandora* stopped, and that only long enough to obtain some dogs, they learned that the English expedition had sailed thence on the 22nd of July. In north latitude 74° they had a glimpse of the grandest



ENTRANCE TO THE MUSIC HALL, DISCO.

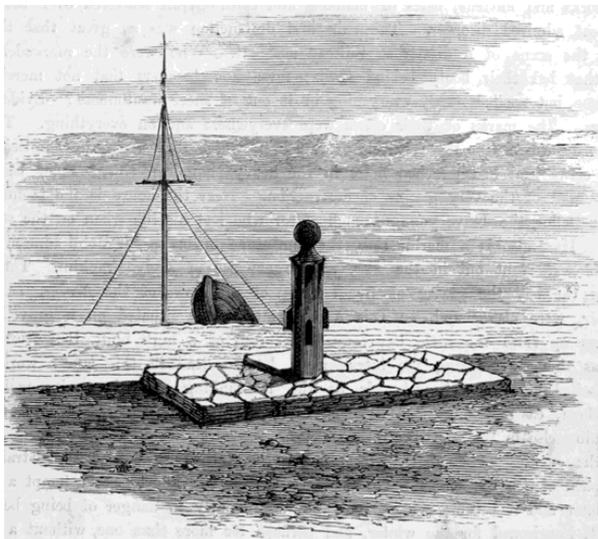


EXPLORERS CROSSING "HUMMOCKS."

of Greenland's glaciers, which is described as a great inclined plane, seventy or eighty miles long, extending back to the interior in one vast icy slope. Immense as was this field of ice, they knew that it was nothing but a small corner of the great, lone, silent, dreary world beyond. Now they entered the dreaded Melville Bay, which is in some years never free from ice. It is often only towards the end of August that ships can get through it. Here, in the middle of that month, the little steam yacht *Fox*, of McClintock's memorable expedition, was caught in the ice, carried down Baffin's Bay and Davis Straits, only to be freed 242 days afterwards by a miracle. The fact of a bear swimming in the sea betokened that ice was not far off, and so it proved. It was not, however, at first very formidable, consisting only of thin, loose floes, that offered little resistance to the sharp prow of the *Pandora*. On the evening of the 19th of August they were at the Carey Islands, where a bootless search was made for a cairn of stones believed to have been erected by Captain Nares. They found, however, two cairns erected by a whaler in 1867, in one of which he had left half a bottle of rum, which, having undergone eight successive freezings, had become as mild as fine old Rhine wine. It is needless to say that the whaling captain's health was drunk therewith and forthwith. Two barrels of letters for the *Alert* and *Discovery* were left there.

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At Beechey Island, visited at different periods by (Sir John) Ross, Belcher, and Franklin, they found the yacht *Mary*, left by the former in 1851, in good condition. Northumberland House, erected by Sir Edward Belcher in 1854 as a depôt for stores, had evidently been broken into. The ground outside was strewn with tins of preserved meats and vegetables, forty-pound tins of pemmican, great rolls of heavy blue cloth, hundreds of pairs of socks and mittens, bales of blankets and clothing, all scattered over the ground in the most admired disorder. The ruin and destruction was so great that the place resembled the scene of a disastrous railway accident. Who were the marauders, these



THE MONUMENT TO BELLOT.

burglars that left their booty behind them; these housebreakers that not merely broke into a house, but spoiled nearly everything in it out of sheer wantonness? Evidently the Polar bears. The marks of their claws were everywhere and on everything. They had even gnawed into two or three barrels of salt beef, which they had quite emptied, and it was their claws that had punched holes in the heavy pemmican tins. Polar bears seem to be possessed of the very genius of destruction. Near the house is the monument of Lieutenant Bellot, the brave young French officer who lost his life when on the search for Franklin. Here also is a marble slab, the tombstone of brave Sir John himself. Both monuments were sent out in the *Fox*, at the expense of Lady Franklin. Three miles farther up the bay the graves of five seamen, of the crews of the *Erebus*, *Terror*, and *North Star*, were also found. "This Arctic graveyard is situated on a gravelly slope, which rises up from the little bay towards the foot of a high bluff, that frowns

down upon it as though resenting the intrusion of human dead in this lonely world. Sad enough looked the poor head-boards as the low-sinking sun threw its yellow rays athwart them, casting long shadows over the shingly slope; silent, sad, and mournful as everything else in this dreary Arctic world.”

On the evening of August 27th they arrived at the entrance of Peel Strait, where a heavy pack of ice was encountered, so dense that it was hopeless to attempt a passage. A little later and it became evident that they were hourly in danger of being beset, and, once beset, imprisoned for the winter, and perhaps for more than one, without a harbour, with no opportunity of accomplishing anything. Neither were they provisioned for a length of time sufficient to run the risk of stopping in that neighbourhood.

On the shores of North Somerset they made an interesting discovery. The *Pandora* had attained the furthest point reached by Ross and McClintock when coming down the coast on foot from the north in 1849, at which time they had built a cairn, and left a record addressed to Sir John Franklin, stating that they had been despatched for his succour. Poor Franklin never found it, but it was reserved for Captain Young to receive it twenty-eight years later. Ross had at that time been within two hundred miles of the spot where the wrecks of Franklin’s vessels had been abandoned.

The *Pandora* at length succeeded in reaching La Roquette Island, and the expedition had, therefore, in a very brief space of time, attained a position only 120 miles from Franklin’s farthest point. Success had crowned their efforts so far. All on board were sanguine that they would ere long be basking in the warmth of a Californian autumn, and enjoying the good things of San Francisco. It was fated otherwise. They found an unbroken ice-field before them, extending for, so far as they could judge, an indefinite distance. They cruised about the island for three days, but matters only grew worse, and, indeed, the ice was moving

slowly towards them. Reluctantly Captain Young decided to give up his attempt at a north-west passage, and return to England. On the way out of Peel Strait, with squalls, snow, and darkness, they had a most difficult task in handling the vessel, having to run races with the driving ice-packs so as to avoid being shut in. The ice-pack at Cape Rennel prevented a passage round it. Suddenly, a snowstorm which had been beating down upon them for the whole night, abated, and disclosed high precipitous cliffs hanging almost over them as it seemed, and "presenting," says Captain Young in his "Journal," "a most ghostly appearance, the horizontal strata seeming like the huge bars of some gigantic iron cage, and standing out from the snow face. In fact, it was the skeleton of a cliff, and we appeared to be in its very grasp. For a few minutes only we saw this apparition, and then all was again darkness." They barely had room to pass between this cliff and the ice-pack, and then hastily ranged about, seeking some escape. After three hours of intense anxiety, a slight movement in the pack was reported from aloft, indicating a weak place in it, and through this gap the vessel at length forced her way. On September 10th they passed through a terrible gale; the heavy seas froze as they fell on the vessel's sides, and the *Pandora* became "one huge icicle." On reaching the Carey Islands they found, at a different spot to that previously visited, a cairn, erected by Captain Nares, from which they obtained a tin tube addressed to the Admiralty. The *Pandora* reached Portsmouth safely on October 16th, 1865, her cruise having been, all in all, one of the most successful of any made in the Arctic seas in a period of time so short.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE "ALERT" AND "DISCOVERY."

Nares' Expedition—Wonderful Passage through Baffin's Bay—Winter Quarters of the *Discovery*—Capital Game-bag—Continued Voyage of the *Alert*—Highest Latitude ever attained by a Ship—"The Sea of Ancient Ice"—Winter Quarters, Employments, and Amusements—The Royal Arctic Theatre—Guy Fawkes' Day on the Ice—Christmas Festivities—Unparalleled Cold—Spring Sledging—Attempt to reach the *Discovery*—Illness and Death of Petersen—The Ravages of Scurvy—Tribute to Captain Hall's Memory—Markham and Parr's Northern Journey—Highest Latitude ever reached—Sufferings of the Men—Brave Deeds—The Voyage Home.

The first official communication received from Captain Nares, and written from Disco, stated that on the voyage out, owing to the heavy lading of the Arctic ships, they were extremely wet and uneasy, and that the hatchways had to be frequently battened down during the prevalence of the many heavy gales encountered. The *Alert* and *Discovery* each lost a whale-boat. A quantity of loose pack-ice had been met after passing Cape Farewell. Mr. Krarup Smith, the Inspector of North Greenland, and the other Danish officials, had been most courteous and obliging, and had engaged to supply from different stations all the Esquimaux dogs they might require.

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Passing over some intermediate details not generally interesting, we find that Captain Nares decided to force his way through the "middle ice" of Baffin's Bay, instead of proceeding by the ordinary route round Melville Bay. On July 24th they ran into the pack, and had the satisfaction, thirty-four hours afterwards, of having completed the passage of the middle ice, an unparalleled feat. "It will ne'er be credited in Peterhead," said

the astonished ice-quartermasters. At Cape York, icebergs, many of them grounded, were noted thickly crowded together. At the south-east point of Carey Island a reserve depôt of provisions, &c., was formed, and the record we have already mentioned as having been recovered by Captain Young was deposited in a cairn. Later, another note was left at Littleton Island. The first ice, in large quantities, was sighted off Cape Sabine on the 30th of July. The pack in the offing consisted of floes from five to six feet thick, with occasionally older and heavier floes, ten to twelve feet in thickness, but always much decayed and honeycombed. The ships were detained at Payer Harbour for three days, watching for an opening in the ice, getting under weigh whenever there appeared the slightest chance of proceeding onwards, but on each occasion being forced to return. On the 4th of August they were enabled to proceed twenty miles up Hayes Sound. A little later, and both ships were for the time hopelessly entangled, and the rudders and screws had to be unshipped. At this period they barely escaped a serious collision with a large iceberg. The repetition of many similar dangers, through which, however, the ships passed safely, would be wearisome to the reader. On August 24th, five miles off Cape Lieber, the pack obliged the vessels to enter Lady Franklin's Sound, on the northern shore of which an indentation of the land gave promise of protection. On a nearer approach they discovered a well-protected harbour inside an island immediately west of Cape Bellot, against which the pack-ice of the channel rested. The next morning they were rejoiced to see a herd of nine musk-oxen feeding close by, all of which were killed. The vegetation was considerably richer than at any part of the coast visited north of Port Foulke, which Captain Nares considers "the Elysium of the Arctic regions." The harbour was found to be perfectly suitable for winter quarters, and it was therefore decided to leave the *Discovery* there, while the *Alert* should push on alone. The *Discovery* was embedded in the ice for ten and a half months. Captain Stephenson, of

that vessel, stated, in a paper read before the Royal Geographical Society, that their first care was to place on shore six months' provisions and fuel, to guard against any possible accident to the ship. They were particularly fortunate in killing musk-oxen and smaller game. Before the darkness set in they had shot thirty-two of the former, and had at one time as much as 3,053 lbs. of frozen meat hanging up. The captain could not say much for its flavour: "it was so very musk." Snow was piled up outside the ship fifteen to twenty feet thick. This and the layer on deck—mingled with ashes, which formed a kind of macadamised walk—kept the warmth in the vessel, and the temperature of the lower deck ranged from 48° to 56°. On October 10th they lost sight of the sun, and did not see it again for 135 days.



WINTER QUARTERS OF THE "DISCOVERY."

The *Alert* on her northward passage had many a severe tussle with the ice, but passed through all dangers successfully. On August 31st Captain Nares had the great satisfaction of having carried his vessel into latitude 82° 24' N., a higher point than ever attained before. The ensign was hoisted at the peak, and there was universal rejoicing on board at this early achievement. [101] It was doubtless regarded as a happy omen of future successes.

At the northern entrance of Robeson Channel the breadth of navigable water became much contracted, until off Cape Sheridan the ice was observed to be touching the shore. In Robeson Channel, except where the cliffs rose precipitously from the sea, and afforded no ledge or step on which the ice could lodge, the shore-line was noted to be fronted, at a few paces distance, by a nearly continuous ragged-topped "ice-wall," from fifteen to thirty-five feet high. It was broken only off the larger ravines. After proceeding some distance north it became evident that their sailing season was rapidly coming to an end. Captain Nares, after a thorough investigation, found that he had to winter in a somewhat exposed place, no harbour being available. He had rounded the north-east point of Grant Land, but instead of finding a continuous coast-line, leading far towards the north, as expected, found himself on the border of an apparently extensive sea, with impenetrable ice on every side. The ice was of most unusual age and thickness, resembling in a marked degree, both in appearance and formation, low floating icebergs rather than ordinary salt-water ice. It has now been termed the "Sea of Ancient Ice." Whereas ordinary ice is usually from two feet to ten feet in thickness, that in the Polar Sea, in consequence of having so few outlets by which to escape to the southward in any appreciable quantity, gradually increases in age and thickness [102] until it measures from 80 to 120 feet, floating with its surface at the lowest part fifteen feet above the water-line.

Strange as it may appear, the extraordinary thickness of the ice saved the ship from being driven on shore, for, owing to its great

depth of flotation, on nearing the shallow beach it grounded, and formed a barrier, inside which the ship was comparatively safe. When two pieces of ordinary ice are driven one against the other and the edges broken up, the crushed pieces are raised by the pressure into a high, long, wall-like hedge of ice. When two of the ancient floes of the Polar Sea meet, the intermediate, lighter, broken-up ice which may happen to be floating about between them alone suffers; it is pressed up between the two closing masses to a great height, producing a chaotic wilderness of angular blocks of all shapes and sizes, varying in height up to fifty feet above water, and frequently covering an area of upwards of a mile in diameter. Captain Nares mentions pieces being raised by outward pressure and crashing together which must have weighed 30,000 tons! A ship between such opposing masses would be annihilated in an instant.

As soon as the shore ice was sufficiently strong Commander A. H. Markham, with Lieutenants A. A. C. Parr and W. H. May under his orders, started on the 25th September with three sledges to establish a depôt of provisions as far in advance to the north-westward as possible. Lieutenant P. Aldrich left four days previously, with two lightly-equipped dog-sledges, to pioneer the road round Cape Joseph Henry for the larger party. He returned on board on the 5th of October, after an absence of thirteen days, having, accompanied by Adam Ayles, on the 27th September, from the summit of a mountain 2,000 feet high situated in latitude  $82^{\circ} 48'$  North—somewhat further north than the most northern latitude attained by their gallant predecessor, Sir Edward Parry, in his celebrated boat and sledge journey towards the North Pole—discovered land extending to the north-westward for a distance of sixty miles to latitude  $83^{\circ} 7'$ , with lofty mountains in the interior to the southward.

On the 14th October, two days after the sun had left them for its long winter's absence, Commander Markham's party returned, after a journey of nineteen days, having with very

severe labour succeeded in placing a depôt of provisions in latitude  $82^{\circ} 44'$  north, and of tracing the coast-line nearly two miles further north, thus reaching the exact latitude attained by Sir Edward Parry.

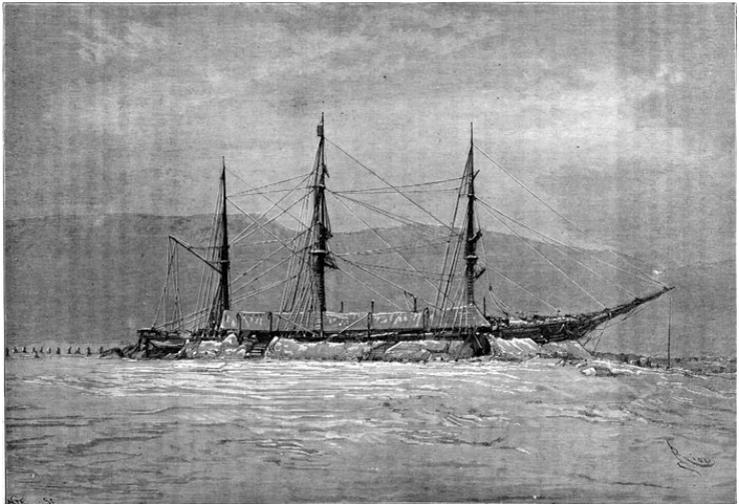
Being anxious to inform Captain Stephenson of his position, and the good prospects before his travelling parties in the following spring in exploring the north-west coast of Greenland, Captain Nares despatched Lieutenant Rawson to again attempt to open communication between the two vessels, although he had grave doubts of his succeeding. Rawson was absent from the 2nd to the 12th of October, returning unsuccessful on the latter day, having found his road again stopped by unsafe ice within a distance of nine miles of the ship. The broken masses of pressed up ice resting against the cliffs, in many places more than thirty feet high, and the accumulated deep snow-drifts in the valleys, caused very laborious and slow travelling.

During these autumn sledging journeys, with the temperature ranging between  $15^{\circ}$  above to  $22^{\circ}$  below zero, the heavy labour, hardships, and discomforts inseparable from Arctic travelling, caused by the wet soft snow, weak ice, and water spaces, which obliged the sledges to be dragged over the hills, combined with constant strong winds and misty weather, were, if anything, much greater than those usually experienced. Out of the northern party of twenty-one men and three officers, no less than seven men and one officer returned to the ship badly frost-bitten, three of these so severely as to render amputation necessary, the patients being confined to their beds for the greater part of the winter.

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During the winter Captain Nares, assisted by his officers, did his very best to keep the crew not merely employed, but amused. A school was organised; and Captain Markham states, to the credit of the Royal Navy, that out of fifty-five men on the *Alert* there were only two who could not read when they came on board. On both vessels there were small printing presses, which were used specially for printing the programmes

of their entertainments, and occasionally even for striking off bills of fare. Each Thursday<sup>15</sup> was devoted to lectures, concerts, readings, and occasional theatrical performances. On the opening night—if any such distinction could be made when all was night—the programme commenced as follows:—“The Royal Arctic Theatre will be re-opened on Thursday next, the 18th inst. (18th November), by the powerful Dramatic Company of the Hyperboreans, under the distinguished patronage of Captain Nares, the Members of the Arctic Exploring Expedition, and all the Nobility and Gentry of the neighbourhood.”



### WINTER QUARTERS OF THE “ALERT.”

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<sup>15</sup> The entertainments were, we are informed by Captain Markham, termed the Thursday “Pops,” and popular they most undoubtedly were.

Meantime, on the *Discovery* something very similar was occurring. As soon as the ice would bear it, they commenced erecting houses, including a magnificent observatory, an ice theatre, and a smithy. The theatre was opened on December 1st. It was the plan for plays to be produced by officers and men alternately. The entertainments were varied by songs and recitations, not a few of these being original. On November 5th they had a bonfire on the ice, and burned the "Guy," according to the usual custom, with rockets and blue lights.

The Rev. Charles Hodson, chaplain of the vessel, says:—"As soon as the ice was sufficiently firm, a walk of a mile in length was constructed by shovelling away the snow. This place was generally used as an exercise ground during the winter. We also constructed a skating-rink there. A free hole in the ice was always kept near the ship. From time to time this gradually closed up, and it then had to be sawn with ice saws or else blasted with gunpowder. The dogs lived on the open floe all the winter. The changes in the temperature are very rapid, and I have known the variation to be as great as 60° in a few hours. The coldest weather we had was in March, when one night the glass showed 70½° below zero.

"And now a few words as to the manner in which we kept Christmas. First of all, in the morning we had Christmas Waits in the usual manner. A sergeant of marines, the chief boatswain's mate, and three others, went round the ship singing Christmas carols suited to the occasion, and made a special stay outside the captain's cabin. On the lower deck in the forenoon there were prayers, and after that captain and officers visited the mess in the lower deck, tasted the pudding, inspected the decorations which had been made, and so on. Then the boxes of presents given by friends in England were brought out, the name of him for whom it was intended having been already fixed to each box, and the presents were then distributed by the captain. Ringing cheers, which sounded strange enough in that lone place, were given for

the donors, some of them very dear indeed to the men who were so far away from their homes. Cheers were also given for the captain and for absent comrades in the *Alert*. A choir was then formed, and 'The Roast Beef of Old England' had its virtues praised again. The men had their dinner at twelve o'clock, and the officers dined together at five. We had brought fish, beef, and mutton, all of which we hung up on one of the masts, and it was soon as hard as a brick, and perfectly preserved. We had also brought some sheep from England with us, and they were killed from time to time. When we arrived in Discovery Bay, as we called it, six of them were alive, but on being landed they were worried by the dogs, and had to be slaughtered. During the winter the men had to fetch ice from a berg about half a mile distant from the ship in order to melt it for fresh water. This used to be brought in sledges.

"The sun returned on the last day in February. From November till February, with the exception of the starlight and occasional moonlight, we had been in darkness, not by any means dense, but sufficiently murky to excuse one for passing by a friend without knowing him."

Captain Nares states that one day early in March, during a long continuance of cold weather, the thermometer on the *Alert* registered a mean or average of minus<sup>16</sup> 73° 7■, or upwards of 105° below the freezing point of water. On the *Discovery* for seven consecutive days the thermometer registered a mean temperature of minus 58° 17■. On the *Alert* for thirteen days a mean temperature of minus 58° 9■ was experienced, and for five days and nine hours a mean temperature of minus 66°

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<sup>16</sup> Few readers will need to be reminded that on the Fahrenheit thermometer commonly used in England zero is expressed by 0, and that the freezing point of water is plus (+) 32°, or 32° above zero. The above temperatures are all minus (-), or below zero. Without remembering these facts, one can hardly appreciate the intense and almost unparalleled cold experienced by the late expedition.

29■. During February the mercury remained frozen for fifteen consecutive days, which it could not have done had not the temperature remained at least 39° below zero. Subsequently the mercury was frozen solid for an almost identical period. One curious effect of the cold was that their breech-loading guns sometimes proved useless, for the barrels contracted so much that the cartridges could not be inserted. Nevertheless the huntsmen were often out, and were fairly successful. The *Alert's* game-bag for winter and early spring included six musk-oxen, twenty hares, seventy geese, twenty-six ducks, ten ptarmigan, and three foxes. That of the *Discovery*, in a lower latitude, was much larger as regards the oxen and hares. The crew of the latter also killed seven seals.

And now the spring sledging season approached, and Captain Nares, anxious to communicate with the *Discovery*, seized the first favourable opportunity (March 12th, 1876) to despatch Sub-Lieutenant Egerton in charge of a sledge. He was only accompanied by Lieutenant Rawson and Christian Petersen, their interpreter. Four days afterwards the little party returned to the ship, in consequence of the severe illness of poor Petersen, who had succumbed to a terrible attack of frost-bite and cramp in the stomach. His feet were almost destroyed and utterly useless; his hands were paralysed, and his face raw. Nothing could keep him warm, though the officers, to their credit, deprived themselves of nearly all their thick clothing for his benefit. After very great persistence they could, indeed, to a certain limited extent, restore the circulation to his extremities, but it became obvious that with the existing temperatures it would be folly to proceed with such a drag and encumbrance on their enterprise. The temperature inside the tent at night was intensely cold, and they had to burrow out a snow hut for the use of the sufferer. Even inside this all the means at their command did not suffice to raise the temperature much above zero, it being 24° below zero at the time in the open air. The hut was simply a hole about six feet by four, and six feet

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deep, covered over with the tent-sledge, &c., and it had occupied them six hours even to accomplish this much for their patient's comfort. Lieutenant Egerton says, in his report to Captain Nares, that Petersen, when asked if he was warm in his feet and hands, constantly responded in the affirmative, but that when examined by them they were found to be gelid and hard. The fact was that all feeling had departed; and it occupied Egerton and Rawson two hours on one occasion to restore circulation to his feet, which they eventually succeeded in doing by rubbing them with their hands and flannels. Leaving a part of their provisions and outfit, they, at eight o'clock on the morning of March 15th, were under way on their return to the vessel. With some assistance, Petersen, after taking a dose of thirty drops of sal-volatile and a little rum—the only thing, indeed, which he could keep on his stomach—got over the first portion of the journey, which was the worst; and as soon as the travelling became easier he was lashed on the sledge and covered with robes. His circulation was so feeble that his face and hands were constantly frost-bitten and his limbs cramped, entailing frequent stoppages, while the two officers did their best to restore the affected parts. This happened over and over again; and there can be no doubt that both Egerton and Rawson behaved in the most humane and heroic manner, suffering as they were in some degree from frost-bite themselves, and having the constant care of the sledge and nine unruly dogs, while the preparations for camping and cooking, into the bargain, fell to their lot. On arrival at the ship every care was taken to relieve Petersen, but eventually his feet had to be amputated, while not all the professional skill and unremitting care of Dr. Colan could save his life. He expired from utter exhaustion three months afterwards. The two brave officers just mentioned, accompanied by two seamen, subsequently made a successful trip to and from the *Discovery*, and afterwards there was frequent communication, as well as co-operation, on the part of both crews, in regard to some of the sledging parties.



AN "ALERT" SLEDGE PARTY EN ROUTE TO THE  
"DISCOVERY."

It would be undesirable to attempt the description in detail of the whole of the many sledge expeditions which were sent out in various directions from both vessels. Among the more important may be named that under Lieutenant Beaumont, of the *Discovery*, who, crossing the difficult, broken, and sometimes moving ice of Robeson Channel, explored the Greenland shores to lat. 82° 18' N. Scurvy made its appearance in a virulent form among his men, only one thoroughly escaping its ravages. The party, in detachments, reached the depôt at Polaris Bay with the greatest difficulty, and not before two poor fellows had succumbed. Soon after the return journey of those who had proceeded furthest had commenced the whole party was attacked by the insidious disease, until at last Lieutenant Beaumont and two others had to drag the other four, who were rendered absolutely *hors de combat*. The sledge, with its living burden, had always to make the journey twice, and often thrice, over the same road, and that a rough and difficult route over broken and hummocky ice. "Nevertheless," says Captain Nares, "the gallant band struggled

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manfully onwards, thankful if they made one mile a day, but never losing heart." A relief party, consisting of Lieutenant Rawson and Dr. Coppinger, with Hans, an Esquimaux, and a dog-sledge, went out in search of them, and met them providentially, just as even the two hardiest of the men were giving in. Indeed, for part of the journey the hauling was performed entirely by the three officers. How thankful were they to at length reach a pleasant haven—Polaris Bay, the spot so intimately connected, as we shall hereafter see, with the memory of poor Hall, the American explorer, and where Captain Stephenson, of the *Discovery*, had a little while before performed a thoughtful and graceful act in erecting over his grave a tablet and head-board! At Polaris Bay most of the invalids soon recruited, and some of this happy result was due to the fact that those able to get about were successful in shooting game enough to furnish a daily ration of fresh meat. When they eventually reached their vessel they had been absent 132 days, a long outing in the Arctic regions.

There were so many parties in the field at one time that we must confine ourselves very much to results, as our narrative would otherwise be a series of repetitions. Lieutenant Archer, of the *Discovery*, explored Lady Franklin Sound, proving that it terminates at a distance of sixty-five miles from the mouth with lofty mountains and glacier-filled valleys; while Lieutenant Fulford and Dr. Coppinger examined Petermann Fiord, finding it terminate in the precipitous cliff of a glacier. A seam of excellent coal, 250 yards long and over eight yards thick, was found near the winter quarters of the *Discovery*. Lieutenant Aldrich, of the *Alert*, made a detailed exploration of the northern shores of Grinnell Land for 220 miles, the main gist of his discoveries being that there was no appearance of land to its northward; and no doubt some will see in this another argument in favour of the "open" Polar Sea theory, to which we have already alluded. When, on his return, he was met by a relief party under Lieutenant May, only one of his men was able to drag with him at the ropes.

Four men were being carried, while two struggled on by the side of the sledge. The scurvy here, as with all the parties, attacked the men, leaving the officers scatheless.

The journey, however, which we are about to briefly describe, was the most interesting of any undertaken on the expedition under review. Commander Markham and Lieutenant Parr, pushing forward almost due north, over and among the stupendous masses of ice which covered the Polar Sea, after many a weary struggle reached the highest latitude ever attained—viz., 83° 20' 26" N. Parry has now to resign the place of honour which he had held for close on half a century.

This division was known as the “Northern,” in contradistinction to the “Western,” the “Greenland,” and others, and consisted of thirty-three officers and men, while an additional sledge, with four men, accompanied them for a few days to form a depôt of provisions some distance from the ship for use on their return should they have run short. Of the thirty-three engaged, it was not supposed that all would proceed to the furthest point; but Dr. Moss, and Mr. White one of the engineers, having charge of the third and fourth sledges, went with the understanding that they should assist the party to pass the heavy barrier of stranded floe-bergs bordering the coast. Each of the sledges had its own name; indeed, this was true of all those employed. Those of the northern division were the *Marco Polo*, *Victoria*, *Bulldog*, and *Alexandra*. Two boats, equipped and provisioned for seventy days, were taken. In an interesting paper read before a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society by Captain Markham, on December 12th, 1876, he stated that the sledges to which they gave a decided preference were what are commonly called the eight-man sledges, each crew consisting of an officer and seven men. The extreme weight of these when packed and fully equipped for an extended journey, on leaving the ship, was 1,700lbs., or at the rate of 220lbs. to 240lbs. per man to drag. The tents, each sledge crew being provided with one, were eleven

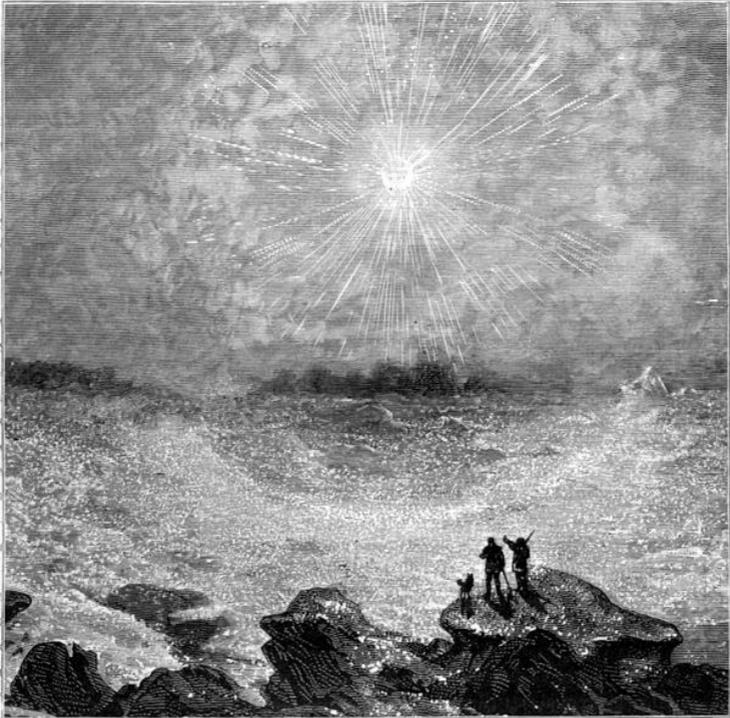
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feet in length, affording a little under fourteen inches space for each man to sleep in, the breadth of the tent being about the length of a man. The costume was composed of duffle, a woollen material resembling thick blanket, over which was worn a suit of duck to act as a "snow repeller." Their feet were encased in blanket wrappers, thick woollen hose, and mocassins. Snow spectacles were invariably worn. After their first adoption they were comparatively exempt from snow blindness. They slept in duffle sleeping bags, and their tent robes were made of the same material. They had three meals a day. Breakfast during the intensely cold weather was always discussed in their bags. It consisted of a pannikin full of cocoa, and the same amount of pemmican with biscuit. The pemmican was always mixed with a proportion of preserved potatoes. After marching for about five or six hours a halt was called for luncheon. This meal consisted of a pannikin of warm tea, with 4ozs. of bacon and a little biscuit to each man. When the weather was intensely cold, or there was any wind, this meal was a very trying one. They were frequently compelled to wait as long as an hour and a half before the tea was ready, during which time they had to keep continually on the move to avoid frost-bite. The question, "Does it boil?" was constantly heard; and the refractory behaviour of the kettle tried the unfortunate cook's temper and patience to the utmost. After the day's march—sometimes ten to eleven, and even twelve working hours—had terminated, and every one was comfortably settled in his bag, supper, consisting of tea and pemmican, was served, after which pipes were lighted, and the daily allowance of spirits issued to those who were not total abstainers. The mid-day tea was found most refreshing and invigorating, and it was infinitely preferred by the men to the old custom of serving half the allowance of grog at that time.

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The party started on April 3rd (1876) from the vessel, and for a few days, although the route was difficult, made fair progress. The men were in good health and spirits, and, except



SUNSHINE IN THE POLAR REGIONS.

a few trifling cases of snow blindness, there were no casualties to report. The reader will not need to be informed that snow blindness is produced by the intense glitter of the sunlight on the snow crystals. Even as early as April 6th we read in Markham's "Journal"<sup>17</sup> of a beautiful sunny day, when the temperature was 35° below zero, and everything frozen stiff and hard. When as far as the eyes can reach in any direction there is nothing but a dazzlingly white field of snow or snow-covered hummocks, the effect is extremely painful, and, indeed, would soon render them weak and sore, and eventually blind, but for the use of "goggles" in some form. In the various journals of the expedition we read of different kinds, made of coloured or smoked glass, &c. The writer has seen among the natives of Northern Alaska, and has himself used, *wooden* goggles. Covering each eye is an oval piece of wood, usually painted black, scooped out like and about the size of the bowl of a dessert-spoon, with a narrow, straight slit cut through the middle. These, with the leather strips by which they are tied on, look clumsy enough, but were found effectual in use. Among natives even, accustomed to the glare on the snow, who had neglected their use in spring, one might often note those with swollen, red, and weak eyes.

To return to our expedition. On reaching a depôt made at Cape Joseph Henry (Grinnell Land), the point from which they would leave the land, the party was re-arranged; only fifteen men with three sledges, carrying a weight of 6,079 pounds in all, were to form the northern party, which, under Markham and Parr, would proceed direct "to sea." It is needless to say that it was a sea of ice, and very ancient ice also, making the travelling correspondingly difficult from the enormous size of the hummocks and extent of their fields. Perhaps the entries appended to each day's travel in Markham's "Journal" will give as good an idea of the difficulty and the tortuous nature of their route, and of the frequency of

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<sup>17</sup> "Journals and Proceedings of the Arctic Expedition, 1875-6," &c. (printed as a Parliamentary Blue-book).

their trips over the same road being duplicated and triplicated, as any direct description. We find constantly entries like the following:—"Course and distance made good north four miles. Distance marched, thirteen miles." This is a mild example. It was found impossible to move the whole of their heavy loads at one time. Indeed, during a large part of the journey but one sledge at a time could be dragged forward. This entailed returning *twice*, and in effect making *five* trips over the same route, thus: forward with number one; return and forward with number two; return and forward with number three, the process being repeated as long as the endurance of the party was equal to it. One mile of progress became therefore five of actual travel; in some cases, where the parties on the return journeys had become enfeebled, and had to be carried on the sledges, *three* returns had to be made by the working members, thus entailing *seven* trips over the same route. Markham's "Journal" for April 10th has, "Distance made good, one mile. Distance marched, seven." On the 12th it was as one and a half to nine, on the 17th as one and a quarter to nine, and on the 18th as one to ten, the latter taking ten hours to accomplish. The writer can understand all this well, having in a minor degree had the same experiences in Northern Alaska, where the winters are only a shade less severe than in these extreme latitudes.<sup>18</sup> [111]

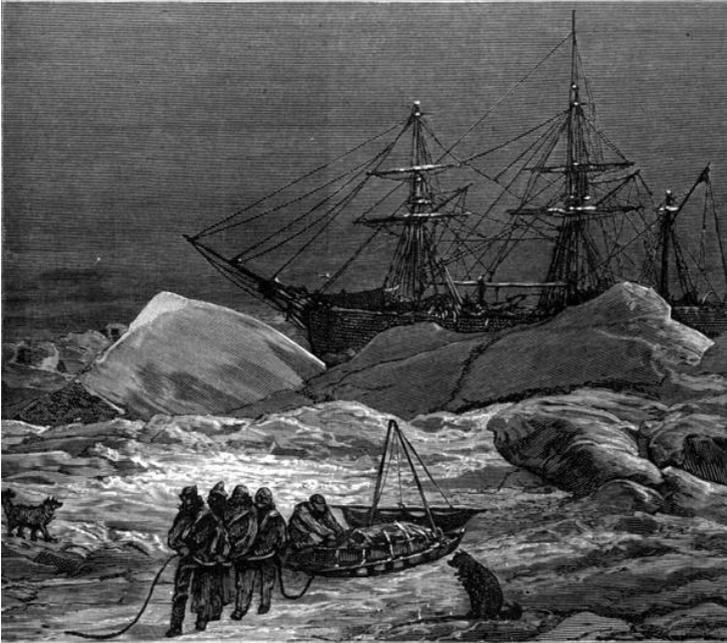
The men were now dragging 405 lbs. apiece, and the exertion and severe climate were beginning to tell upon them. The symptoms of scurvy were plain enough, and on the 19th we do not wonder to find Markham determining to leave one of his boats. "Before quitting the boat an oar was lashed to the mast, and the mast stepped, yard hoisted, and decorated with some old clothes," in order that they might be sure to find it on their return. No wonder the men worked a little livelier shortly afterwards,

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<sup>18</sup> Mercury frequently froze during the writer's stay on the Yukon, and other parts of Northern Alaska, in the winter of 1866-7. On one occasion the thermometer registered 58° below zero (90° below the freezing point of water).

for they were thus relieved of dragging a matter of 800 lbs. Two of them, however, were already prostrated with scurvy, and had to be carried on the sledges. In journeying to the northward the route seldom lay over smooth ice, and the somewhat level floes, or fields, were thickly studded over with rounded, blue-topped ice humps, ten or twenty feet high, laying sometimes in ranges, but more often separated, at a distance of 100 to 200 yards apart, the depressions between being filled with snow, deeply scored into ridges by the wind, the whole composition being well comparable to a suddenly frozen oceanic sea. Separating the floes were "hedges" of ice masses, often forty to fifty feet high, or more, thrown together in irregular and chaotic confusion, and where there was little choice of a road over, through, or round about them. Among and around these, again, were steep-sided snow-drifts, sloping down from the highest altitude of the piled-up masses to the general level. "The journey," says Captain Nares in the general report, "was consequently an incessant battle to overcome ever-recurring obstacles, each hard-won success stimulating them for the next struggle. A passage way had always to be cut through the squeezed-up ice with pick-axes, an extra one being carried for the purpose, and an incline picked out of the perpendicular side of the high floes, or roadway built up, before the sledges, generally one at a time, could be brought on. Instead of advancing with a steady walk, the usual means of progression, more than half of each day was expended by the whole party facing the sledge and pulling it forward a few feet at a time." Occasionally a little "young ice," which had formed between the split-up floes of ancient date, would afford them better travelling, but this luxury was not often found. As the warmer weather approached—anything above zero was considered warm—they were much troubled by wind, snow-fall, and foggy weather. On April 30th so thick was it that they could scarcely see the length of two sledges ahead, and as they were surrounded by hummocks they were obliged to halt,

for fear of becoming entangled. It would be wearisome to the reader to enlarge upon similar experiences, which were of daily occurrence.



A SLEDGE PARTY STARTING FOR CAPE JOSEPH HENRY.

They had on May 11th exceeded by several days the time for which they were provisioned, and so many of the men were, from the weakening effects of scurvy, actually *hors de combat*, or as nearly as possible useless, that it was determined to make a camp in which to leave the invalids, while the rest should push on for one final "spurt." On the morning of the 12th, therefore, leaving the cooks to attend upon the sufferers, the remainder of the party, carrying the sextant and artificial horizon, and

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also the sledge-banners and colours, started northwards. "We had," says Markham, "some very severe walking, struggling through snow up to our waists, over or through which the labour of dragging a sledge would be interminable, and occasionally almost disappearing through cracks and fissures, until twenty minutes to noon, when a halt was called. The artificial horizon was then set up, and the flags and banners displayed, these fluttering out bravely before a S.W. wind, which latter, however, was decidedly cold and unpleasant. At noon we obtained a good altitude, and proclaimed our latitude to be  $83^{\circ} 20' 26''$  N., exactly  $399\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the North Pole. On this being duly announced, three cheers were given, with one more for Captain Nares; then the whole party, in the exuberance of their spirits at having reached their turning-point, sang the 'Union Jack of Old England,' the grand Palæcrystic sledging chorus, winding up, like loyal subjects, with 'God Save the Queen.' These little demonstrations had a good effect on the spirits of the men, and on their return to the camp a second celebration, in which even the invalids joined, occurred, when a magnum of whisky, that had been sent by Scotch friends to be consumed at the highest latitude attained, was produced, and the steaming grog, so dear to the sailor's heart, was brewed. At supper, a hare, shot by Dr. Moss shortly before they parted company at Depôt Point, was added to their usual fare of pemmican, and in the evening, cigars, presented to them by Lieutenant May before leaving the ship, were issued to each man. The day was brought to a close with songs, and general hilarity prevailed.

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Markham speaks of their attempt almost as a failure. It was, however, the greatest success of the expedition, although unhappily purchased at the expense of one life. Passing over the return journey, we find that on the evening of June 8th Lieutenant Parr, who had volunteered to take singly and alone the sad intelligence that nearly the whole party were prostrated with scurvy, arrived at the ship. Commander Markham and the



ARRIVAL OF LIEUTENANT PARR ON BOARD THE  
"ALERT."

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few men who were able to keep on their feet had succeeded by veritable “forced marches” in conveying the invalids to the neighbourhood of Cape Joseph Henry, thirty miles distant from the ship; but each day was adding to the intensity of the disease, and lessening the power of those still able to work. Parr, with brave determination, started alone, with only an alpenstock and a small allowance of provisions, and completed his long and solitary walk over a very rough icy road, deeply covered with newly-fallen snow, within twenty-four hours. If, indeed, a large part of Markham’s party could have done it at all, it would have taken them, with their heavy loads, a week to ten days to accomplish the same distance. No time was lost in making arrangements for their succour, and Captain Nares himself, with two strong detachments, started at midnight. By making forced marches, Lieutenant May, Dr. Moss, and a seaman, with a light dog-sledge, laden with appropriate medical stores, reached the camp fifty hours from the time that Lieutenant Parr had left it, but, unfortunately, too late to save the life of George Porter, gunner R.M.A., who had expired a few hours previously, and was already buried in the snow. Of the original seventeen members of the party, only five—the two officers and three of the men—were able to drag the sledges. Three others manfully kept to their feet to the last, but were so weak that they were constantly falling, and sometimes fainting, while the remaining eight had utterly succumbed, and had to be carried on the sledges.

This is not the place for a medical discussion. Captain Nares’ conduct in partially neglecting to supply the parties with sufficient of that great anti-scorbutic, lime-juice, has been severely handled, and not without some show of justice. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the disease attacked a part of the crews who had *remained* on both vessels and had been well supplied with all dietary and medical necessaries. At one time thirty-six cases were under treatment on the *Alert*, making it resemble a naval hospital.

Captain Nares may be allowed to give in brief his reasons for returning home that season. The enfeebled state of his crew precluded the hope that, even when recovered, they would accomplish as much as, or at all events more than, had been already done. He believes that from any position in Smith's Sound attainable by a ship it would be impossible to advance nearer the Pole by sledges. Furthermore, that all that he could have hoped to accomplish by stopping another winter was perhaps an extended exploration of Grant Land to the south-westward, and Greenland for perhaps fifty miles further to the north-eastward or eastward. And to his credit it must be scored that he brought the vessels home in nearly as good condition as they would have returned from any foreign station. After many a fight with the elements and many an encounter with the ice, the *Alert* and *Discovery* reached our shores safely on October 27th, 1876. The reader knows the rest, and if he is of our mind will not grudge the honours bestowed on men who, if they had not accomplished all that was expected, had at least done more than any of their predecessors in the frozen fields of the far north.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### THE FIRST ARCTIC VOYAGES.

Early History of Arctic Discovery—The “Hardy Norseman”—Accidental Discovery of Iceland—Colony Formed—A Fisherman Drifted to Greenland—Eric the Red Head—Rapid Colonisation—Early Intercourse with America—Voyages of the Zeni—Cabot's Attempt at a North-west Passage—Maritime Enterprise of this

Epoch—Voyage of the *Dominus Vobiscum*—Of the *Trinitie*  
and *Minion*—Starvation and Cannibalism—A High-handed  
Proceeding—Company of the Merchant  
Adventurers—Attempts at the North-east—Fate of  
Willoughby—Chancellor, and our First Intercourse with  
Russia.

And now, having noted the results attained by the latest expedition which has dared to attempt the discovery of the North Pole,<sup>19</sup> let us glance at the progress of northern discovery from the very beginning, and watch the gradual steps by which such discoveries were rendered possible. We shall have to go back to a period when no compass guided the mariner on his watery way, when sextants and artificial horizons were undreamed of, when navigation, in a word, was but in its second stage of infancy. And although many of the earlier discoveries were the result of pure accident, we shall see much to admire in the enterprise and hardihood of explorers who ventured almost blindfold into unknown seas, abounding in special obstacles and dangers.

With the discovery of Iceland and Greenland virtually commences our knowledge of the northern and Arctic seas. The Romans, even as late as Pliny's time, had no correct knowledge of the North Sea and Baltic, and whatever they did know seems to have been derived second-hand from the Carthaginians. In the days of our good King Alfred our ancestors did undoubtedly engage in the pursuit of the whale and sea-horse, but it is to the "hardy Norseman," whose

"House of yore  
Was on the foaming wave,"

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<sup>19</sup> The recently-reported exploit of Professor Nordenskjold, of which we have at present the barest outlines, does not properly come under this category. It was in reality a successful voyage by the north-west passage, and must eventually find its place in these pages.

that we are indebted for the first great discoveries. Conquering and ravaging wherever they went, spreading not merely terror and ruin, but also population and some of the ruder forms of civilisation, these Scandinavian pirates were the only rulers of the main in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, during which they incessantly ravaged our coasts, penetrated the very heart of France, established settlements, and even levied tribute on the reigning monarch. These bold Northmen ventured in vessels which now-a-days would be regarded as unsuitable for the most trifling sea voyages. In the year 861, Naddodr, a Norwegian Viking, bent on a piratical trip to the Faroe Islands, was driven by an easterly gale so far to the north-westward that he reached an utterly unknown island. Its mountains were snow-covered, and the first name suggested by this fact, and which he bestowed on the island, was Sneeland (Snowland). Certain Swedes ventured there three years afterwards, and on their return gave such a very lively account of its vegetation and soil that an emigration followed. One of the first adventurers thither was Flokko. The secret of the magnetic power, as applied to the compass, although known apparently in the earliest ages to the Chinese, was entirely unknown to the Scandinavians; and Flokko had provided himself with a raven, or, as some accounts say, four ravens, which, Noah-like, he let loose, and which guided him to the land of which he was in quest. He passed a winter there, and from the large quantity of drift-ice which encumbered the northern bays and coasts, changed its name to that which it at present bears—Iceland. In the year 874, Ingolf and other Norwegians, sick of the tyranny of their king, Harold, determined to settle in the new-found island. On approaching the coast, the leader, determining to be guided by chance in his selection of a locality, threw overboard a wooden door, which floated into a fiord on the southern side of the island, and the emigrants landed there. Others soon joined the little colony, bringing with them their cattle, implements, and household goods. From very early

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Icelandic records it is interesting to learn that these Norwegians found indications that others had preceded them, as on the shore were discovered crosses, bells, and books, and other relics of the Christian worship of those days. It is very generally believed that these were of Irish origin. While the new colony was yet young, one Gunbiörn, a fisherman, was drifted in his boat far to the westward, and he may perhaps be regarded as the real discoverer of Greenland, but, although he sighted the land, he did not attempt to explore it. About the year 982, Eric Rauda, or Eric the Red Head, a man who had been convicted of manslaughter in Iceland, was banished from the island for a term of years. Sailing with some companions to the westward, he reached Greenland, and spent three years in its examination, returning at the end of that time to Iceland, where he spread a somewhat high-flown account of "its green and pleasant meadows" and of its extensive fisheries. No less than twenty-five vessels were despatched from Iceland for the newly-discovered land, a significant proof of the early progress of the former colony. One-half of these were lost; the others reached Greenland in safety.

By accident or design these Scandinavians were the great explorers of their day, and the colonisation of Greenland virtually led to the first European intercourse with North America. An Icelandic settler, one Bjarni, on a voyage by which he hoped to reach Greenland, encountered severe weather, and was driven on a part of the American coast, now believed to have been that of Nantucket Island, south of the State of Massachusetts. The account he gave on his return inflamed the ambition of Heif, or Heifr, the son of that Eric who had founded the colony on Greenland. He equipped a vessel, and set sail for the New World. On approaching the coast they observed a barren and rocky island, which they named *Helleland*, and to a low sandy shore beyond it, which was covered with wood, they gave the name *Markland*. "Two days after this they fell in with a new coast of land, to the northward of which they observed a

large island. They ascended a river, the banks of which were covered with shrubs, bearing fruits of a most agreeable and delicious flavour. The temperature of the air felt soft and mild to the Greenland adventurers, the soil appeared to be fertile, and the river abounded with fish, and particularly with excellent salmon.”<sup>20</sup> To the island they gave the name *Vinland*, because wild grapes, or berries resembling grapes, were found there. They had reached some part of the coast of Newfoundland, in all probability. The intercourse between Greenland and America was kept up to the fourteenth century, principally for the purpose of obtaining wood, but no colony was formed. Meantime the Greenland colonies grew and flourished. Sixteen churches were erected, and nearly three hundred hamlets formed on the east and west sides. That on the west had increased till it numbered four parishes, containing one hundred villages, but being engaged in perpetual hostility with the native Esquimaux, then known as Skrœlings, the colony was ultimately destroyed. In 1721, when the excellent missionary, Hans Egede, visited that country, on its being re-colonised by the Greenland Company, the ruins of their edifices were still to be found. The fate of the eastern colony was, if possible, still more deplorable. It had, for a time, a greater population than that of the western side. “A succession of sixteen bishops is recorded in the Iceland annals,” says Barrow, “but when the seventeenth was proceeding from Norway, in 1406, to take possession of his see, a stream of ice had fixed itself to the coast, and rendered it completely inaccessible; and from that period to the present time no intercourse whatever has been had with the unfortunate colonists.” It is related in the “History of Greenland” by Thormoder Torfager, that Amand, Bishop of Skalholt, in Iceland, in returning to Norway from that island, about the middle of the sixteenth century, was driven by a storm near to the east coast of Greenland, and got so close

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<sup>20</sup> Sir John Barrow: “Chronological History of Voyages into the Arctic Regions.”

that the inhabitants could be seen driving their cattle, but they did not attempt to land. The fate of the East Greenland colony has been the cause of much discussion, some contending that it never was on the eastern side, but on the western; but that there were two distinct colonies cannot be doubted. A field of ice has apparently blocked the eastern coast for centuries, and all attempts made to penetrate it have failed, as we shall see in the progress of our narrative. Up to the end of the last century, the Esquimaux of the western side spoke of a foreign race, taller than themselves, and of whom they were greatly afraid, regarding them as cannibals and as their natural enemies. When they had met, the former had always fled, the latter shooting after them with arrows. Crantz, a great authority on Greenland, says:—"If this report can be depended upon, we might suppose that these men were descended from the old Norwegians, had sheltered themselves from the savages in the mountains, lived in enmity to them out of resentment for the destruction of their ancestors, pillaged them in the spring when sustenance failed them, and were looked upon by the savages as man-eaters, and fabulously represented through excess of fear."

The above introduction to our subject will pave the way for the period when the history of Arctic and northern voyages becomes more and more definite. We begin with those of the Zeni brothers, from which the mists of obscurity and error have only recently been cleared, through the patient researches of a most careful student and geographer.

The voyages of the Zeni have generally been either ignored or considered worse than mythical. For some three centuries these noble Venetian adventurers have indeed been subjected to an amount of contumely and abuse sufficient to have made them turn in their graves. But a champion has arisen in the person of R. H. Major, Esq., F.S.A., one of the secretaries of the Royal Geographical Society, who, clearing their narratives from subsequent interpolations, has shown that their own voyages,

and those of others recorded by them were both genuine and important. Their history, in brief, is as follows:—Towards the close of the fourteenth century, Nicolo Zeno, a member of a distinguished Venetian family, sailed on a voyage of discovery in the northern seas. Wrecked on the Faroe Islands, Sinclair, the Earl of Orkney and Caithness, a noble pirate, ambitious as any sovereign for conquest, took him into his service as pilot, and, later, Nicolo was joined by his brother Antonio. Many of the journals and documents of the Zeni were subsequently lost, and their narrations were edited by a descendant, who mixed with them much of the false geography of the day and conjectures of his own. This was the point of trouble. The narrative cleared of a mass of error by Mr. Major's investigations, there can now be no doubt that Nicolo visited Greenland, where he found a monastery of friars, preachers, and a church of St. Thomas close by a volcanic hill. There was also a hot-water spring, which the monks used for heating the church and the entire monastery, and by which they cooked their meat and baked their bread. By a judicious use of this hot water they raised in their small covered gardens the flowers, fruits, and herbs of more temperate climates, thereby gaining much respect from their neighbours, who brought them presents of meat, chickens, &c. They were indebted, the narrative says, to the volcano for the very materials of their buildings, for by throwing water on the burning stones while still hot they converted them into a tenacious and indestructible substance, which they used as mortar. They had not much rain, as there was a settled frost all through their nine months' winter. They lived on wild fowl and fish, which were attracted by the warmth of that part of the sea into which the hot water fell, and which formed a commodious harbour. The houses were built all round the hill, and were circular in form and tapering to the top, where was a little hole for light and air, the ground below supplying all necessary heat. In summer time they were visited by ships from the neighbouring islands and from Trondheim, which

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brought them corn, cloths, and other necessaries in exchange for fish and skins. The narrative goes on to speak of the fishermen's boats, in shape like a weaver's shuttle, and made of the skins and bones of fishes, and other points indicating a confirmation of the facts already mentioned concerning the early history of Greenland. On the death of Nicolo Zeno, his brother Antonio succeeded to his property, dignities, and honours, with which latter, it seems, he would have gladly dispensed, wishing to return to his own country, but the earl would not hear of it. Antonio therefore remained in his service, and has recorded the accounts of some fishermen who had undoubtedly reached North America; as also a voyage made by the Earl Sinclair and himself, wherein the former at least appears to have reached Newfoundland and Labrador. A part of these voyages may with more propriety be considered when we come to the discoveries in regard to the New World made by Columbus and the Cabots. And here a fact little known may be briefly recorded, on account of the absence of almost any history, that Cristoforo Colon (Columbus), prior to those great voyages which have made his name immortal, did undoubtedly make a northern voyage, visiting both Greenland and Iceland. The object of this voyage is unknown; but, judging from the ruling ambition of the navigators of those days, it was to attempt a north-west or north-east passage to the Indies. As our next voyage will show, it is a question to whom belongs the honour of having first made this attempt.

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Giovanni Cabota, or Cabot, a Venetian, had settled in Bristol during the reign of Henry VII., and being a skilful pilot and navigator, the king encouraged him to attempt discoveries by granting him a patent, in virtue whereof he had leave to go in search of strange lands, and to conquer and settle them. One-fifth of the profits was to be the king's. The patent bears date March 5th, 1496, and is granted to Cabot and his three sons, Ludovico, Sebastian, and Sancio. There is some little difficulty in collating the various accounts collected by Hakluyt,

but the voyage reported by Sebastian to the Pope's legate in Spain is distinct enough. He says in effect that the discoveries of Columbus had inflamed his desire to attempt to reach India by the north-west. By studying the globe—"understanding by reason of the sphere," he terms it—he thought that he must, theoretically at least, reach India that way, if no land intervened. He, of course, knew nothing of the icy barriers that stopped Franklin and M'Clure from actually taking a vessel that way. The king favoured his ideas, "and immediately commanded two caravels to be furnished with all things appertaining to the voyage," which was made, as far as he could remember, in 1496. Sailing to the north-west, he encountered land in latitude 56°. Then, despairing to find the passage, he turned back, sailing down the coast of America as far as Florida, when, his provisions failing, he returned to England. The Cabots brought home three natives of Newfoundland, who "were clothed in beasts' skins, and did eat raw flesh, and, spake such speech that no man could understand them; and in their demeanour like to brute beasts." The attempt of Cabot furnishes a clue to the object of many subsequent voyages, which were intended to have been made *viâ* the Arctic Seas to the Pacific and Indian Oceans. It must be remembered that it was not till 1498 that the route to the Indies *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope was discovered. That *viâ* Cape Horn, as we shall see, was discovered still later.

In Hakluyt's collection of voyages a very curious poem is reprinted, complaining of the neglect of the navy in the time of Henry VI., and praising highly "the policee of keeping the see in the time of the merveillous werriour and victorious prince, King Henry the Fift." The fact is that for some little time the spirit of maritime adventure seems to have slumbered, subsequent to the voyages just recorded. It, however, broke out in full force in the reign of Henry VIII., and flourished still more particularly in that of Queen Elizabeth. In 1527, "King Henry VIII. sent two faire ships, well manned and victualled, having in them divers

cunning men, to seek strange regions, and so they set forth out of the Thames the 20th day of May, in the 19th yeere of his raigne.” This voyage was despatched at the instance of Master Robert Thorne, of Bristol, who, in his “exhortation” to the king, gave “very weighty and substantial reasons to set forth a discoverie, even to the North Pole.” One of the vessels was lost “about the great opening between the north parts of Newfoundland and Meta incognita, or Greenland,” and the other returned, having accomplished nought, about the beginning of October. Hakluyt tried hard to discover the names of the vessels, and of the “cunning men” aboard them. He could only learn that one of the ships was called the *Dominus Vobiscum*, and that a wealthy canon of St. Paul’s, a very scientific person, had accompanied the expedition. “This,” writes Hakluyt, evidently in no happy frame of mind, “is all that I can hitherto learne or finde out of this voyage, by reason of the great negligence of the writers of those times, who should have used more care in preserving of the memories of the worthy actes of our nation.” Master Thorne deserves, however, the credit of having been the first distinct advocate of Polar exploration in the full sense of the term, or, is at least, the first of whom we have any record.

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The general interest felt in the subject of the North-west Passage about this period may be inferred from the relation of the next voyage, that of the *Trinitie* and *Minion* in 1536, where several gentlemen of the Inns of Court and Chancery, “and divers others in good worship, desirous to see the strange things of the world,” accompanied the expedition. Of “sixe-score persons” in the “two tall ships,” thirty were private gentlemen. The voyage was instigated by Master Hore, of London, “a man of goodly stature and of great courage, and given to the study of cosmographie,” and was directly encouraged by Henry VIII. After a tedious voyage of two months, they reached Cape Breton, and later Penguin Island and Newfoundland, where they encountered some of “the naturall people of the country,”

who fled from them. The history of this voyage was given to Hakluyt by Mr. Oliver Dawbeney, a merchant, who was one of the adventurers on the *Minion*. Laying in a harbour of Newfoundland, their provisions began to get very scarce, and [121] “they found small reliefe, more than that they had from the nest of an osprey, that brought hourelly to her yong great plentie of divers sorts of fishes. But such was the famine that increased amongst them from day to day, that they were forced to seek to relieve themselves off raw herbes and rootes that they sought on the main; but the famine increasing, and the reliefe of herbes being to little purpose to satisfie their insatiabie hunger, in the fieldes and deserts here and there, the fellow killed his mate while he stooped to take up a roote for his reliefe, and cutting out pieces of his bodie whom he had murthered, broyled the same on the coles and greedily devoured them.

“By this meane the company decreased, and the officers knew not what had become of them; and it fortunated that one of the company, driven with hunger to seeke abroad for reliefe, found out in the fieldes the savour of broyled flesh, and fell out with one for that he would suffer him and his fellowes to sterve, enjoying plentie as he thought; and this matter growing to cruell speaches, he that had the broyled meate burst out into these wordes:—‘If thou wouldest needes know, the broyled meat I had was a piece of such a man’s buttocke.’ The report of this brought to the ship, the captaine found what had become of those that were missing, and was perswaded that some of them were neither devoured with wilde beastes nor yet destroyed with savages; and hereupon he stood up and made a notable oration, containing howe much these dealings offended the Almightye, and vouched the Scriptures from first to last what God had, in cases of distresse, done for them that called upon Him, and told them that the power of the Almightye was then no lesse than in al former time it had bene. And added, that if it had not pleased God to have holpen them in that distresse, that it

had been better to have perished in body, and to have lived everlastingly, than to have relieved for a poore time their mortal bodyes, and to be condemned everlastingly both body and soule to the unquenchable fire of hell. And thus having ended to that effect, he began to exhort to repentance, and besought all the company to pray, that it might please God to look upon their present miserable state, and for His owne mercie to relieve the same.” The famine increasing, it was agreed that they should cast lots who should be killed, but fortunately, that very night a French vessel arrived in that port, and the chronicler coolly and amusingly adds, “such was the policie of the English that they became masters of the same, and changing ships and vittailing them they set sayle to come into England.” It is but just to the king to add that he afterwards recompensed the Frenchmen.

The return of Sebastian Cabot to England, after he had done good service to Spain in various maritime enterprises, was very much the cause of awakening the merchants of London to renewed efforts for discovery. This great navigator was introduced by the Duke of Somerset to Edward VI., soon after his succession to the throne, and the young king was so charmed by his conversation and intelligence that he created him, by patent, Pilot Major, and settled on him the large annual pension—for those days—of £166 13s. 4d., “in consideration of the good and acceptable services done and to be done.” He was also constituted “Governour of the mysterie and companie of the marchant adventurers for the discoverie of regions, dominions, islands and places unknowen.” By his suggestion a voyage was instituted in the year 1553, for the discovery of a *north-east* passage to Cathaia; and three vessels—the *Bona Esperanza*, the *Edward Bonadventure*, and the *Bona Confidentia*—under Sir Hugh Willoughby, as captain-general of the fleet, were made ready for their eventful voyage. So certain were the promoters of the expedition that the vessels would reach the Indian Seas, that they caused them to be sheathed with lead as a protection



SEBASTIAN CABOT.

against the worms in those waters, which they understood were destructive of wooden bottoms, and this is believed to be the first instance of metal sheathing being used. On May 20th the ships were towed to Gravesend, “the mariners being all appalled in watchet or skie-coloured cloth,” and the shores being thick with spectators. The expedition started with an amount of *éclat* which contrasts sadly with the events which followed. Sir Hugh Willoughby, with the whole of the merchants, officers, and companies of two of the ships, perished miserably on the coast of Lapland, from the effects of cold and starvation. Their dead bodies were found the following year by some Russian fishermen.

Master Richard Chancellor, the second in command, whose vessel had become separated from the others, was more fortunate. After waiting vainly at Wardhuys, in Norway, for the rest of the squadron, he held on his course till he reached a “very great bay,” where he learned from the fishermen that their country was Muscovy or Russia. He made a land journey of fifteen hundred miles to Moscow, where he was well received, and from an abortive attempt at making the north-east passage sprung that extensive commerce with Russia which has continued, almost uninterruptedly, ever since.

The events which immediately followed have little bearing on arctic history, excepting that while our merchants were fully alive to the importance of the new commerce opening to their vision they did not neglect exploration. Chancellor and his companions, on a second voyage to Russia, whither they went as commissioners to arrange the treaties and immunities which the Czar might be pleased to grant, were instructed “to use all wayes and meanes possible to learn howe men may passe from Russia, either by land or sea, to Cathaia.” They did not even wait the result of his voyage, but despatched a small vessel, the *Serchthrift*, in command of Steven Burrowe, for north-eastern discovery. On the 27th April, 1556, the vessel being ready

at Gravesend, it was visited by many distinguished ladies and gentlemen, including old Cabot, then in his ninety-seventh year, who “gave to the poore most liberall almes; and then, at the sign of the Christopher, hee and his friends banketted,” and “entered into the dance himselfe amongst the rest of the young and lusty company.” The *Serchthrift* reached the Cola and Petchora rivers, Nova Zembla (the New Land), and the island of Weigats. In proceeding to the eastward they encountered much ice, in which they became entangled, and “which,” says the narrative, “was a fearful sight to see.” But on June 25th they met their first whale, which seems to have inspired more terror even than the ice. The account given of it is amusing. “On St. James his day, bolting to the windwardes, we had the latitude at noon in seventy degrees, twentie minutes. The same day, at a south-west sunne, there was a monstous whale aboard of us, so neere to our side that we might have thrust a sworde or any other weapon in him, which we durst not doe for feare he should have overthrowen our shippe; and then I called my company together, and all of us shouted, and with the crie that we made he departed from us; there was as much above water of his backe as the bredth of our pinnesse, and at his falling downe he made such a terrible noise in the water, that a man would greatly have marvelled, except he had known the cause of it; but, God be thanked, we were quietly delivered of him.” Burrowe returned to England in the autumn, having reached in an eastward direction a further point than any of his predecessors. Meantime, Chancelor, returning to England in company with the newly-appointed Russian ambassador, was wrecked in Pitsligo Bay, Scotland, the former losing his life, and the latter being saved with difficulty. [123]

## CHAPTER XIII.

EARLY ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS.

Attempts at the North-west Passage—Sir Humphrey Gilbert’s advocacy—The one thing left undone—Frobisher’s Expeditions—Arctic “Diggings”—A Veritable Gold Excitement—Large Fleet Despatched—Disaster and Disappointment—Voyages of John Davis—Intercourse with the Natives—His Reports concerning Whales, &c.—The Merchants aroused—Opening of the Whaling Trade—Maldonado’s Claim to the Discovery of the North-west Passage.

While these attempts at a north-east passage were being made, the north-west question was by no means forgotten. Several learned men, including Sir Humphrey Gilbert, employed their pens in arguing the practicability of such a passage. In his defence of such an attempt he spoke of a friar of Mexico who had actually performed the journey, but who, on telling it to the King of Portugal, had been forbidden to make it known, lest it should reach England. Whatever the facts of this case, some enthusiasm on the subject was the result, and Martin Frobisher spoke of it as *the* one thing “left undone.” But although he also persisted in his advocacy, it took fifteen years of perseverance and constant effort before he could find any one who would give him the assistance he needed. At last, when hope was nearly dead within him, Dudley Earl of Warwick, came to the rescue, and aided him to fit out two small barques, the *Gabriel* and the *Michael*, thirty-five and thirty tons burthen respectively. With these small craft—mere cockle-shells for such a voyage—he left the Thames. As he passed Greenwich Palace, on the 8th of June, 1576, Queen Elizabeth waved her farewell from a window. Briefly, they reached what is believed to have been the southern part of Greenland and Labrador, where they could not land because of the icy field surrounding the coast. Sailing to the

northward, Frobisher met with a gigantic iceberg, which fell in pieces within their sight, making as much noise as though a high cliff had fallen into the sea. They saw a number of Esquimaux, and perhaps the description given of them by the commander is as good as any ever given in few words:—"They be like to Tartars, with long black hair, broad faces, and flatte noses, and taunie in colour, wearing seale skinnes; and so doe the women, not differing in the fashion, but the women are marked in the face with blewe streekes downe the cheekes and round about the eyes." They came near the ship timidly, and after a while one of them ventured into the ship's boat, when Frobisher presented him with a bell and a knife, and sent him back with five of the crew. They were directed to land him apart from the spot where a number of his countrymen were assembled, but they disobeyed his orders, and were seized by the natives, together with the boat, and none of them were heard of more. Returning to the same spot a few days afterwards, one of the natives was enticed alongside the vessel, when Frobisher, a very powerful man, caught him fast, "and plucked him with maine force, boate and all, into his barke out of the sea. Whereupon, when he found himself in captivity, for very choler and disdaine he bit his tongue in twaine within his mouth; notwithstanding he died not thereof, but lived until he came to England, and then he died of cold which he had taken at sea." With this "strange infidele" Frobisher set sail for home, arriving at Harwich on October 2nd. It is very questionable whether this, the first of Frobisher's arctic voyages, would not have been his last, but for one little circumstance, which had been overlooked until the return of the expedition. [124]

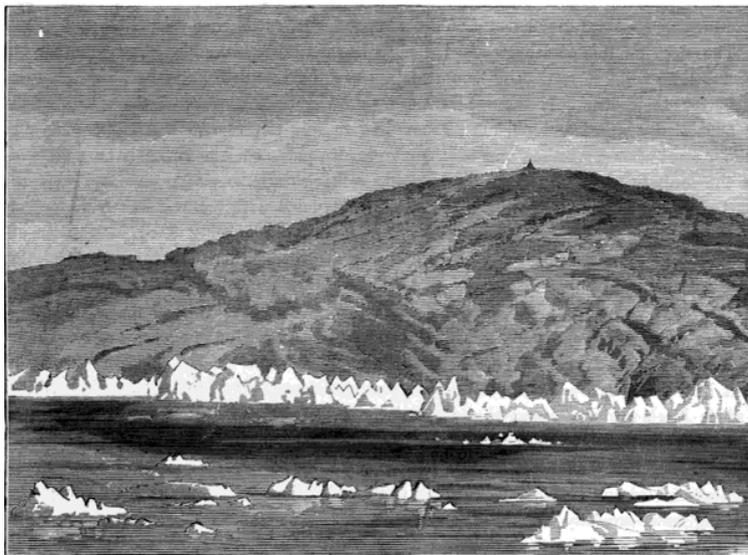
Every one who visits a strange place likes to bring home some little memento, and several of the men on this voyage had collected trifles—flowers, moss, grass, pebbles, or what not. One of them had obtained a piece of stone, "much like to a sea-cole in colour," which being given to one of the adventurer's wives, she threw it in the fire, doubtless to see whether it would burn.



FROBISHER PASSING GREENWICH.

Whether from accident or not, she threw some vinegar on it to quench the heat, when “it glistered with a bright marquet of golde.” This incident soon became known abroad, and the stone was assayed, the “gold finers” reporting it to contain a considerable quantity of gold. It seems almost ridiculous to think of a fever, a veritable “excitement,” in connection with Arctic “diggings.” Nevertheless, the next voyage of Frobisher was instigated purely for the further discovery of the precious metal. Queen Elizabeth seems to have been infected with the same fever, and Frobisher on taking his leave of her Majesty had the honour of kissing her hand, and being dismissed with “gracious countenance and comfortable words.” He was furnished with “one tall ship” of her Majesty’s, named the *Ayde*, of 180 tons or so, and two barques of about thirty tons each. On the way north they observed some enormous icebergs, more than half a mile in circuit, and seventy to eighty fathoms (210 to 240 yards) under water. The ice being perfectly fresh, Frobisher came to the conclusion that they “must be bredde in the sounds, or in some land neere the Pole.” It is now admitted that icebergs properly so called, are but the *ends of glaciers*, broken off. Furthermore, he was the first to record that “the maine sea freeseth not, therefore there is no *mare glaciale*, as the opinion hitherto hath bene.” They loaded up with the ore from Hall’s greater island and on a small island in Frobisher’s Strait. “All the sands and cliffs did so glisten, and had so bright a marquesite, that it seemed all to be gold, but upon tryall made it proved no better than black-lead, and verified the proverbe, ‘All is not gold that glistereth.’” We shall see that it was only iron pyrites, a sulphuret of iron. They also professed to have found on another island a mine of silver, and more gold ore. [125]

On this expedition they had several altercations with the natives, and in one skirmish in Yorke Sound killed five or six of them. It is said that they found here some of the apparel of their five unfortunate companions who had been seized the previous [126]



AN ARCTIC SCENE: FLOATING ICE.

year by the natives. By means of two captives they brought about some degree of intercourse with the Esquimaux, and left a letter, understanding that their own sailors were still alive, but they were never more seen. Having loaded with about 200 tons of the supposed gold ore, they set sail for England, where they arrived safely, to the great delight of the queen and court, who considered that there were now great hopes of riches and profit. It was determined that a third expedition should be despatched the following year (1578).

The fleet on this occasion consisted of no less than fifteen vessels. One hundred persons were taken to form a settlement and remain there the complete year, keeping three of the vessels for their own use; the others were to bring back cargoes of the ore. Frobisher was appointed admiral and general. From first to last the voyage was disastrous. In the straits named after Frobisher, one of their larger barques struck so violently on a mass of ice that she sank in sight of the whole fleet, and although all the people on board were saved, a part of the house intended for the settlers went down with the wreck. A violent storm next ensued, which dispersed the fleet, some of the vessels being fixed in the ice of the strait, others being swept away to sea. It was a severe season, and they were bewildered by fogs, snow, and mist. After many perils, a large part of the fleet assembled in the Countess of Warwick's Sound, when a council was held. It was at first determined to plant the colony on the adjoining island, but on examination so much of the wooden house was missing, and so great a quantity of the stores and provisions were on the ships which had parted company, that the idea was abandoned. "A great black island," where so much black ore was found that it "might suffice all the gold gluttons of the world," was discovered by one of the captains, and was named after him, "Best's Blessing." It was at length decided that each captain should load his ship with ore and set homewards. The fleet arrived in England on or about October 1st, having

lost some forty persons. The ore being now carefully examined proved worthless pyrites; and the Arctic gold mines seem to have proved a “fizzle” as great as any of the worst which have succeeded them. One Michael Lok, who had advanced money and become security for Frobisher, was ruined, and cast into the Fleet prison. One of the accounts mentions the fact that when the ore was first examined, one of the assayers, “by coaxing nature, as he privately admitted to Michael Lok,” *pretended* to make the discovery of its precious qualities. It seems that the Master of the Mint had reported on it adversely; but the favourable opinion of others and the lust for wealth overcame all reason and judgment, until queen, courtiers, and subjects were sobered by the complete disappointment, which ended all further search for the time. Frobisher did good service for his country afterwards, and fought with such bravery against the Spanish Armada that he was knighted. He died from the effect of a shot-wound received at the assault of Croyson, during the war with Henry IV. of France.

The disastrous voyage of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, with its melancholy termination, has been already described; but the merchants of London and elsewhere, being still persuaded “of the likelihood of the discoverie of the north-west passage,” only two years later subscribed for fresh attempts. John Davis—a name inseparably associated with arctic enterprise—received the appointment of captain and chief pilot of the new expedition. Two small vessels, the *Sunshine* and *Moonshine*, were employed, and on one of them four musicians were taken. They left Dartmouth on the 7th of June, 1585, and on the 19th of July were off the west coast of Greenland, where they noted “a mighty great roaring of the sea,” which was found to proceed from the “rowing together of islands of ice.” As they proceeded northward, the fog, which had hampered their movements, clearing away, they observed “a rocky and mountainous land, in form of a sugar-loaf,” its summit, covered with snow, appearing, as it were,



MARTIN FROBISHER.

above the clouds. The aspect of all around was so uninviting that Davis named it "The Land of Desolation." He could not land there, owing to the coast ice, and after sundry explorations to the southward, and again to the north-westward, discovered an archipelago of islands, "among which were many free sounds, and good roads for shipping," to which he gave the title of Gilbert's Sound. Here a multitude of natives approached in their canoes, on which the musicians began to perform, and the sailors to dance and make signs of friendship. This delighted the "salvages," and the sailors obtained from them almost whatever they wished—canoes, clothing, bows, and native implements. After other explorations they reached a fine open passage (Cumberland Strait) between Frobisher's Archipelago and the land now called Cumberland's Island, entirely free from ice, "and the water of the colour, nature, and quality of the main ocean." They proceeded up it a distance of sixty leagues, when they found a cluster of islands in the middle of the passage, and

the weather being bad and the season late, they, after a week's further stay, determined to sail for England, where they arrived safely on September 30th.

The reports given by Davis respecting the vast number of whales and seals observed, and the peltries to be obtained from the Esquimaux, aroused the enterprise of the merchants, and several persons in Exeter and other parts of the West of England combined to add a trading vessel, the *Mermaid*, of one hundred and twenty tons, to those which had been employed the previous season. Davis again reached the west coast of Greenland, where much intercourse was held with the natives, who came off to the vessels sometimes in as many as one "hundred canoes at a time ... bringing with them seale skinnes, stagge skinnes, white hares, seale fish, samon peale, smal cod, dry caplin, with other fish, and birds such as the country did yield." The natives do not seem to have made quite so favourable an impression as on the former occasion, and were described as thievish and mischievous, prone to steal everything on which they could lay their hands. After some remarks on their diet, we are gravely informed that they "drink salt water," and eat grass and ice as luxuries. They were found to be extremely nimble and strong, and fond of leaping and wrestling, in which they beat the best of the crew, who were west-country wrestlers. In the middle of July the adventurous navigators were alarmed at the appearance of a most "mighty and strange quantity of yce in one entire masse," so large that Davis was afraid to mention its dimensions, lest he should not be believed. The same modesty and diffidence has not been observed, to any marked degree, in the narratives of most modern voyagers and travellers! They coasted the ice till the end of July, and the cold was so severe, even in this month, that the shrouds, ropes, and sails were frozen, and the air was loaded with a thick fog. Sickness prevailed among the men, and they commenced to murmur. They "advised their captain, through his overboldness, not to leave their widows and fatherless children to give him

bitter curses." He therefore left the *Mermaid* to remain where she was, in readiness to return, while with the *Moonshine* he would proceed round the ice. Davis made several discoveries of some geographical importance, and thought that off the Labrador coast, in latitude 54° N., he had actually discovered the opening to the north-west passage. Two of his vessels, the *Sunshine* and *North Star*, had been despatched previously to seek a passage northward, between Greenland and Iceland, as far as latitude 80°. They proceeded some little distance north, being much hampered by the ice, but in effect accomplished nothing. The latter vessel was lost on the passage home.

The second voyage of Davis had not been particularly prosperous either as regards commerce or discovery, but his persistency and perseverance induced the merchants to despatch a third expedition in 1587. On this voyage he proceeded as far north as 73°, and discovered the strait which now bears his name. The merchant adventurers would doubtless have continued these voyages, even in part for discovery, had they been reasonably profitable. But although Davis tried very zealously to persuade them, they now declined most absolutely. We find him eight years after appealing for the same object to Her Majesty's Privy Council in a little work entitled, "The Worlde's Hydrographical Discription," a book of which it is believed there are not over three copies in existence. Among the headings to the various divisions is one to this effect: "That under the Pole is the greatest place of dignitie." Davis made no more arctic voyages, but was employed by the Dutch in the East Indian service.

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While there are so many well-authenticated voyages to record, we shall not be blamed if those of a doubtful nature are here omitted. The so-called voyage of Maldonado, in which he claimed to have effected a north-west passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific in 1588, and back again the following year, is universally discredited, and the narrative bears every indication of being an utter forgery. The genuine voyage of Juan de Fuca,



AN ICEBERG BREAKING UP.

in 1592, who, while searching for the same imaginary “Straits of Anian,” of which Maldonado wrote, discovered the straits which now bear his own name, belongs properly to voyages in the Pacific Ocean, and will be considered in its place.

## CHAPTER XIV.

North-eastern Voyages of the Dutch—Barents reaches Nova Zembla—Adventures with the Polar Bears—Large Trading Expedition organised—Failure of the Venture—Reward offered for the Discovery of a North-east Passage—Third Voyage—Dangers of the Ice—Forced to Winter on Nova Zembla—Erection of a House—Intense Cold—Philosophical Dutchmen—Attacks from Bears—Returning Spring—The Vessel abandoned—Preparations for a Start—The Company enfeebled and down-hearted—Voyage of 1,700 miles in two small Boats—Death of Barents and Adrianson—Perils of Arctic Navigation—Enclosed in the Ice—Death of a Sailor—Meeting with Russians—Arrival in Lapland—Home once more—Discovery of the Barents Relics by Carlsen—Voyages of Adams, Weymouth, Hall, and Knight.

“The True and Perfect Description of Three Voyages, so strange and woonderfull that the like hath neuer been heard of before,” albeit bearing a somewhat sensational title, is by a long way the most complete of early Arctic narratives. The work is a translation, by one William Phillip, from the Dutch of Gerrit de Veer, and describes three voyages undertaken by the Hollanders towards the close of the sixteenth century, with the view of reaching China by a north-east passage. The narrative of the last expedition in particular, during the progress of which they met so many disasters, were obliged to spend ten months in the

inhospitable region of Nova Zembla, abandon their vessel, and make their homeward voyage of seventeen hundred miles in two small open boats through all the perils of the Arctic seas, will be found most interesting. Our account is compiled from the edition edited by Dr. Beke, and issued by the Hakluyt Society.

In the year 1594 the United Provinces determined to send out an expedition in the hopes of finding a northern route to China and India. The city of Amsterdam contributed two vessels: Zeelandt and Enkhuyzen one each. Willem Barents<sup>21</sup>, “a notable, skillfull, and wise pilote,” represented Amsterdam, while the other vessels were respectively commanded by Cornelis Cornelison and Brand Ysbrants. The vessels left the Texel on June 5th, and soon after separated. Following first the fortunes of Cornelison and Ysbrants, we find that they reached Lapland on the 23rd, and, proceeding eastward, found the weather in the middle of July as hot as in Holland during the dog days, and the mosquitoes extremely troublesome. Reaching Waigatz Island they met enormous quantities of drift-wood, which was also piled up on the shores. Passing the southern end of the island, they observed three or four hundred wooden idols, men, women, and children, their faces generally turned eastward. Sailing through Waigatz Strait, they found and were impeded much by large quantities of floating ice; later they reached an open sea perfectly clear of it. The land to the southward was in sight, and trended apparently to the south-east. Without more ado they concluded that they had discovered an open passage round Northern Asia to China, and turned their vessels’ bows homewards, in order to be the first to bring the good news to Holland. Meanwhile, Barents, in the *Messenger*, crossed the White Sea, and eventually made the west coast of Nova Zembla, proceeding thence northwards, naming several headlands and

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<sup>21</sup> The full name of this navigator is Willem zoon Barents, or Barentz, *i.e.*, William, the son of Barents. The abbreviated form, however, has always been adopted of late.

islands. About latitude  $77^{\circ} 25'$  they encountered an immense field of ice, of which they could see no end from the mast-head, and they had to turn back. After becoming entangled in drift-ice, and experiencing misty, cold, and tempestuous weather, the crew began to murmur, and then refused positively to proceed. On the homeward voyage, after they had arrived at Malfloe and Delgoj Islands, they met the other ships, the commanders of which were jubilant with the idea that they had discovered the North-east Passage. At all events, on their return, the reports given by them were so favourably considered, that preparations were immediately made for a second expedition.

Near one of the islands off the coast of Nova Zembla Barents and a boat-load of his men were almost swamped by an enormous white she-bear, which they had wounded, and secured by a rope. The animal, in its pain and fury, more than seconded their efforts to get it on board—for they had fancied that they might take her alive to Holland—and a panic ensued. Fortunately the rope caught round a rung or hook of the rudder, and one of the bolder men then struck her into the water. The rest immediately got to their oars and rowed so rapidly to the ship, that the bear was pretty well half drowned by the time they arrived there, and she was easily despatched. De Veer, the principal historian of these voyages, gives us some graphic descriptions of the walrus. A female walrus almost succeeded in swamping one of the boats, as Madam Bruin had before, but fled when a good round volley of Dutch execrations were levelled at her. Some of the men, tempted by the ivory tusks apparently within their easy reach, went ashore with the intention of killing some of these animals, but the sea-horses “brake all their hatchets, curtle-axes, and pikes in pieces,” and they could not kill any of them, but succeeded in performing dentistry on a rough scale by knocking out some of their teeth. The resemblance of the front part of the head of a young walrus to a human face has been often remarked, and, as we shall hereafter show, has had much to do with sailors’ stories

concerning mermaids and mermen. More than once has the cry, "A man overboard!" been caused by the sudden appearance of the head of a young walrus above the water near a ship's side.

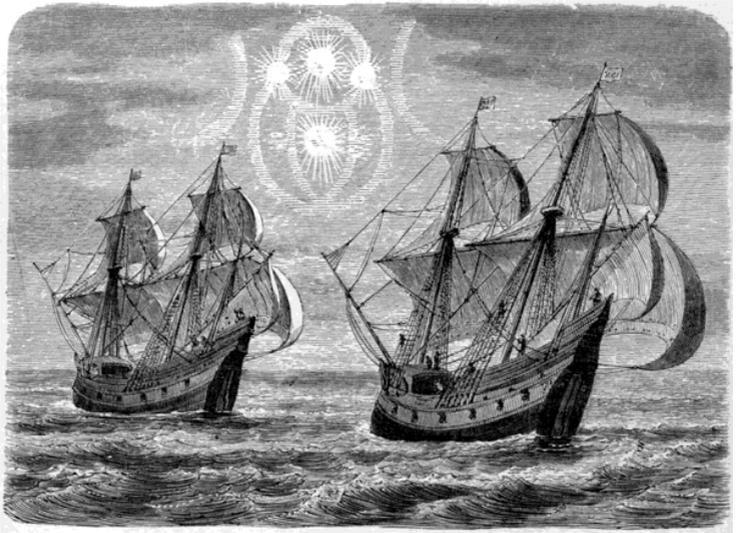
The second expedition consisted of seven vessels: six laden with wares, merchandise, and money, and factors to act as traders; the seventh, a small pinnace, was to accompany the rest for part of the voyage, and bring back news of the proceedings. These extensive preparations were rendered nearly useless by the dilatoriness of those who had the matter in hand. The vessels did not leave the Texel till July 2nd, 1595, nor reach Nova Zembla before the middle of August. The coasts of that island were found to be unapproachable on account of the ice. In few words, they returned to Holland, having accomplished little or nothing.

[131] When off Waigatz some of the men had landed to search for supposed precious stones, which they fondly believed were diamonds, but which were doubtless pieces of rock crystal. As two of the men were taking a little rest, a "great leane white beare" suddenly stole upon them, and caught one fast by the neck. The other, seeing the cause, ran away. "The beare," says the quaint narrative, "at the first faling upon the man, bit his head in sunder, and suckt out his blood," whereupon some twenty of the men ran to the place, and charged the animal with their pikes and muskets. Bruin, nothing daunted, seized another of the men and tore him in pieces, the rest, seized with terror, running away. A number of sailors, seeing all this, immediately came on shore, and a second charge was made. Many shots were fired, but missed; at length the purser shot the animal between the eyes, when she began to stagger. Two of the men broke their axes over her, and yet she would not leave the bodies of their comrades. At length one of them succeeded in stunning her with a well-directed blow, and then cut her throat.

On the return of the second expedition from a voyage so fruitless, the General States of the United Provinces declined to repeat the experiment, but offered a large reward to any one



NOVA ZEMBLA, SHOWING THE ROUTE TAKEN BY BARENTS AND HIS FOLLOWERS.  
(After an Authentic Map made by Gerrit de Veer.)



MOCK SUNS, SEEN ON THE 4TH JUNE, 1596, BY  
BARENTS AND HIS FOLLOWERS.  
*(After a Stamp published in 1609 at Amsterdam.)*

who might make it “apparant that the sayd passage was to be sayled.” The merchants of Amsterdam thereupon prepared two vessels, and selected mostly single men for their crews, *i.e.*, men unhampered by family ties, offering them great rewards if the objects they sought were accomplished. One of the vessels was [132] commanded by Jacob Heemskerke Hendrickson, the master of the second being Cornelison Rijp; Barents was appointed chief pilot. The expedition sailed from Amsterdam on May 10th, 1596, and on June 1st was in a latitude high enough to have no night. On the 4th, in lat. 71°, they observed two parahelia, or mock suns, which are thus described in the narrative:—“On each side of the sunne there was another sunne and two raine-bowes, that past cleane thorow the three sunnes, and then two raine-bowes more, the one compassing round about the sunnes, and the other crosse thorow the great rundle.” On the 5th they fell in with the first floating ice, which at a distance they mistook for white swans, and on the 7th they were in lat. 74°, sailing through the ice “as if betweene two lands.” They found quantities of the eggs of red geese on an island. The narrator makes these birds, when flying away, cry out “Rot, rot, rot” (red), as though describing themselves. They also killed several bears, one of which they pursued in their boats while “foure glasses were run out (*i.e.*, for two hours), for their weapons seemed powerless to do her hurt. One of the men struck her with an axe, which stuck fast in her back, and with which she swam away. They followed, and at length a well-directed blow split her skull.” They appear to have been much hampered in proceeding further north from the constantly accumulating ice. By their latitude at this time they were near Amsterdam Island, on which is that cape or foreland since so well known to whalers as Hakluyt’s Headland. On July 1st the commanders mutually agreed to part company: [133] Cornelison Rijp, who now disappears from the scene, being of opinion that by sailing back to Spitzbergen, which they had just left, he would find a passage near its east side; while Barents

favoured an eastward course in a lower parallel, and steered for Waigatz Strait and Nova Zembla, which latter he reached on July 17th. As far as the ice would permit they stood to the northwards, and at the end of the first week of August doubled Point Nassau, where, the wind being contrary, they made the ship fast to an iceberg, thirty-six fathoms (216 feet) under water, and sixteen fathoms (96 feet) above it. This berg suddenly, without warning, broke up: “with one great cracke it burst into foure hundred pieces at the least.” Ships have often been overwhelmed in this manner. Ice in all forms now surrounded them; the ship’s rudder was smashed to pieces, and their boat crushed like a nutshell, while a similar fate was expected constantly for the vessel herself, which had become much strained. They had equally to give up all hopes of proceeding or returning that season, and with great difficulty they got to the west side of a harbour on Nova Zembla, named by them Ice Haven. Here, as we shall see, they had to pass a long winter, under circumstances of great hardship and danger.

On August 27th the ice drove with great force on the ship’s bows, and lifted her up several feet. They feared that she must be capsized. Shortly afterwards the ship burst out of the ice, “with such a noyse and so great a crack” that all on board feared their last hour was come. On the 30th, during a heavy snow and boisterous weather, the ice masses commenced driving and grinding together with greater force than before; the ship was lifted up bodily, almost upright, and then dashed into the water again. We cannot wonder to learn that the hairs of their heads also stood “vpriight with feare” amid such scenes.

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And so it went on from day to day, the vessel being strained and cracked in many places, and leaking badly. On September 5th they held a council, and determined to commence the work of removing the stores ashore. They carried off their old foresail, and “other furniture” on land to make a tent; powder, lead, muskets, with bread and wine, and some tools to mend their boat. “The 11 of September,” says the narrative, “it was calme

wether, and 8 of vs went on land, euery man armed, to see if that were true, as our other three companions had said that there lay wood about the riuer; for that seeing we had so long wound and turned about, sometime in the ice, and then againe got out, and thereby were compelled to alter our course, and at last saw that we could not get out of the ice, but rather became faster, and could not loose our ship, as at other times we had done, as also that it began to be winter, we took counsell together what we were best to doe according to the time that we might winter there, and attend such aduventure as God would send vs; and after we had debated vpon the matter, to keepe and defend our selues both from the cold and the wild beasts, we determined to build a house vpon the land to keep vs therein as well as we could, and so to commit ourselues vnto the tuition of God." As they had little wood on board, and there were no trees on land, they were most rejoiced when they found "certaine trees, roots and all," which had been driven upon the shore (drift-wood, probably, brought down by one of the great rivers of Asiatic Siberia, floated out to sea, and deposited on the shores of Nova Zembla). "We were much comforted," says the narrator, "being in good hope that God would show vs some further fauour; for that wood serued vs not onely to build our house, but also to burne and serue vs all the winter long; otherwise, without all doubt, we had died there miserably with extreame cold."

The party as it now stood consisted of seventeen persons, of whom one, the carpenter, who of all could least be spared at this juncture, died towards the end of September, and another was prostrated with sickness. They had to haul the wood in sledges for a considerable distance over ice and snow, and it was so intensely cold that the skin was often taken off their hands and faces. "As wee put a naile into our mouthes," says De Veer "(as carpenters use to do) there would ice hang thereon when wee took it out againe, and make the bloud follow." The present writer saw precisely the same thing happen more than once at a Russian



TRANSPORTING WOOD ON SLEDGES FOR BUILDING THE HOUSE.

trading post in Alaska some years ago, and knows well what it is to have his own mouth and nostrils nearly frozen up by the breath congealing about the moustache, lips, &c., more especially when camped in the “open” at night. These good Dutchmen seem to have been most resigned and philosophical during “their cold, comfortlesse, darke, and dreadful winter,” determining to make the best of their hard lot. The narrative of De Veer is told in a plain, unvarnished, and manly style, and, as Dr. Beke<sup>22</sup> has well remarked, “we may perceive that the reliance of himself and his comrades on the Almighty was not less firm or sincere because His name was not incessantly on their lips. Cheerfulness, and even frequent hilarity, could not fail to be the concomitants of so wholesome a tone of mind.” [135]

On September 15th two bears made their appearance, and there was great excitement, the men being anxious to shoot them. A tub or barrel of salt beef was standing on the ice near the ship, and one of the bears put his head into it to get out a joint of the meat. But “she fared therewith,” says the narrator, “as the dog did with ye pudding;<sup>23</sup> for as she was snatching at the beefe she was shot into the head, wherewith she fell downe dead and neuer stir’d (there we saw a curious sight); the other beare stood still, and lokt vpon her fellow (as if wondering why she remained so motionless), and when she had stood a good while she smelt her fellow, and perceiuing that she lay still and was dead, she ran away, and all pursuit was vain.”

At length their house was completed; it had been built partly from the drift-wood, and partly from the deck timbers and other portions of the ship. The original illustration, a very quaint picture, shows the fire in the middle of the floor, and a large chimney immediately over it. In other illustrations in De Veer’s works the chimney is surmounted by a barrel, which served

<sup>22</sup> Introduction to the Hakluyt Society’s edition of these voyages.

<sup>23</sup> A Dutch proverb, used when an undertaking turns out badly. The dog stole a sausage, and got well whipped for his pains.



ATTACKED BY BEARS.

the same purpose for the "look out" as the "crow's nest" or observatory in modern Arctic vessels. An oil lamp swung in the centre of the room, and a large bench, with divisions, served for resting places by night. The old Dutch clock, the works of which became frozen during the winter, is shown hanging on the wall, while the large twelve-hour sand-glass, which replaced it, is also included. A large wine-vat or barrel, standing on end, requires explanation. It was used as a vapour or steam bath, a hole in the side being cut both for air and as a door or opening for ingress or egress. The steam was in all probability made by placing hot stones in a small quantity of water at the bottom of the barrel. The writer has in Alaska (formerly Russian America) often used a steam bath of a construction almost as primitive, where in a small room the required vapour was raised by throwing water on a little furnace or fire-place, built of stones, which were kept at a white heat by a fire inside. Round the walls of the room were shelves or benches, on which one could recline, and by selecting the upper or lower ones, as the case might be, enjoy a greater or a lesser degree of heat.

On November 4th the last feeble rays of the sun took leave of them, and intense cold followed. Their wine and spruce-beer became frozen, and separated into two parts, the water being ice, and the remainder a thick glutinous liquid. Melted together again, they were nearly undrinkable. Wood does not appear to have been scarce till later in the winter, although they had to fetch some of it a distance of several miles. They once tried a fire of coal in the middle of their room, but the experiment was not repeated, as the sulphurous smoke nearly suffocated them. Their thickest European clothing was utterly insufficient for the climate they had to endure. During the winter they killed and trapped a few bears and foxes, and some of their skins were of course utilised. The former, however, disappeared with the sun, and only reappeared when it again showed itself.

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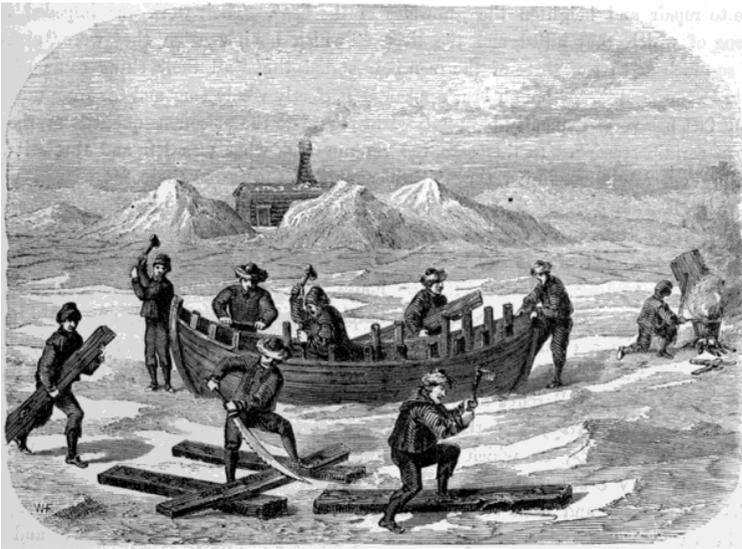
The record of their monotonous winter life, almost entirely

confined to the house, would be as tedious in the recital as it was in reality. Their wretched habitation was nearly buried in snow, and they felt as much out of the world as though they had really left it. Outside, gale succeeded gale, and howling winds and drifting snow prevented the possibility of hunting, exercise, or amusement. Inside, as the record tells us, they used all the means in their power to preserve warmth: put hot stones and heated cannon-balls at their feet, and smothered themselves in every article of clothing or bedding they had, but with little avail; their cots and the walls were covered with frost, and themselves as stiff and white as corpses. The narrative says quaintly that as they sat before a great fire their shins burned on the fore side, while their backs were frozen. Nevertheless they repined not, but took everything in the spirit of calm philosophy. On December 26th De Veer, when an unusually severe day had set in, writes that they comforted themselves that the sun had gone as low as it could, and must now return. The quaintness and simplicity of this narrative is well illustrated by the following entry for the last day of 1596:—"The 31 of December it was still foule wether, with a storme out of the north-west, whereby we were so fast shut vp into the house as if we had beene prisoners, and it was so extreame cold that the fire almost cast no heate; for as we put our feete to the fire we burnt our hose (stockings) before we could feele the heate, so that we had constantly work enough to do to patch our hose. And, which is more, if we had not sooner smelt than felt them, we should haue burnt them quite away ere we had knowne it."

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On January 5th they even celebrated Twelfth Night, making merry with a small quantity of wine, pancakes, and white biscuit. They drew lots for a master of revels, and it fell to the gunner, who was made King of Nova Zembla. All this, after all, was more sensible than giving way to the despondency which they could not help feeling at times. On February 12th they shot a bear, the first for the year. The first bullet fired, passing through

her body, “went out againe at her tayle, and was as flat as a counter that had been beaten out with a hammer.” This was a god-send to them, as now they were enabled to keep their lamps constantly burning, which previously they had often been unable to do for want of grease. The bear yielded a hundred pounds of fat. In the latter part of winter the bears came round the house, and attempted to break in the door, while one almost succeeded in entering by the chimney.



REPAIRING THE BOAT.

At the beginning of March they saw open water, and were greatly rejoiced, looking hopefully forward to the day of release. In April the ice hummocks on the coast were “risen and piled vp one vpon the other, that it was wonderfull in such manner as if there had bin whole townes made of ice, with towres and bulwarkes round about them.” In May their provisions were

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getting very low, and they themselves were both weakened by inaction and insufficiency of food, while the scurvy had made its appearance among some of the number. Impatient of their long and dreary sojourn, the men, on the 9th and 11th of May, came to Barents, praying him to speak to “the maister (skipper) to make preparations to goe from thence.” On the 15th they consulted together and decided to leave at the end of the month, if “the ship could not be loosed,” which gladdened the hearts of the men. Next they began to repair their clothes; and on May 29th the boat and yawl were cleared of the snow which buried them. The narrative shows how enfeebled they had become. Ten of them went to the boat, to repair it and make it ready. When they had got it out of the snow, and thought themselves able to drag it up to the house, their united efforts were not sufficient. De Veer says, “We could not doe it because we were too weake.” They became, we cannot wonder, wholly out of heart, for unless the boats could be got ready they would, as the master told them, have to remain as burghers or citizens of Nova Zembla, and make their graves there. But, as the narrative continues, there was no want of goodwill in them, but only strength. After a rest they did, by slow degrees manage to repair and heighten the gunwales of the boat. Their work was impeded by the bears, one of which they killed, and the liver of which having eaten, they were “exceeding sicke,” so much so that of three of the men it is stated that “all their skins came off from the foote to the head.” Although bear’s meat is perfectly wholesome and far from uneatable, the same fact has very frequently been noticed in regard to the poisonous qualities of the liver, at least at certain seasons. In this case, the captain took what was left and threw it away, for as De Veer candidly admits, they “had enough of the sawce thereof.”

It now became obvious that the ship, which was completely bilged, must be abandoned, and their time, after repairing and strengthening the boats, was fully employed in moving

and packing their goods, including the more valuable of the merchandise they had brought for trading purposes from the house, and in stripping the ship of everything of value. On June 12th they went with hatchets, pick-axes, shovels, and all kinds of implements, to make a clear wide shoot or way from the house, passing the ship, to the water. The ice was full of hummocks, knobs, and hills, and this was not the lightest of their labours. Then Barents and the skipper wrote letters, detailing the circumstances of their ten months' stay, and that they were forced to abandon the ship and put to sea in two open boats, to which all of the men subscribed except four, who from sickness or inability could not write. Barents' letter was put in a place of safety in their deserted house, and each of the boats was furnished with a copy of the captain's letter, in case they should be separated or one or other lost. The yawl and boat having been launched and loaded, Barents and a man named Adrianson, both of whom had been long invalids, were carried on a sledge to the water's edge. There were now fifteen men in all, and their provisions were reduced to limited rations of bread, one barrel of Dutch cheese, one flitch of bacon, and some small runlets of wine, oil, and vinegar.

To the narrative which follows the compiler can hardly do justice, whilst an exact reprint of the quietly and unsensationally told story of Gerrit de Veer would have to be closely studied before the reader would understand and feel the adventurous and desperate nature of the exploit performed. These fifteen poor Dutchmen, gaunt and exhausted as we know they were, weakened by semi-starvation and disease, badly provisioned at this most critical time, two of their number dying, bravely encountered a voyage of some seventeen hundred miles, eleven at least of which were amongst the worst dangers of the Arctic seas. The larger of their two craft was a fishing yawl of the smallest size. For eighty days they struggled through an unknown and frozen ocean, in the ice, over the ice, and through the sea, exposed to all

the ordinary dangers of wave and tempest, liable to be crushed at any moment by the grinding ice masses, or swamped by the disintegration of icebergs, constantly having to unload, haul up, and re-launch their boats, and further, exposed to severe cold, wet, fatigue, and famine, as well as to the constant attacks of savage animals. They persevered, for although their hearts often sank within them, it was for dear life, and at length their heroic efforts were rewarded. Some few extracts from the work already so often quoted will give a faint idea of the dangers through which they passed and over which they finally triumphed.

The boats, sailing in company, left Ice Haven on June 14th, 1597, at first slowly, making their course from one cape or headland to another. At the very start they became entangled in the floating ice, which, however, on the following day was more sparsely scattered. On June 16th they set sail again (having stopped off Cape Desire for the night), and got to the Islands of Orange. There they went on land with two small barrels and a kettle to melt snow, as also to seek for birds and eggs for their sick men. Of the former they only obtained three. "As we came backe againe," says the narrator, "our maister fell into the ice, where he was in great danger of his life, for in that place there ran a great streame ('strong current' is Dr. Beke's translation); but, by God's helpe, he got out againe and came to vs, and there dryed himselfe by the fire that we had made, at which fire we drest the birds, and carried them to the scute to our sicke men." Putting to sea again, with a south-east wind and a mizzling rain, they were soon all wet to the skin. Off Ice Point, the most northerly cape or point of Nova Zembla, the skipper called to Barents to ask him how he did, to which he answered, "I still hope to run before we get to Wardhuus." Then he turned to De Veer, and said, "Gerrit, if we are near the Ice Point just lift me up again. I must see that point once more." These were almost the last words of this brave man, who undoubtedly felt at the time that not merely he should never see Ice Point again, but that he was not long for this world.

He was dying fast, and his courageous words were meant for his companions' comfort. "Next day," says the narrator, "when we had broken our fastes, the ice came so frightfully upon vs that it made our haire stand vpright vpon our heades, it was so fearefull to behold; by which meanes we could not make fast our scutes, so that we thought verily that it was a foreshewing of our last end; for we draue away so hard with the ice, and were so sore prest between a flake of ice, that we thought verily the scutes would burst in a hundredth peeces, which made vs look pittifully one upon the other, for no counsell nor aduise was to be found, but every minute of an houre we saw death before our eies." At last, in desperation, De Veer managed to jump on a piece of ice, and creeping from one to another of the grinding masses, at length secured a rope to one of the hummocks. "And when we had gotten thither," says he, "in all haste we tooke our sicke men out and layd them vpon the ice, laying clothes and other things vnder them, and then tooke all our goods out of the scutes, and so drew them vpon the ice, whereby for that time we were deliuered from that great danger, making account that we had escaped out of death's clawes, as it was most true."

The boats having been repaired, they were delayed some days by the ice, which shut them in. On June 20th Adrianson "began to be extreme sick," and the boatswain came to inform the others that he could not live long; "whereupon," says De Veer, "William Barents spake and said, I think I shall not liue long after him; and yet we did not iudge William Barents to be so sicke, for we sat talking one with the other, and spake of many things, and William Barents looked at my little chart which I had made of our voyage (and we had some discussion about it). At last he laid away the chart and spake vnto me, saying, Gerrit, give me some drinke; and he had so sooner drunke but he was taken with so sodaine a qualme that he turned his eies in his head and died presently, and we had no time to call the maister out of the other scute to speak vnto him; and so he died before Claes Adrianson [140]

(who died shortly after him). The death of William Barents put us in no small discomfort, as being the chiefe guide and only pilot on whom we reposed our selues next under God; but we could not striue against God, and therefore we must of force be content.” Other passages indicate that Barents had inspired great affection in the hearts of his companions, and that his loss was felt with much poignancy.



#### UNLOADING, DRAGGING, AND CARRYING BOATS AND GOODS.

The following passage is only one of many indicating the laborious nature of their undertaking:—“The 22 of June in the morning it blew a good gale out of the south-east, and then the sea was reasonably open, but we were forced to draw our scutes ouer the ice to get vnto it, which was great paine and labour unto vs; for first we were forced to draw our scutes over a peece of ice of 50 paces long, and then put them into the water, and then

again to draw them vp vpon other ice, and after draw them at the least 300 paces more ouer the ice, before we could bring them to a good place, where we might easily get out.” On the 25th and 26th of June a tempest raged, and they were driven to sea, being unable, as they had sometimes done before, to tie the boats to fast or grounded ice. They were nearly swamped at this time by the great seas which constantly broke over their open boats, and for some little time were separated in a fog, but by firing muskets at length found out each other’s position and joined company. One of the boats got into a dangerous place between fixed and driving ice, and the men had to unload it, and take it and the goods bodily across the masses to more open water. On June 28th, the narrative continues, “We laid all our goods vpon the ice, and then drew the scutes vpon the ice also, because we were so hard prest on all sides with the ice, and the wind came out of the sea vpon the land, and therefore we were in feare to be wholly inclosed with the ice, and should not be able to get out thereof againe. And being vpon the ice, we laid sailes ouer our scutes, and laie down to rest, appointing one of our men to keepe watch; and when the sun was north there came three beares towards our scutes, wherewith he that kept the watch cried out lustily, ‘Three beares! Three beares!’ at which noise we leapt out of our boates with our muskets, that were laden with small shot to shoote at birds, and had no time to reload them, and therefore shot at them therewith; and although that kinde of shot could not hurt them much, yet they ranne away, and in the meane time they gaue vs leisure to lade our muskets with bullets, and by that meanes we shot one of the three dead.... The 29th of June, the sun being south-south-west, the two beares came againe to the place where the dead beare laie, when one of them tooke the dead beare in his mouth, and went a great way with it ouer the rugged ice, and then began to eate it; which we perceauing, shot a musket at her, but she, hearing the noise thereof, ran away and let the dead beare lie. Then foure of vs went thither, and saw that in so short a time

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she had eaten almost the halfe of her.” It was as much as these four could do to carry away the half of the body left, although the bear had just before dragged the whole of it over the rough and hummocky ice with little exertion.

On July 1st they were again in great danger among the driving, grinding ice, their boats were much crushed, and they lost a quantity of goods, and, what was of vital importance at the time, a large proportion of their remaining provisions. A few days afterwards their little company was still further reduced by the death of one of the sailors. On July 11th, and a week afterwards, they were enclosed by ice, from which they could not extricate themselves. During this enforced delay they shot a bear, whose fat ran out at the holes made by the bullets, and floated on the water like oil. They obtained some seventy duck eggs on a neighbouring island, and for a time feasted royally. “The 18 of July,” says the narrator, “about the east sunne, three of our men went vp vpon the highest part of the land to see if there was any open water in the sea; at which time they saw much open water, but it was so farre from the land that they were almost out of comfort, because it lay so farre from the land and the fast ice.” They had on this occasion to row to an ice-field, unload, and drag and carry boats and goods at least three-fourths of a mile across; they then loaded and set sail, but were speedily entangled again, and had to repeat their previous experiences.

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And so it went on for forty-four days, until, in St. Laurence Bay, behind a projecting point, they suddenly came on two Russian vessels with which they had met the previous year, and the crews of which wondered to see them in their present plight, “so leane and bare” and broken down. They exchanged courtesies, and provided them with a trifling supply of rye bread and smoked fowls, then sailing away on their own affairs. For thirty-five days longer they sailed westward, repeating many of their previous experiences, till at length, on September 2nd, they arrived at Kola, in Russian Lapland, and their troubles were

really over. Cornelison's ship happened to be in the port, and they rejoiced and made merry with their old companions, who had long given them up for lost.

Thus ended this remarkable voyage of nearly eighty days in two small open boats. It would seem nowadays utter madness to think of making a long voyage in such frail and unsuitable craft, and our adventurers had had the special perils of the Arctic seas superadded to the more ordinary dangers of the ocean. Eight weeks later they were enjoying the calm pleasures of their own firesides, after having been entertained at the Hague by the Prince of Orange.

A further interest attaches to the voyage from the recent discovery made by Captain Carlsen, while circumnavigating Nova Zembla, of the very house erected at Ice Haven by these adventurers, with many interesting relics, which had remained in tolerable preservation, and had been evidently unvisited for this great length of time. "No man," says Mr. Markham, "had entered the lonely dwelling where the famous discoverer of Spitzbergen had sojourned during the long winter of 1596 for nearly three centuries. There stood the cooking-pans over the fireplace, the old clock against the wall, the arms, the tools, the drinking-vessels, the instruments, and the books that had beguiled the weary hours of that long night, 278 years ago.... Perhaps the most touching is the pair of small shoes. There was a little cabin-boy among the crew, who died, as Gerrit de Veer tells us, during the winter. This accounts for the shoes having been left behind. There is a flute, too, once played by that poor boy, which will still give out a few notes."<sup>24</sup> The relics brought home by Carlsen were eventually taken to the Hague, where they are now preserved with jealous care.

In chronological order, a voyage of which there is little record

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<sup>24</sup> "Discoveries East of Spitzbergen," &c. Paper read before the Royal Geographical Society by C. R. Markham, Esq., C.B., F.R.S., February 10th, 1873.

left comes next. There is little doubt that William Adams—who, afterwards cast away on the coast of Japan, is inseparably connected with the history of that country, and whose adventures will be considered in the proper place—did, in 1595 or 1596, make an attempt at the north-east passage. The Prince of Orange had ordered him to try for a northern route to Japan, China, and the Moluccas, considering that it would be shorter, and safer from the attacks of the pirates and corsairs who infested the more southern seas. Adams averred that he had reached 82° N., but that “the cold was so excessive, with so much sleet and snow driving down those straits, that he was compelled to return.” And he asserted that if he had kept close to the coast of Tartary, and had run along it to the eastward, to the opening of Anian, between the land of Asia and America, he might have succeeded in his undertaking.

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Next comes the attempt of George Weymouth in 1602. He was despatched by the worshipful merchants of the Muscovy and Turkey Companies to attempt a north-west passage to China. This voyage was an utter failure, and he never reached a higher latitude than 63° 53' N. While proceeding to the north-west they passed four islands of ice “of a huge bignesse,” and about this time the fog was so thick that they could not see two ships’ lengths before them, and the sails, shrouds, and ropes were frozen so stiff that they could not be handled. On July 19th the crew mutinied, and conspired to keep the captain confined to his cabin, while they reversed the ship’s course and bore for England. Weymouth discovered this, and punished the ringleaders. The boats were on one occasion sent to an iceberg, to load some of it for fresh water, and as the men were breaking it “the great island of ice gave a mightie cracke two or three times, as though it had been a thunderclappe; and presently the island began to overthrow,” which nearly swamped the boats. The whole account of Weymouth’s voyage is confused and indefinite, but he evidently did nothing beyond cruising among the islands north

of Hudson's Strait, and off Labrador.

In 1605, 1606, and 1607, three expeditions, of which James Hall, an Englishman, was pilot, were despatched to the Greenland coasts by the King of Denmark. They fancied on the first voyage that they had discovered a silver mine in Cunningham's Fiord, Greenland, and the second voyage was instigated in the hopes of filling the royal coffers with the precious metal. These voyages were in effect most fruitless. Several natives were carried off by Hall, who in return left three Danish malefactors on the Greenland coasts, a severe mode of banishment. While these voyages were in progress, the Muscovy and East India merchants had despatched a small barque, under the command of John Knight, for the discovery of the north-west passage. Near Cape Guinington, on the coast of Labrador, a northerly gale, which brought down large quantities of drift ice, did much damage to the vessel, and she lost her rudder. Knight took the vessel into the most accessible cove in order to repair her, and went ashore with the mate and four sailors, all well armed, to endeavour to find some more suitable harbour. On landing, Knight, the mate, and another, went up towards the highest part of the island, leaving the others to take charge of the boat. The latter waited some thirteen hours, but the captain and his companions did not return. Next day, a well-armed party from the ship went in search of them, but were unable to reach the island on account of the ice. No tidings were ever gleaned concerning their fate, but it was concluded that the savage natives had killed them, as later a number of these people came down and attacked the crew with great ferocity. They had large canoes, and the narrator describes them as "very little people, tawnie coloured, thin or no beards, and flat-nosed, and man-eaters." After patching up their vessel, they steered for Newfoundland, and later for England, which they reached in safety.



VIEW ON THE HUDSON.

## CHAPTER XV.

Henry Hudson's Voyages—Projected Passage over the Pole—Second Expedition—A Mermaid Sighted—Third Voyage in the Dutch Service—Discovery of the Hudson River—Last Voyage—Discovery of Hudson's Bay—Story of an Arctic Tragedy—Abacuk Pricket's Narrative—Their Winter Stay—Rise of a Mutiny—Hudson and Nine Companions Set Adrift and left to Die—Retribution—Four of the Mutineers Killed—Sufferings from Starvation—Death of a Ringleader—Arrival in Ireland—Suspicious Circumstances—Baffin's Voyages—Danish Expeditions to Greenland—Jens Munk and his Unfortunate Companions—Sixty-one Persons Starved to Death—Voyage of three Survivors Across the Atlantic—An unkingly King—Death of Munk—Moxon's Dutch Beer-house Story—Wood and Flawes—Wreck of Wood's Vessel—Knight's Fatal Expedition—Slow Starvation and Death of the whole Company—The Middleton and Dobbs' Agitation—£20,000 offered for the Discovery of the North-west Passage.

So many previous failures do not seem to have discouraged the London merchants, who, in 1607, renewed the search for a northern route to China and Japan. Hitherto neither the north-east nor north-west had held out much hopes of success, and they now determined on a bold and novel attempt at *sailing over the Pole itself*. For this expedition Henry Hudson—already known as an experienced and intrepid seaman, and well-skilled in nautical science—was chosen commander. This adventurous navigator left Gravesend on May 1st, in a small barque, with only ten men and a boy. The very name and tonnage of the vessel have been forgotten, but it is known to have been of the tiniest description. In the second week of June Hudson fell in with land—a headland

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of East Greenland—the weather at the time being foggy, and the sails and shrouds frozen. He examined other parts of this coast, feeling doubtful whether he might not reach open water to the northward, and sail round Greenland, a voyage never made up to this day. Later he reached Spitzbergen, where the ice to the north utterly baffled all his efforts to force a passage, and being short of supplies, he set sail for England. Next year we find him attempting a north-east passage. He landed on Nova Zembla, and as he says himself, his “purpose was by the Waygats (Strait) to passe by the mouth of the river Ob (or Obi), and to double that way the north cape of Tartaria, or to give reasons wherefore it will not be.” Finding quantities of morse or walrus, he delayed somewhat, hoping to defray part of the expenses of the voyage by obtaining ivory. Meantime he despatched a party up a large river flowing from the north-eastward, fancying, apparently, that it was an arm of the sea, which might lead them to the solution of the problem they sought. On this voyage, “one of our company,” says Hudson, “looking overboard, saw a mermaid, and calling up some of the companie to see her once more come up, and by that time shee was come close to the ship’s side, looking earnestly on the men; a little after a sea came and overturned her; from the navill upwards her backe and breasts were like a woman’s (as they say that saw her), her body as big as one of us; her skin very white, and long haire hanging down behind, of colour blacke; in her going downe they saw her tayle, which was like the tayle of a porposse, and speckled like a macrell. Their names that saw her were Thomas Hilles and Robert Rayner.” All this is only another version of some walrus story. On this as on the previous voyage, Hudson made some observations on the inclination or “dip” of the magnetic needle, and he is probably the first Englishman who had done so.

The following year (1609) we find Hudson on a third voyage of discovery, in the service of the Dutch. His movements were very erratic, and the only record left us does not explain them.

He first doubled the North Cape, as though again in quest of the north-east passage; then turned westward to Newfoundland; thence again south as far as Charleston (South Carolina); then north to Cape Cod, soon after which he discovered the beautiful Hudson River, at the mouth of which New York is now situated. Hudson's fourth and last voyage is that most intimately associated with his name on account of the cruel tragedy which terminated his life, and lost England one of her bravest and most energetic explorers.

Several gentlemen of influence, among them Sir John Wolstenholme and Sir Dudley Digges, were so satisfied of the feasibility of making the north-west passage, that they fitted out a vessel at their own expense, and gave the command to Henry Hudson. For reasons which will appear as we proceed, the accounts of the voyage itself are meagre. We know, however, that he discovered the Strait and "Mediterranean" Sea (the latter of which has since been called a bay, although somewhat improperly), and both of which still bear his name. The vessel appropriated for this service had the same name as one of those on Captain Nares' late expedition—*The Discovery*—and was of fifty-five tons burden, victualled only, as it seems, for six months. She left the Thames on April 17th, 1610, and on June 9th was off the entrance of Frobisher's Strait, where Hudson was compelled to ply to the westward, on account of the ice and contrary winds. During July and the early part of August several islands and headlands were sighted and named, and at length they discovered a great strait formed by the north-west point of Labrador and a cluster of islands, which led them into an extensive sea. Here Hudson's own testimony ends, and we are dependent on the narrative of one Abacuk Pricket, which is perfectly useless as regards any discoveries made, but which is probably correct as regards the mutiny about to be described, and the circumstances which preceded and followed it. The reader will, we imagine, form his own conclusions very speedily in

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regard to Pricket's own share in this brutal transaction, in spite of his constant protestations. The story in its sequel furnishes a significant example of the condition to which mutiny and lawlessness on board ship may bring the perpetrators.

Abacuk Pricket says that Hudson, being closely beset in the ice, and doubtful whether he should ever escape from it, brought out his chart, and showed the company that he had entered the strait a hundred leagues further than any Englishman before him, and, in spite of the dangers, very naturally wished to follow up his discoveries. He, however, put it to them whether they should sail forward or turn the ship's head towards England. No decision appears to have been obtained, some wishing themselves at home, and others, sailor-like, saying they cared not where they were so long as they were out of the ice. The narrator admits, however, that "there were some who then spake words which were remembered a great while after."

The slumbering embers of mutiny appear to have been first fanned into a flame when Hudson displaced the mate and boatswain "for words spoken when in the ice," and appointed others. Still sailing southward, they entered a bay on Michaelmas day, and here the discontent was increased by Hudson insisting on weighing the anchor, while the crew was desirous of remaining there. Having voyaged for three months "in a labyrinth without end," they at length, on November 1st, found a suitable place to winter, and were soon frozen in. Hudson had taken into his house in London, apparently from sheer kindheartedness, a young man named Greene, of good and respectable parentage, but of a very dissolute and abandoned life, and had brought him to act as a kind of captain's clerk on this voyage. Greene was most undoubtedly an irreclaimable vagabond, as well as a most ungrateful person. He quarrelled with the surgeon and others on board, and was the leading conspirator in the mutinous proceedings against his benefactor, which were now fast ripening to a conclusion. Pricket speaks well of his "manhood"—which it is to be hoped he meant

only as regarded his physical qualifications—“but for religion, he would say he was cleane paper, whereon he might write what he would.” Although the ship’s provisions were nearly exhausted, they obtained, during the first three months, as many as a hundred dozen white partridges, and, with more difficulty, in the early spring, a few swans, geese, and ducks. A little later these failed them, and they were reduced to eating moss and frogs. Later again, when the ice broke up, seven men were sent out with the boat, and returned with five hundred fish as big as good herrings. They were, however, unsuccessful afterwards, and when the ship left the bay in which they had wintered, had nothing left but short rations of bread for a fortnight, and five cheeses which gave three pounds and a half to each man. These were carefully and fairly divided by Hudson, and, as we are told in the narrative, “he wept [148] when he gave it unto them.”

The vessel stood to the north-west, and on June 21st, 1611, while entangled in the drift ice, Pricket says that Wilson the boatswain and Greene came to him and told him that they and the crew meant to turn the master and all the sick into the boat, and leave them to shift for themselves; that they had not eaten anything for three days, that there were not fourteen days’ provisions left for the whole crew, and that they were determined “either to mend or end; and what they had begun they would go through with it or die.” Pricket says that he attempted to dissuade them, but that they threatened him, and Greene bade him hold his tongue, for he himself would rather be hanged at home than starved abroad. A little later, five or six of the mutineers came to Pricket—he lying, as he says, lame in his cabin—and administered the following oath to him:—“You shall swear truth to God, your prince, and country; you shall do nothing but to the glory of God, and the good of the action in hand, and harm to no man.” The signification of all this soon appeared, for on Hudson coming out of the cabin they seized him, and bound his arms behind him. He demanded what they meant, when

he was told that he would find out when he was in the boat. The boat was hauled alongside, and Hudson, his son, and seven “sicke and lame men” were hustled into it; a fowling-piece, some powder and shot, a few pikes, an iron pot, a little meal, and some other articles, were thrown in at the same time. Only one man, John King, the carpenter, had the courage to face these fiends in human shape, and remonstrate with them. He wasted his words and efforts, and, determining not to abandon his captain, jumped into the boat, and the mutineers cut it adrift among the ice. We know the horrors that have overtaken strong and hearty men when obliged to trust to the boats in mid-ocean; in this case, of ten persons seven at least were helpless and crippled; and sad as is the fact, we can hardly wonder to find that nothing was ever gleaned concerning their fate. One shudders to think of their hopeless and inevitable doom, and that among them was lost one of the bravest and most intrepid of England’s seamen.

But to this Arctic tragedy there was a sequel. As soon as the boat was out of sight Pricket says that Greene came to him and told him that he, Pricket, had been elected captain, and that he should take the master’s cabin, which he pretends that he did with great reluctance. The mutineers soon began to quarrel about their course, and were for a whole fortnight shut in the ice, at the end of which time their provisions were all gone. They had to subsist on cockle-grass, which they found on some neighbouring islands. They now began to fear that England would be no safe place for them, and blustering “Henry Greene swore the shippe should not come into any place but keep the sea still, till he had the king’s majesties hand and seale to shew for his safety.” Greene shortly after dispossessed Pricket, and became captain, a position he did not enjoy long. Going ashore on an island near Cape Digges to get some more grass and shoot some gulls, a quarrel ensued with a number of the natives, wherein Greene was killed, and three others died shortly afterwards from wounds received in the scuffle. Pricket, after fighting bravely,

according to his own statement, was also severely wounded. The survivors were now in a fearful plight, and, except some sea-fowl which they managed to procure, were almost entirely without provisions. They, however, stood out to sea, shaping their course for Ireland. At length all their supplies were gone, and they were reduced to eating candles and fried skins and bones. Just before reaching Galloway Bay one of the chief mutineers died of sheer starvation. [149]



IN SMITH'S SOUND.

Such are the main points of Pricket's story, and possibly out of compassion for the sufferings they had undoubtedly endured, no inquiry or punishment followed their arrival. But a very suspicious circumstance has to be related: Hudson's journal, instead of terminating at the date, June 21st, on which he was thrust into the boat, finished on August 3rd of the previous year. Pricket had charge of the master's chest, and there can be little doubt but that all portions of the journal which might have implicated them had been destroyed. A subsequent navigator shrewdly remarks of these transactions: "Well, Pricket, I am in great doubt of thy fidelity to Master Hudson." Nevertheless, his character seems not to have suffered in the eyes of the merchant adventurers; for we find him employed next year in a voyage under Captain (afterwards Sir) Thomas Button, one

object of which seems to have been to follow Hudson's track. They discovered and wintered in Hudson's River, but found no traces of the great navigator or his unfortunate companions. James Hall, who in 1612 left England on a voyage of northern discovery, and was mortally wounded by the dart of a Greenland Esquimaux, was accompanied by William Baffin, one of the most scientific navigators of his time. This expedition is noteworthy for having been the first on record where *longitudes* were taken by observation of the heavenly bodies. Baffin accompanied Bylot in 1615 on a voyage to the north-west. After sighting and leaving Greenland, many enormous icebergs were met, some upwards of two hundred feet out of the water. Baffin records one two hundred and forty feet high above the sea, and says that on the usual computation,<sup>25</sup> it must have been "one thousand six hundred and eightie foote from the top to the bottome." A voyage made by the same navigators in 1616 is principally interesting on account of the discovery of Sir Thomas Smythe's (now-a-days abbreviated to "plain" Smith) Sound. About this period also the pursuit of the whale and walrus was creating great attention from the large profits accruing to the merchants and companies engaged in it. Baffin accompanied an expedition sent out by the Muscovy Company, consisting of six ships and a pinnace, and off Spitzbergen they encountered no less than eight Spanish, four French, two Dutch, and some Biscayan vessels. Nevertheless, "the English having taken possession of the whole country in the name of his Majesty, prohibited all the others from fishing, and sent them away, excepting such as they were pleased to grant leave to remain." Baffin expected that

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<sup>25</sup> A cubical or rectangular mass of ice will, floating in the sea, have about six times the depth under water that it has height above. But it will be evident that this will not apply to irregular-shaped masses, which may have very solid bases, rising above in lighter pinnacles or other fantastic forms. The brother of the writer has seen on the Greenland coast icebergs 90 to 100 feet out of the water, *grounded* at 100 fathoms (600 feet).

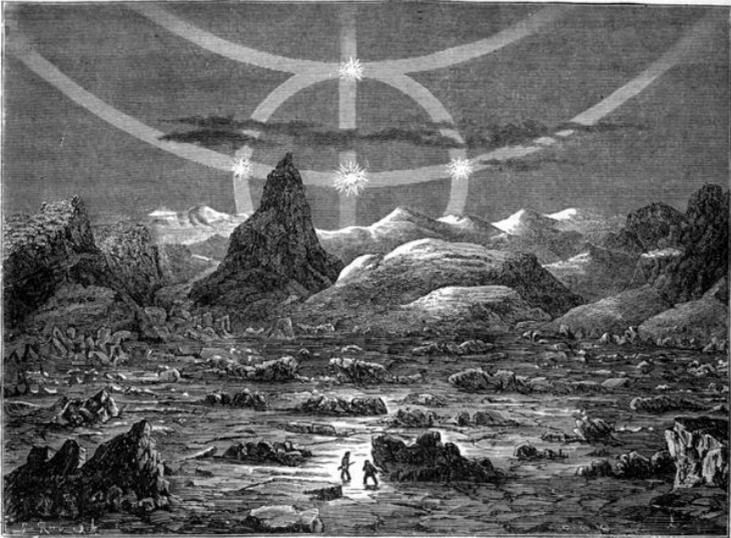
the Spanish would, at all events, have objected to this rather high-handed course, and “fought with us, but they submitted themselves unto the generall.” About this period there was a very large number of more or less important voyages made, which may be termed of a mixed character. Although sent out for purely commercial purposes, they were the means of adding something to our knowledge of geography. Baffin made more than one voyage after this, accompanying one whaling expedition which consisted of ten ships and two pinnaces. The results of some of these voyages will be more particularly mentioned when we come to consider the inhabitants of the Sea.

In 1619 Christian IV. of Denmark sent out an expedition to Greenland, and for northern discovery generally, under the command of Jens Munk, an experienced seaman. The two vessels employed were mainly manned by English sailors who had served on previous Arctic voyages. Munk left Elsinore on May 18th, and a month afterwards made Cape Farewell. He endeavoured to stand up Davis’s Strait, but the ice preventing he retraced his course, eventually passing through Hudson’s Strait, to which, with the northern part of Hudson’s Bay, he attached new names, in apparent ignorance of previous discoveries. He made the coast of America in latitude  $63^{\circ} 20'$ , where he was compelled to seek shelter in an opening of the land, which he named Munk’s Winter Harbour. To the surrounding country he gave the name of New Denmark. The year being advanced—it was now September 7th—huts were immediately constructed, and his company were at first very successful in obtaining game—partridges, hares, foxes, and white bears. Several mock suns were observed, and on December 18th an eclipse of the moon occurred, during which this luminary was surrounded by a transparent circle, within which was a cross quartering the moon. This phenomenon was regarded with alarm, and as a harbinger of the misfortunes which soon followed. The weather was intensely cold; their wine, beer, and brandy, were frozen,

and the casks burst. The scurvy made its appearance in virulent form, and a Danish authority states it was mostly occasioned by the too free use of spirituous liquors. Their bread and provisions became exhausted, and none of them had strength to hunt or seek other supplies. One by one they succumbed, till out of sixty-four persons hardly one remained. When Munk, who, reduced to a skeleton, had remained for some time alone in a little hut in an utterly hopeless and broken-hearted condition, ventured to crawl out, he found only two others alive. But the spring had come, and, making one last effort, they went forth, and removing the snow found some roots and plants, which they eagerly devoured. They succeeded in obtaining a few fish, and, later, killed some birds. Their strength returning, they equipped the smaller vessel as well as they were able, and set sail on an apparently hopeless voyage, but in spite of storms and other perils succeeded at length in reaching Norway, where they were received as men risen from the grave. Munk must have possessed an undaunted spirit, for we find him almost immediately proposing to make an attempt at the north-west passage, in spite of all the sufferings he had just undergone. A subscription was raised, and a vessel prepared. On taking leave of the court, the king, in admonishing him to be more cautious, appeared to ascribe the loss of his crew to some mismanagement. Munk replied hotly, and the king, forgetting his own proper dignity, struck the brave navigator with a cane. The old sailor left the presence of this unkingly king, smarting under a sense of outrage which he could not forget; and we are told that he took to his bed and died of a broken heart very shortly afterwards. The story, however, is discredited by some authorities. Some thirty years later Denmark again furnished an expedition, under the command of Captain Danells, to explore East Greenland. He could rarely approach the ice-girt coast nearer than eighteen or twenty miles, and subsequent attempts have been little more successful.

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The establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1669,



MOCK SUNS.

appears to have diverted the spirit of adventure and discovery from the far north, and we hear of few voyages to the Arctic at this period, and for some time afterwards, although the discovery of a northern passage to the Pacific is really included in the objects for which the charter to that Corporation was granted.

One attempt at a north-eastern passage in 1676 deserves to be mentioned, principally on account of the circumstances which brought it about. There was a considerable amount of rivalry in the East Indian, Chinese, and Japanese trade at that time, between the Dutch and ourselves, and some reports had reached England that a company of merchants in Holland was agitating the subject of a north-eastern passage to the Orient once more. Further, Mr. Joseph Moxon, a Fellow of the Royal Society, had just published his "Brief Discourse," wherein he records the following story, from which he concluded "that there is a free and open sea under the very pole." "Being about twenty-two years ago in Amsterdam," says he, "I went into a drinking-house to drink a cup of beer for my thirst, and sitting by the public fire among several people, there happened a seaman to come in, who seeing a friend of his there whom he knew went in the Greenland voyage, wondered to see him, because it was not yet time for the Greenland fleet to come home, and asked him what accident brought him home so soon; his friend (who was the steer-man aforesaid in a Greenland ship that summer) told him that their ship went not out to fish that summer but only to take in the lading of the whole fleet, and bring it to an early market. But, said he, before the fleet had caught fish enough to lade us, we, by order of the Greenland Company, sailed unto the north pole, and came back again. Whereupon (his relation being novel to me) I entered into discourse with him, and seemed to question the truth of what he said; but he did ensure me it was true, and that the ship was then in Amsterdam, and many of the seamen belonging to her to justify the truth of it; and told me, moreover, that they had sailed two degrees beyond the Pole." The Hollander

also stated that they had an open sea, free from ice, and that the weather was warm. Whatever amount of truth there might be in this beerhouse story, its publication had an influence at the time, and an expedition, partly provided by the Government and partly by the Duke of York and several other noblemen and gentlemen, was despatched at the end of May, 1676. The *Speedwell* and *Prosperous*, under the command respectively of Captains Wood and Flawes, were the vessels employed. The first struck on a ledge of rocks off Nova Zembla, and Wood had scarcely time to get the bread and carpenter's tools ashore before she went to pieces. Two of the crew were lost, and the rest safely landed. They had almost concluded to attempt a boat voyage, similar to that made by the brave Hollanders of Barents' third expedition, when the *Prosperous*, attracted by a great fire which they had made on the shore, hove in sight, and took them on board. The two crews reached England safely, and the voyage, in the words of a distinguished writer, "seems to have closed the long list of unfortunate northern expeditions in that century; and the discovery, if not absolutely despaired of, by being so often missed, ceased for many years to be sought for." [152]

Nor did the eighteenth century open much more auspiciously. Mr. Knight, an old servant of the Hudson's Bay Company, and for a long time governor of their leading establishment on Nelson's River, had learned from the Indians that in the extreme north of their territory, and on the banks of a navigable river, there was a rich mine of native copper. Knight was so impressed with the value of this information, that, after much trouble, he induced the Company to send out an expedition for the purpose of investigating the matter. Knight himself, nearly eighty years of age, had a general charge of the expedition, the vessels of which were commanded by Captains Barlow and Vaughan. The expedition left in the spring of 1719, and never returned; it was not till forty-eight years afterwards that any information was gleaned concerning the melancholy fate of the whole party. [153]

In the year 1767 some of the Company's men employed in whaling near Marble Island stood in close to the shore, where in a harbour they discovered the remains of a house, the hulls of two ships under water, and guns, anchors, cables, an anvil, and other heavy articles, which had not been removed by the natives. The following, from a work by Samuel Hearne,<sup>26</sup> sufficiently indicates the misery to which the party had been reduced, before death terminated their sufferings. It was obtained through the medium of an Esquimaux interpreter from the natives.

When the vessels arrived at Marble Island it was very late in the fall, and in getting them into the harbour the largest received much damage, but on being fairly in the English began to build the house; their number at that time seeming to be about fifty. As soon as the ice permitted in the following summer (1720), the Esquimaux paid them another visit, by which time the number of the English was very greatly reduced, and those that were living seemed very unhealthy. According to the account given by the Esquimaux, they were then very busily employed, but about what they could not easily describe, probably in lengthening the long boat, for at a little distance from the house there was now lying a great quantity of oak chips, which had been made most assuredly by carpenters.

A sickness and famine occasioned such havoc among the English that by the setting in of the second winter their number was reduced to twenty. That winter (1720) some of the Esquimaux took up their abode on the opposite side of the harbour to that on which the English had built their houses, and frequently supplied them with such provisions as they had, which chiefly consisted of whale's blubber, seal's flesh, and train oil. When the spring advanced the Esquimaux went to the continent, and on their visiting Marble Island again, in the summer of 1721, they only found five of the English alive, and those were in

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<sup>26</sup> "Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean."

such distress for provisions that they eagerly ate the seal's flesh and whale's blubber quite raw as they purchased it from the natives. This disordered them so much that three of them died in a few days, and the other two, though very weak, made a shift to bury them. Those two survived many days after the rest, and frequently went to the top of an adjacent rock and earnestly looked to the south and east, as if in expectation of some vessels coming to their relief. After continuing there a considerable time together, and nothing appearing in sight, they sat down close together and wept bitterly. At length one of the two died, and the other's strength was so far exhausted that he fell down and died also in attempting to dig a grave for his companion.



THE REMNANTS OF KNIGHT'S EXPEDITION.

In 1741 Captain Middleton made a northern voyage of little importance, and on his return was publicly accused by one Mr. Arthur Dobbs, of having acted in bad faith to the Government, and of having taken a bribe of £5,000 from the Hudson's Bay Company, his old employers, not to make discoveries. The captain denied having accepted any bribe, but almost admitted that he had said no one should be much the wiser if he did make the north-west passage. The agitation, however, stirred by Dobbs, led to the passing of an Act of Parliament offering the large sum of £20,000 for the discovery of a north-western route to the Indies. Two vessels—the *Dobb's Galley* and *California*—were equipped by subscription, and left in the spring of 1746. The expedition wintered near Fort York, but although absent seventeen months, virtually accomplished nothing. The result was that the ardour of the public as well as of explorers received a decided check, and for nearly thirty years we hear of no Arctic voyage being despatched for purposes of discovery. [154]

## CHAPTER XVI.

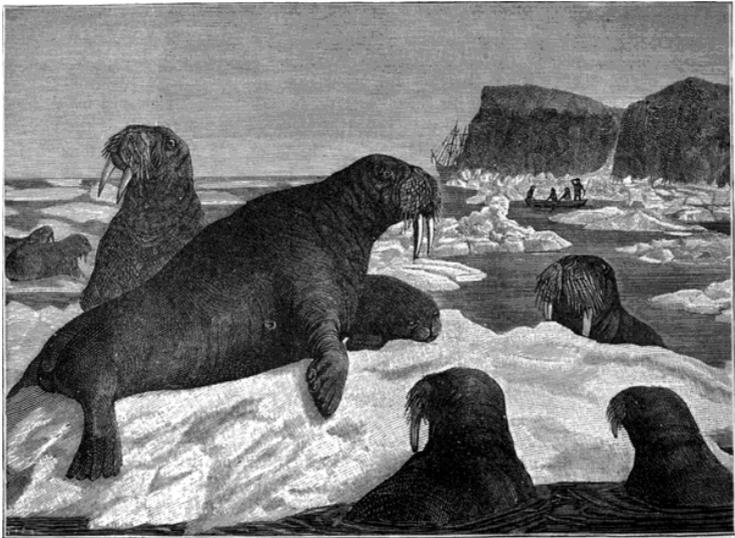
Paucity of Arctic Expeditions in the Eighteenth Century—Phipps' Voyage—Walls of Ice—Ferocious Sea-horses—A Beautiful Glacier—Cook's Voyage—A Fresh Attempt—Extension of the Government Rewards—Cape Prince of Wales—Among the Tchuktchis—Icy Cape—Baffled by the Ice—Russian Voyages—The Two Unconquerable Capes—Peter the Great—Behring's Voyages—Discovery of the Straits—The Third Voyage—Scurvy and Shipwreck—Death of the Commander—New Siberia—The Ivory Islands.

The eighteenth century was not remarkable for the number of northern voyages instigated in England for geographical research. This was partly due to the many previous failures, but still more to important discoveries which were being made in other parts of the world, and which for the time threw Arctic adventure in the shade. The land and river expeditions of Samuel Hearne and Alexander Mackenzie to the shores or neighbourhood of the Arctic Ocean do not come within the scope of this work, and strong doubts have been expressed as to whether either of these explorers really reached salt water, although both were undoubtedly near it.

The northern voyage of Captain Constantine John Phipps (afterwards Lord Mulgrave) deserves some notice, inasmuch as it was a distinct attempt to reach the North Pole. The Hon. Daines Barrington and others had, prior to 1773, agitated the subject before the Royal Society, and the President and Council of that learned body had memorialised the Government to fit out an expedition for the purpose, which His Majesty was pleased to direct should be immediately undertaken. Two vessels, the *Racehorse* and the *Carcass*, were selected, the former having ninety and the second eighty men on board. The ships left the Nore on June 10th, 1773, and seventeen days later had reached the latitude of the southern part of Spitzbergen, without having met ice or experiencing cold. But from the 5th of July onwards, when off Spitzbergen, they met immense fields, almost "one compact, impenetrable body," and the most heroic and persevering efforts failed to penetrate it or find an opening. In Waigatz Strait, where some of the officers landed on a low, flat island, large fir-trees, roots and all, and in other cases timber which had been hewn with an axe, were noticed on the shore. These had, undoubtedly, drifted out from some of the great rivers of the mainland. While here they wounded a sea-horse, which immediately dived, and brought up a whole army of others to the rescue. They attacked the boat, which was nearly upset and stove in, and wrested an

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oar from one of the sailors.



### ENCOUNTER WITH SEA-HORSES.

On July 30th the weather was exceedingly lovely, and the scene around them, says Captain Phipps, “beautiful and picturesque; the two ships becalmed in a large bay, with three apparent openings between the islands that formed it, but everywhere surrounded with ice as far as we could see, with some streams of water; not a breath of air; the water perfectly smooth; the ice covered with snow, low and even, except a few broken pieces near the edges; the pools of water in the middle of the pieces were frozen over with young ice.” On August 1st the ice began to press in, and places which had before been flat and almost level with the water were forced *higher than the main-yards* of the vessels. The crews were set to work to try and cut out the ships, and they sawed through ice sometimes as much as twelve feet thick, but without effecting their escape. Meantime the ships

drifted with the ice into fourteen fathoms, and Captain Phipps, greatly alarmed, at one time proposed to abandon the ships and betake to the boats. On August 7th, keeping their launch out and ready for emergencies, they crowded all sail on the vessels, and three days later, after incurring much danger, reached the open water, and anchored in Fair Haven, Spitzbergen. A remarkably grand iceberg,<sup>27</sup> or, more properly, glacier, was observed here. The face towards the sea was nearly perpendicular, and about 300 feet high, with a cascade of water issuing from it. The contrast of the dark mountains and white snow, with the beautiful green colour of the near ice, made a very pleasing and uncommon picture. Phipps describes an iceberg which had floated from this glacier and grounded in twenty-four fathoms (144 feet). It was fifty feet above the surface of the water.

Captain Phipps did not pursue his investigations farther, but bore for England, which he reached late in September. The unfavourable termination of his voyage did not deter the Government from other efforts. Another voyage was ordered, and the celebrated navigator, Captain James Cook, appointed to the command. The object was to attempt once more the north-west passage, but in a new manner. Hitherto all efforts had been made from the Atlantic side; on this occasion the plan was reversed, and the vessels were to enter the Polar seas from the Pacific Ocean. The two vessels employed, the *Resolution* and *Discovery*, are now historically famous from the extensive voyages made in them, in the Pacific more particularly. The first was commanded by Cook, and the latter by Captain Clerke. By an Act of Parliament then outstanding a reward of £20,000 was held out to ships belonging to any of His Majesty's subjects which should make the passage, but it excluded the vessels of the

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<sup>27</sup> In several of the older Arctic works glaciers and icebergs are confounded. The fact is that the latter, or at all events the larger number of the latter, are born of the former. They are masses of ice which have become detached at the sea end and have floated away.

[156] Royal Navy. This was now amended to include His Majesty's ships, and a further reward of £5,000 offered to any vessel which should approach within one degree of the North Pole.

The two ships, after making many discoveries in the Pacific, entered Behring Strait on August 9th, 1779, and anchored near a point of land which has been subsequently found to be the extreme western point of North America, and to which Cook gave the name Cape Prince of Wales. Some elevations, like stages, and others like huts, were seen on this part of the coast, and they thought also that some people were visible. A little later Cook stood over to the Asiatic coast, where, entering a large bay, he found a village of the natives known now-a-days as Tchuktchis. They were found to be peaceable and civil, and several interchanges of presents were made.

[157] In 1865 and 1866 the writer of these pages, when in the service of the Russian-American Telegraph Expedition, had an opportunity of visiting an almost identical village in Plover Bay, Eastern Siberia.<sup>28</sup> The bay itself, sometimes called Port Providence, has generally passed by the former name since the visit of H.M.S. *Plover*, which laid up there in the winter of 1848-9, when employed on the search for Sir John Franklin. Bare cliffs and rugged mountains hem it in on three sides, and a long spit, on which the native village is situated, shelters it on the ocean (or Behring Sea) side. The Tchuktchis live in skin tents. *The remains of underground houses are seen, but the people who used them have passed away.* The present race makes no use of such houses. Although their skin dwellings appear outwardly rough, and are patched with every variety of hide—walrus, seal, and reindeer—with here and there a fragment of a sail obtained

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<sup>28</sup> The writer has visited many parts of Russian-America, or, as it is now called, Alaska, a little south of the above point. The natives as a rule live *underground* in winter, but they have for summer use board and log houses on the surface, and stages above and around them of all kinds, some for drying fish, others for raising sledges or canoes above the surface of the ground, &c.

from the whalers, they are in reality constructed over frames built of the larger bones of whales and walruses, and very admirably put together. In this most exposed of villages the wintry blasts must be fearful, yet these people are to be found there at all seasons. Wood they have none,<sup>29</sup> and blubber lamps are the only means they have for warming their tents. The frames of some of their skin canoes are also of bone. On either side of these craft, which are the counterpart of the Greenland canoes it is usual to find a sealskin blown out tight and the ends secured. These serve as floats to steady the canoe. They have very strong fishing-nets, made of thin strips of walrus hide.

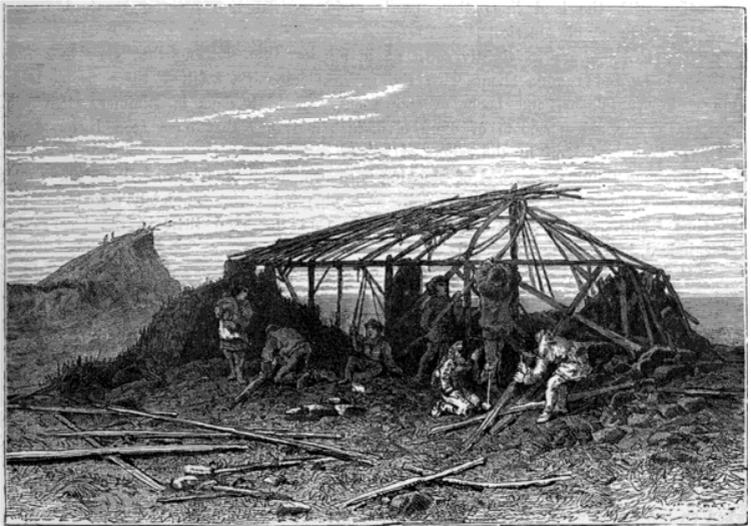
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The Tchuktchis are a strongly-built race, although the inhabitants of this particular village, from intercourse with whaling vessels, have been much demoralised. One of these natives was seen carrying the awkward burden of a carpenter's chest weighing two hundred pounds without apparently considering it a great exertion. They are a good-humoured people, and not greedier than the average of natives; they are very generally honest. They were of much service to a large party of men who wintered there in 1866-7, at the period when it was proposed to cross Behring Straits with a submarine cable in connection with the land lines then partly under construction by the Western Union Telegraph Company of America.

“The children are so tightly sewn up in reindeer-skin clothing that they look like walking bags, and tumble about with the greatest impunity. All of these people wear skin coats, pantaloons, and boots, excepting only on high days in summer,

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<sup>29</sup> There is none growing, but a wreck or piece of drift-wood occasionally supplies their need. The writer was in Behring Sea in the autumn of the year 1865, when the famed and dreaded privateer *Shenandoah* burned thirty American whale-ships, and the natives had then a considerable amount of wreckage, including complete boats, which had come ashore. *Vide* the author's work, “Travel and Adventure in the Territory of Alaska,” &c.



TCHUKTCHI INDIANS BUILDING A HUT.

when you may see a few old garments of more civilised appearance that have seen better days, and have been traded off by the sailors of vessels calling there.

“The true Tchuktchi method of smoking is to swallow all the fumes of the tobacco; and I have seen them after six or eight pulls at a pipe fall back, completely intoxicated for the time being. Their pipes are infinitely larger in the stem than in the bowl; the latter, indeed, holds an infinitesimally small amount of tobacco.

“It is said that the Tchuktchis murder the old and feeble, but only with the victim’s consent! They do not appear to indulge in any unnecessary cruelty, but endeavour to stupify the aged sacrifice before letting a vein. This is said to be done by putting some substance up the nostrils; but the whole statement must be received with caution, although we derived it from a shrewd native who had been much employed by the captains of vessels in the capacity of interpreter, and who could speak in broken English.

“This native, by name ‘Nau-Kum,’ was of service on various occasions, and was accordingly much petted by us. Some of his remarks are worthy of record. On being taken down into the engine-room of the steamer *Wright*, he examined it carefully, and then shaking his head, said solemnly, ‘*Too muchee wheel, makee man too muchee think!*’ His curiosity when on board was unappeasable. ‘What’s that fellow?’ was his constant query with regard to anything, from the ‘donkey-engine’ to the mainmast. On one occasion he heard two men discussing rather warmly, and could not at all understand such unnecessary excitement. ‘That fellow crazy?’ said he. Colonel Bulkley (engineer-in-chief of the telegraph enterprise) gave him a suit of clothes with gorgeous brass buttons, and many other presents. The whalers use such men on occasions as pilots, traders, and interpreters, and to Naukum in particular I know as much as five barrels of villanous whiskey have been entrusted, for which he accounted satisfactorily. The truth-loving Chippewa, when asked, ‘Are you

a Christian Indian?’ promptly replied, ‘No, I wishkey Injen!’ and the truthful Tchuktchi would say the same. They all appear to be intensely fond of spirits. The traders sell them liquors of the most horrible kind, not much superior to the ‘coal oil’ or ‘kerosene’ used for lamps.” So much for natives, who, in Captain Cook’s time, were doubtless much more innocent and unsophisticated.

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To resume our narrative: Cook again crossed to the northern American coast, and on August 17th reached a point encumbered with ice, which formed an impenetrable field. To this point he gave the name Icy Cape, and it was the furthest east he was able to proceed. While he made every effort to fulfil the object of his mission he was baffled at every point, and on August 30th he turned the vessels’ bows southward. After many explorations of both the Asiatic and American coasts, it will be remembered that he lost his life at the Sandwich Islands. He was succeeded by Captain Clerke, who in 1779 again attempted to make the passage, but with even less success than had been attained by Captain Cook.

In order that the various sections of this subject should not become confused or involved, mention of many Russian voyages, which had for their aim the exploration of the coasts of Northern Asia, and among which were several direct attempts at making the north-east passage, has been purposely omitted till now. As early as 1648 Deshneff undoubtedly made a voyage from the mouth of the Kolyma round the extreme eastern point of Asia, and through Behring Straits to the Anadyr. In very early times the Russians used to creep along the coast at the other end of the continent, from Archangel to the Obi, and in the eighteenth century, in particular, many efforts were made to extend the explorations eastward. In brief, several explorers, Lieutenants Maravief, Malgyn, and Shurakoff, between the years 1734 and 1738, sailed from Archangel to the Obi, doubling the promontory; Lieutenant Koskelof made a successful voyage from the Obi to

the Yenesei in 1738; and in 1735 Lieutenant Pronchishchef, who was accompanied by his wife, got very close to Cape Chelyuskin (or North-east Cape) on its eastern side, his vessel being frozen in near that point. Both himself and his wife died there. In 1742 Lieutenant Chelyuskin reached the northernmost cape, which bears his name, by a sledge journey. The North East Cape (Cape Chelyuskin) and the neighbouring Cape Taimyr<sup>30</sup> had never been rounded, till Professor Nordenskjöld only the other day succeeded in passing both, thus making the long-sought north-east passage. From the Lena eastward to the Kolyma voyages have often been made, and, as we have seen, Deshneff had completed the circuit of the coast from the Kolyma eastward at a very early period. The records of this voyage were entirely overlooked for a century, when they were unearthed at Yakutsk, in Siberia, by Müller, the historian of the voyages about to be narrated.

Inseparably connected with the history of Arctic voyages are those of Vitus Behring, an explorer who deserves to rank among the greatest of his century, although his several adventurous attempts are comparatively little known. Behring was a Dane who had been attracted into the Russian service by the fame of Peter the Great, and his expeditions had been directly planned by that enterprising and sagacious monarch. The emperor, however, did not live to see them consummated. Their main objects were to determine whether Asia and America did or did not join at some northern point and form one continent; and if detached, how nearly the coasts approached each other. "The Empress Catherine," says Müller, the historian of Behring's life, "as she endeavoured in all points to execute most precisely the plans of her deceased husband, in a manner began her reign with an order for the expedition to Kamtschatka." Behring was appointed commander, having associated with him Lieutenants Spanberg

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<sup>30</sup> In the summer of 1843 Middendorf explored the coasts and neighbourhood of Cape Taimyr, and looking seawards to the Polar Ocean, saw open water.

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and Tschirikoff. They took their final orders on February 5th, 1725, and proceeded overland through Siberia to the Ochotsk Sea. It certainly gives some idea of the difficult nature of the trip in those days when we find that it occupied them *two years* to transport their stores and outfit to Ochotsk. A vessel was specially constructed, in which they crossed to Bolcheretsk, in Kamchatka,<sup>31</sup> and the following winter their provisions and naval stores were transported to Nishni (new) Kamchatka, a small town, or rather village, which is still one of the few settlements in that great peninsula. "On the 4th of April, 1728," says Müller, "a boat was put upon the stocks, like the packet-boats used in the Baltick, and on the 10th of July was launched, and named the boat *Gabriel*." On the 20th of the same month Behring left the river, and following the east coasts of Kamchatka and Siberia, reached as far north as 67° 18' in the straits which now bear his name. Here, finding the land trend to the west, he came to the conclusion that he had reached the extreme point of Asia, and that the continent of America, although contiguous, did not join it. Of course we know that in the latter and main point he was right. He discovered St. Laurence Island, and in the autumn returned successfully to the town from which he had sailed. In a second voyage contrary winds baffled all his efforts to reach and examine the coasts of America, and eventually he doubled the southern point of Kamchatka, and returned viâ the Siberian overland route to St. Petersburg.

It is to the third voyage of Behring that the greatest interest attaches. His first attempt had been successful in its main

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<sup>31</sup> The writer has spelt the word phonetically. It is impossible to render more than the sound of a Russian word in English, and any attempt to Anglicise the Russian spelling must end in failure, as there are thirty-six letters in that language. But from intercourse with educated Russians in Kamchatka during two visits in 1865 and 1866, he knows that his mode more nearly represents the sound than the versions commonly adopted, one of which may be noted above in the quotation from Müller, where the English translator has made the word *Kamtschatka*.

object, and both the leader and his officers were fired with an ambition to distinguish themselves in further explorations. Müller says:—"The design of the first voyage was not brought on the carpet again upon this occasion, since it was looked upon as completed; but instead of that, orders were given to make voyages, as well eastward to the continent of America as southward to Japan, and to discover, if possible, at the same time, *through the frozen sea the north passage* (the italics are ours—ED.), which had been so frequently attempted by the English and Dutch. The Senate, the Admiralty Office, and the Academy of Sciences, all took their parts to complete this important undertaking." Behring and his faithful lieutenants were promoted, and a number of naval officers were ordered to join the expedition. Several scientific professors, John George Gmelin, Lewis de Lisle de la Croyère, S. Müller, and one Steller, a student, volunteered to accompany Behring. Two of these latter never went to sea—a probably fortunate circumstance for themselves, as the sequel will show—but confined themselves to land researches in Siberia.

After long and tedious journeyings, and great trouble in transporting their stores across the dreary wilds of Siberia, they at length reached Petropaulovski, Kamchatka, and having constructed vessels, left that port on July 4th, 1741, on their eventful voyage. Early in its history the ships became separated during the continuance of a terrible gale. Behring discovered many of the Aleutian and other islands nearer the American coast. The scurvy making its appearance, this brave commander endeavoured to return to Kamchatka. The sickness increased, and they became so exhausted that "two sailors who used to be at the rudder were obliged to be led in by two others who could hardly walk. And when one could sit and steer no longer, another, in little better condition, supplied his place. Many sails they durst not hoist, because there was nobody to lower them in case of need." At last land appeared, and they endeavoured to

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sail towards it; getting near it, the anchor was dropped. A violent gale arose, and the vessel was driven on the rocks, which she touched; they cast a second anchor, but its cable was snapped before it took ground. Their little barque was thrown bodily over the rocks by a sea which threatened to overwhelm them, but, fortunately, inside the reef the water was calmer, and the crew, having rested, managed to launch their boat, and some of them reached the shore. There was scarcely any drift-wood on the beach, and no trees on the island; hence they determined to roof over some small ravines or gullies near the beach. On the “8th of November a beginning was made to land the sick, but some died as soon as they were brought from between-decks in the open air, others during the time they were on the deck, some in the boat, and many more as soon as they were brought on shore.” The following day the commander, Behring—himself terribly prostrated with scurvy—was brought ashore on a hand-barrow, and a month later died on the island which is now known by his name. “He may be said to have been buried half alive, for the sand rolling down continually from the side of the ditch in which he lay, and covering his feet, he at last would not suffer it to be removed, and said that he felt some warmth from it, which otherwise he should want in the remaining parts of his body; and thus the sand increased to his belly, so that after his decease they were obliged to scrape him out of the ground in order to inter him in a proper manner.” Poor Behring! It was a melancholy end for an explorer so great.

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Their vessel, lying unprotected, became an utter wreck, and the larger part of their stores and provisions was lost. They subsisted for a considerable time on dead whales which had been driven ashore. At last, in the spring they resolved to construct a small vessel from the wreck, which was at length completed, and they left the dreary scene of their sufferings. Never were shipwrecked mariners more rejoiced than when once more they sighted and reached the coast of Kamchatka. Behring’s

companion, Tschirikoff, had preceded them the previous autumn, having lost twenty-one men by scurvy; and the Professor de la Croyère, who had lingered till the last moment, died in sight of Petropaulovski.

In 1770 a Russian merchant, named Liakhof, crossed on the ice from the mainland to the islands in the Polar Ocean which now bear his name, although sometimes called New Siberia. Immense quantities of mammoth bones were discovered, and he obtained from the Empress Catherine the exclusive right of digging for them. As late as the year 1821 as much as nine to ten tons per annum of this fossil ivory were being obtained from this source. Hedenström, in 1809, and Anjou, in 1821, examined these islands in detail. The latter travelled out on the ice to a considerable distance north of the islands, and found *open water*.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE EXPEDITIONS OF ROSS AND PARRY.

Remarkable Change in the Greenland Ice-fields—Immense Icebergs found out of their Latitude—Ross the First's Expedition—Festivities among the Danes—Interviews with Esquimaux—Crimson Snow—A Mythical Discovery—The Croker Mountains—Buchan's Expedition—Bursting of Icebergs—Effects of Concussion—The Creation of an Iceberg—Spitzbergen in Summer—Animated Nature—Millions of Birds—Refuge in an Ice-pack—Parry and his Exploits—His Noble Character—First Arctic Voyage—Sails over the Croker Mountains.

The long series of interesting voyages which have been made to the Arctic regions during the present century were commenced in 1818, after a considerable period of inaction and apathy had existed in regard to northern exploration. The renewal of these attempts was not brought about by accident or caprice, but was due to a great change, which had been noted by many whalers and navigators. Sir John Barrow, one of the most consistent and persistent advocates of Arctic exploration, as well as one of the most intelligent writers of his day, says: "The event alluded to was the disappearance of the whole, or greater part, of the vast barrier of ice which for a long period of time—perhaps for centuries—was supposed to have maintained its firm-rooted position on the eastern coast of Old Greenland, and its reappearance in a more southerly latitude, where it was met with, as was attested by various persons worthy of credit, in the years 1815, 1816, and 1817, by ships coming from the East Indies and America, by others going to Halifax and Newfoundland, and in different parts of the Atlantic, as far down as the 40th parallel of latitude." Large islands of ice had impeded some voyagers for days together; icebergs miles in extent, and from one to two hundred feet high, had been reported. A vessel had been beset for eleven days on the coast of Labrador in floes of ice mixed with icebergs, many of which had huge rocks, gravel, soil, and wood upon them. In short, there was so much testimony from various sources to the vast break-up which had occurred that it created a great deal of attention among scientific men and navigators.

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It was perfectly understood whence the larger part of this ice must be derived. Scoresby the younger, in a letter to Sir Joseph Banks, recorded the fact that some 18,000 square miles of the surface of the Greenland seas included between the parallels of 74° and 80° were known to be void of ice, and that this immense change had been effected within two years. Intelligence received at Copenhagen in 1816 from Iceland indicated that the ice had broken loose from the opposite coast of Greenland, and floated

away to the southward, after surrounding the shores of Iceland and filling all the creeks and bays of that island. This was repeated in 1817.



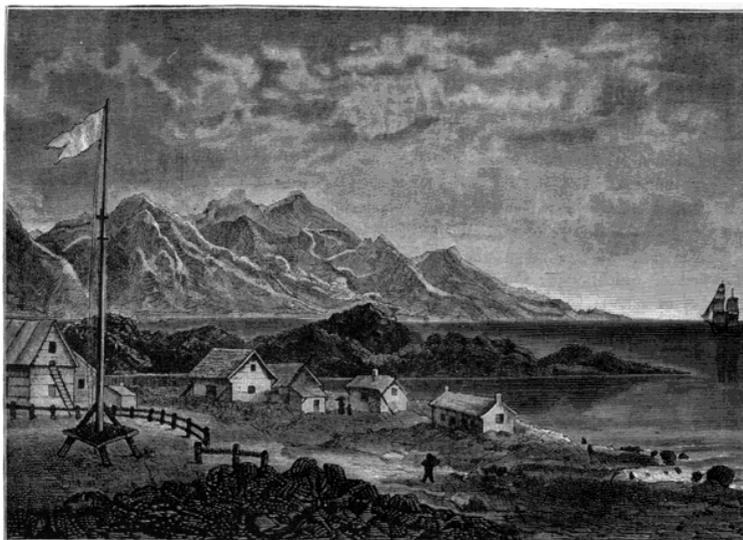
SIR JOHN ROSS.

The public notice taken of the above facts led to two expeditions being ordered, the first of which, under Commander (afterwards Sir) John Ross, was remarkable for the number of officers who accompanied it, and who, later, acquired distinction in the Arctic explorations of this century. Parry, J. C. Ross (the commander's nephew), Sabine (long President of the Royal Society, and a most distinguished *savan*), then a captain of the Royal Artillery, Hoppner, and others, were among the number. The ships employed were the *Isabella* and *Alexander*, and the commander's instructions were to attempt the north-west passage by the western route.

On the 1st of June, 1818, they had reached the eastern side of Davis's Strait, but detained by ice, and it was not till the 3rd of the

following month that they arrived at the Women's Islands. The delay did not prevent them from having some pleasant intercourse with the Danes and Esquimaux of the Greenland settlements. Extempore balls were organised, where their interpreter, Jack Sackhouse (or Saccheous), was of great value. Jack combined in his person the somewhat discordant qualifications of seaman, interpreter, draughtsman, and master of ceremonies, with those of a fisher of seals and a successful hunter of white bears.

A favourable breeze sprang up, and Ross was anxious to leave, as the ice began to separate. Jack had gone ashore, and when a boat was sent for him he was found in one of the huts with his collar-bone broken, from having greatly overloaded and discharged his gun. His idea was, as he expressed it, "Plenty powder, plenty kill!" Proceeding northward, and passing many whalers, he examined and named Melville Bay. On August 10th, the ships being at anchor near shore, eight sledges of Esquimaux were observed, and Saccheous was despatched with a flag and some presents in order to parley with them, they being on one side of a field of ice, in which was a canal or chasm. After much shouting and gesticulating, Saccheous held out his presents, and called to them in their own language to approach. The reply was "No, no; go away!" and one man said, "Go away; I can kill you!" holding up a knife. The interpreter, however, threw them an English knife, which they accepted, and *pulled their noses*, which Ross represents to mean a sign of friendship. They soon became more familiar, and pointing to the ships, asked, "What great creatures these are. Do they come from the sun or the moon? Do they give us light by day or by night?" To which Saccheous replied, "They are houses made of wood." The natives would not believe this, answering, "No, they are alive; we have seen them move their wings." Ross entitles these natives the "Arctic Highlanders." There is a good deal of rather doubtful matter in the narrative of Ross, and it is certainly more than likely that these people had often seen whale-ships.



FISKERNÆS, SOUTH GREENLAND.

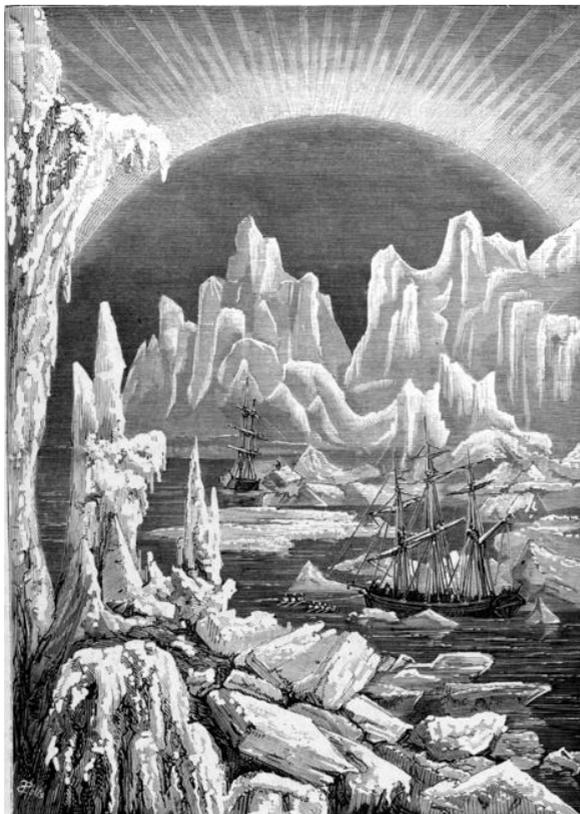
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Not far from Cape Dudley Digges Ross observed some of the cliffs covered with the *crimson* snow often mentioned in other Arctic narratives, and indeed noted by Saussure in the Alps. "This snow," he says, "was penetrated even down to the rock, in many places to a depth of ten or twelve feet, by colouring matter." Some of this having been bottled, was analysed on their return by Mr. Brande, the celebrated chemist, who, detecting uric acid, pronounced it to be no other than the excrement of birds. Other authorities considered it to be of vegetable origin, judging it to be probably the drainage from some particular kind of moss, the roots of which are of that colour.

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The results of this voyage were not extensive. Ross only reached Sir James Lancaster's Sound, where an imaginary discovery of his has since given rise to much ridicule. He fancied that he saw at the bottom of a bay an extensive range of mountains, the which he somewhat unfortunately named after Mr. Croker, the then Secretary of the Admiralty. The site of the Croker Mountains was a year afterwards sailed over by Parry! It is certain that either clouds, mirage, or some other phenomenon of nature, had misled him. A very similar fact was noted by Captain Nares in his expedition.

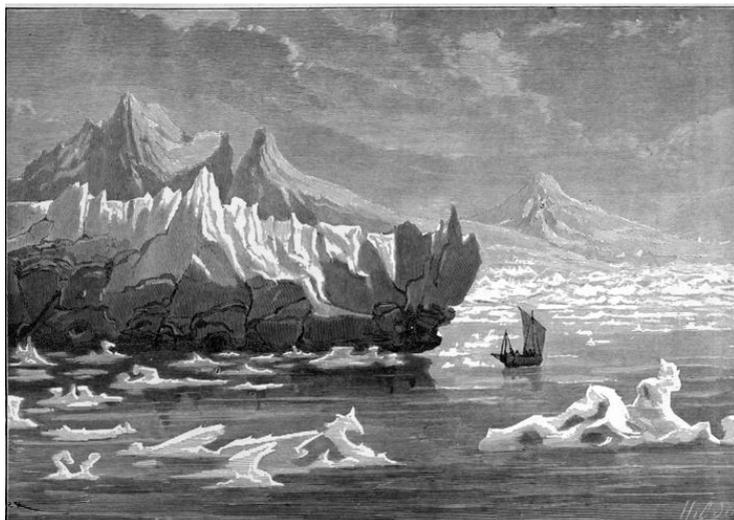
The second of the two expeditions was that performed under the command of Captain David Buchan, who had associated with him a number of officers, including John Franklin, Frederick Beechey, and George Back, who afterwards distinguished themselves in various branches of the Arctic service. Buchan himself was a first-rate navigator, particularly well acquainted with the dangers of the northern seas, more especially on the Newfoundland station. He had also made a remarkable journey across the ice and snow of that island in order to communicate with the natives, and was the first European who had so done. Subsequent to the expedition about to be recorded, he lost his life on the *Upton Castle*, a vessel making the voyage from India, and the exact fate of which was never known.



THE "DOROTHEA" AND THE "TRENT" IN THE ICE.

The two vessels employed on this service were the *Dorothea* and the *Trent*. The instructions directed Buchan to proceed to the northward, between Spitzbergen and Greenland, without delay on the way, and use his best endeavours to reach the North Pole or its neighbourhood. On May 24th the expedition had reached Cherie Island, on the coasts of which the walrus were so numerous that at about that period as many as 900 or 1,000 had been captured by the crew of a single vessel in seven hours' time. Many interesting traits of walrus character—if the expression may be used—were observed on this expedition. “We were greatly amused,” says Captain Beechey, the historian of the voyage, “by the singular and affectionate conduct of a walrus towards its young. In the vast sheet of ice that surrounded the ships there were occasionally many pools, and when the weather was clear and warm, animals of various kinds would frequently rise and sport about in them, or crawl from thence upon the ice to bask in the warmth of the sun. A walrus rose in one of these pools close to the ship, and finding everything quiet, dived down and brought up its young, which it held by its breast by pressing it with its flipper. In this manner it moved about the pool, keeping in an erect posture, and always directing the face of the young towards the vessel. On the slightest movement on board the mother released her flipper and pushed the young one under water, but when everything was again quiet, brought it up as before, and for a length of time continued to play about in the pool, to the great amusement of the seamen, who gave her credit for abilities in tuition which, though possessed of considerable sagacity, she hardly merited.”

On May 28th, the weather being severe, with heavy fogs, the ships separated, to rejoin at Magdalena Bay, Spitzbergen, a few days later. The harbour was full of ice in a rapidly decaying state. This bay is remarkable for four glaciers, the smallest of which, called the Hanging Iceberg, is 200 feet above the sea-level at its termination. The largest extends several miles inland, and, owing



MAGDALEN BAY, SPITZBERGEN.

to the immense rents in its surface, was called the Waggon Way. In the vicinity of the icebergs, which had become detached from these glaciers, the observance of strict silence was necessary, and the concussion produced by the discharge of a gun (not its "explosion," as Sir John Barrow says) would often detach large masses. Beechey notes the effects of such a discharge: A musket had been fired at half a mile distance, which not merely brought down an immense piece of ice, but which was the cause of a ship's launch being carried ninety-six feet by the wave produced, filled with water, and landed on a beach, where it was badly stove, the men barely escaping with their lives. They also had the rare opportunity of noting the creation of an iceberg. An immense piece of the front of a glacier was observed sliding down from the height of at least 200 feet into the sea, dispersing the water in every direction. This discharge was accompanied by a loud grinding noise, and the ice was followed by quantities of water, which, being previously lodged in the fissures, now made its escape in numberless small cataracts from the face of the glacier. Some idea may be formed of the disturbance caused by its plunge and the rollers which agitated the bay when we learn that the *Dorothea*, then careening on her side at a distance of *four miles*, righted herself. This mass dived wholly under water, and then reappeared, rearing its head a hundred feet high, accompanied by the boiling of the sea and clouds of spray. Its circumference was found to be nearly a quarter of a mile, while its weight was computed at over 400,000 tons.

In summer the coasts of Spitzbergen were found perfectly alive with animated nature. The shores reverberated with the cries of the little auks, cormorants, divers, and gulls. Walruses were basking in the sun, mingling their roar with the bark of the seal. Beechey describes an uninterrupted line of little auks flying in the air three miles in length, and so close together that thirty fell at one shot. He estimated their number at 4,000,000, allowing sixteen to a cubic yard. This number appears very

large; yet Audubon, in describing the passenger-pigeons on the banks of the Ohio, speaks of one single flock of 1,115,000,000. Audubon's character for veracity is too unquestioned for us to inquire how he made the calculation.

The surrounding islands were thick with reindeer, Vogel Sang, in particular, yielding the expedition forty carcasses. The king eider-ducks were found in such numbers that it was impossible almost to walk without treading on their nests, which they defended with determined resolution; but, in fact, all nature was alive at this time, and birds of many kinds, foxes, and bears, were everywhere found on the shore and on the ice, while amphibious animals, from whales downwards, abounded in the water.

On the 7th of June the ships left Magdalena Bay, and were greatly hampered in the ice. Indeed, they learned from several whale-ships that the ice to the westward was very thick, and that fifteen vessels were beset in it. Proceeding northward themselves, they became entangled in a floe of ice, where they had to remain thirteen days, after which the field broke up, and they got into an open sea. Several attempts were made to prosecute their voyage in a northerly direction, but without success; and Captain Buchan, being satisfied that he had given the ice a fair trial in the vicinity of Spitzbergen, resolved on bearing for the coast of Greenland. Having arrived at the edge of the pack, a gale came on so suddenly that they were at once reduced to storm staysails. The vessels were reduced to take refuge among the ice, a proceeding often rendered necessary in those latitudes, though extremely dangerous. The *Trent*, following the *Dorothea*, dashed into the unbroken line of furious breakers, in which immense masses of ice were crashing, heaving, and subsiding with the waves. The noise was so great that the officers could scarcely be heard by the crew. "If ever the fortitude of seamen was fairly tried it was assuredly not less so on this occasion; and I would not," says Beechey, "conceal the pride I felt in witnessing the bold and decisive tone in which the orders were issued by the

commander of our little vessel (Franklin), and the promptitude and steadiness with which they were executed by the crew. Each person instinctively secured his own hold, and, with his eyes fixed upon the masts, awaited in breathless anxiety the moment of the concussion. It soon arrived; the brig, cutting her way through the light ice, came in violent contact with the main body. In an instant we all lost our footing, the masts bent with the impetus, and the cracking timbers from below bespoke a pressure which was calculated to awaken our serious apprehensions." So great was the motion of the vessel that the ship's bells tolled continually, and they were ordered to be muffled; the heaviest gale of wind had never before made them strike. After many dangers from the ice the pack broke up sufficiently to release the ships, both of which were greatly disabled, while the *Dorothea* was in a foundering condition. They proceeded as well as they could to Fair Haven, Spitzbergen, where the damages were in some sort repaired, and they sailed for home.

The character of Sir William Edward Parry, who carried the Union Jack nearer the Pole than any explorer prior to Markham and Parr, was truly admirable, while his services to his country were as brilliant as they were numerous. In every way he was an honour to the British navy, such a union of lofty heroism, consummate nautical skill, and calm daring, is almost without parallel. The amiability and benevolence of his manners endeared him to all ranks of the service, and made him the idol of his men, whom he never failed to encourage by all the means in his power. His name, though written in snow and ice, is imperishable, for his heart was in his work, and he always believed in its future success. In the four voyages made under his command to the Arctic seas he was most careful of the health and comfort of his followers, and lost fewer hands than any other commander in these parts; and when we remember the kind of vessels he sometimes sailed in (the *Griper*, in particular, being about as unseaworthy a ship as could well be sent out of dock), we can

only wonder at his patience under difficulties and the persevering energy which kept him “pegging away.”

The son of a celebrated physician, Dr. Caleb Hillier Parry, he was born at Bath on the 19th of December, 1760, and was intended originally for his father’s profession; but circumstances having occurred to alter his determination, he was appointed to the *Ville de Paris*, the flagship of Admiral Cornwallis’s Channel Fleet, as a volunteer of the first class. Here he remained for three years, during which period he was engaged in an action off Brest Harbour. Fortunate in making his first essay of a seaman’s life under officers who were desirous of winning the esteem and affection of those beneath them, he soon became a favourite, and the admiral, on his leaving the ship, thus records his opinion of him:—“Parry is a fine, steady lad. I never knew any one so generally approved of. He will receive civility and kindness from all while he continues to conduct himself as he has done, which, I dare believe, will be as long as he lives.” He was afterwards appointed to the *Tribune* frigate and to the *Vanguard*, and was frequently engaged with the Danish gun-boats in the Baltic.

In 1810 he gained his epaulet, and joined the *Alexandria* frigate, in which, after serving in the Baltic, he made his first acquaintance with polar ice between North Cape and Bear Island; and he subsequently joined the *La Hogue* at Halifax. In 1814 he commanded a boat in a successful expedition up the Connecticut river, for which service he received a medal. Three years later he was recalled to England in consequence of the severe illness of his father, who had been seized with a paralytic stroke. His father’s illness and his own despair of promotion made this the gloomiest period of our young hero’s life. But dark is the hour before the dawn, and an incident occurred which threw a gleam of hope upon his professional prospects, and proved the forerunner to his future success. At the close of 1817 he wrote to a friend on the subject of an expedition that was about starting to explore the River Congo. The letter was written, but not posted, when his

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eye fell on a paragraph in the newspaper relative to an expedition about to be fitted out to the northern regions. He seized the pen, and added, by way of postscript, that, as far as he was concerned, "hot or cold it was all one to him, Africa or the Pole." This letter was shown to Mr. Barrow, the then Secretary of the Admiralty, and in a few days he was appointed to the command of the *Alexander*, discovery ship, under the orders of Commander John Ross, as recorded in the first voyage of the present series.



THE NORTH CAPE.

In 1819-20 Parry made a second voyage to the Arctic, this being the first, however, in which he had the chief command. The *Hecla* and the *Griper* were the vessels employed, and the expedition left the river on May 11th, reaching Davis's Strait at the end of June, where icebergs of large size and in great numbers were encountered. Fifty or sixty *per diem* was not an

unusual allowance, and Parry counted eighty-eight large ones from the crow's nest on one occasion, besides a profusion of smaller ones. Some most important explorations in Sir James Lancaster's Sound were made, and the land which Ross had supposed extended across the bottom of this inlet was found to be open water. The expedition sailed across the site of the Croker Mountains, as has been before mentioned. Barrow's Strait, Wellington Channel, Melville Island, and many others, were first discovered and named on this voyage.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### PARRY'S EXPEDITIONS (*continued*).

Five Thousand Pounds earned by Parry's Expedition—Winter Quarters—Theatre—An Arctic Newspaper—Effects of Intense Cold—The Observatory Burned down—Return to England—Parry's Second Expedition—"Young" Ice—Winter at Lyon's Inlet—A Snow Village in Winter and Spring—Break-up of the Ice—The Vessels in a Terrible Position—Third Winter Quarters—Parry's Fourth Winter—The *Fury* Abandoned—The Old *Griper* and her Noble Crew.

A very important event—at least, so far as concerned the members of Parry's expedition—was that which occurred on September 4th, 1819. On that day the commander had the satisfaction of announcing to officers and crew that they had crossed the meridian of 110 W. from Greenwich, by which they had become entitled to the reward of £5,000 offered by the Government to

“such of His Majesty’s subjects as might succeed in penetrating thus far to the westward within the Arctic circle.” To a bluff headland near this point the appropriate name of Cape Bounty was given. After many perils in the ice, a secure harbour was selected for their winter quarters at Melville Island, but before they could enter it a canal, two and one-third miles, had to be cut through the ice. This feat was performed in three days by the united efforts of “all hands” from both vessels; and as they would probably have to remain eight or nine months in that spot, Parry began the arrangements for promoting the comfort and health of his crews, the wisdom of which has often since been admitted and imitated by others, but which were not very commonly understood then. Parry, however, has hardly had a superior in these matters since. The vessels were well housed in, and all that was possible done for warming and ventilating the decks and cabins. An anti-scorbutic beer was brewed, and issued in lieu of spirits. Some difficulty was experienced in the very cold weather in making it ferment sufficiently to become palatable. A theatre was organised on board the *Hecla*, in the arrangements for which Parry took a part himself, “considering,” says he, “that an example of cheerfulness, by giving a direct countenance to everything that could contribute to it, was not the least essential part of my duty, under the peculiar circumstances in which we were placed.” A little weekly newspaper, *The North Georgia Gazette and Winter Chronicle*, edited by the since illustrious Sabine, was organised, and helped to employ many contributors, and divert their minds “from the gloomy prospect which would sometimes obtrude itself on the stoutest heart.” For this desolate spot was destined, as it proved, to be their home for nearly ten months. The animals had nearly all left; seals were not found in the neighbourhood; even gulls and ducks avoided Melville Island, where the only vegetation consisted of stunted grasses and lichens. The cold was intense, and such experiences as the following did not offer much inducement for prolonged trips

from the vessels.

One John Pearson, a marine, had imprudently gone out without his mittens, to attempt hunting, and with a musket in his hands. A party from the ships found him, although the night was very dark, just as he had fallen down a bank of snow, and was beginning to feel that degree of torpor and drowsiness which, if indulged, inevitably proves fatal. "When he was brought on board," says Parry, "his fingers were quite stiff, and bent into the shape of that part of the musket which he had been carrying; and the frost had so far destroyed the animation in his fingers on one hand that it was necessary to amputate three of them a short time after, notwithstanding all the care and attention paid to him by the medical gentlemen. The effect which exposure to severe frost has in benumbing the mental as well as the corporeal faculties was very striking in this man, as well as in two of the young gentlemen who returned after dark, and of whom we were anxious to make inquiries respecting Pearson. When I sent for them into my cabin, they looked wild, spoke thick and indistinctly, and it was impossible to draw from them a rational answer to any of our questions. After being on board for a short time the mental faculties appeared gradually to return with the returning circulation; and it was not till then that a looker-on could easily persuade himself that they had not been drinking too freely." At other times excursions were made when the thermometer was 40° or 50° below zero without special inconvenience. The fact is that one's safety or danger much depends on the absence or prevalence of wind. Even the natives of extreme latitudes have been frozen to death during its prevalence. On February 24th, 1820, a fire broke out in their house ashore, and in their anxiety to save the valuable instruments it contained, sixteen men incurred frost-bite, the thermometer on that day being from -43° to -44° (76° below freezing). One man, by incautiously leaving his gloves off, had afterwards to suffer the amputation of most of his fingers. When he arrived on board his hands were

plunged in cold water, the surface of which was immediately covered with a skin of ice by the cold suddenly communicated! “The appearance,” says Parry, “which our faces presented at the fire was a curious one, almost every nose and cheek having become quite white with frost-bites in five minutes after being exposed to the weather; so that it was deemed necessary for the medical gentlemen, together with some others appointed to assist them, to go constantly round while the men were working at the fire, and to rub with snow the parts affected, in order to restore animation.”

On the 16th day of February the greatest degree of cold was experienced, the thermometer having descended to  $-55^{\circ}$ , and remained for fifteen hours at  $-54^{\circ}$ ; the less to have been expected as the old year had closed with mild weather. On the following day, Parry says, “notwithstanding the low temperature of the external atmosphere, the officers contrived to act, as usual, the play announced for this evening; but it must be confessed that it was almost too cold for either the actors or the audience to enjoy it, especially those of the former who undertook to appear in female dresses.” As early as March the snow commenced to melt, according to Parry’s statement. This, however, could only possibly mean under the rays of the midday sun, as, at the same time, we are told that the thermometer stood at  $-22^{\circ}$  to  $-25^{\circ}$  in the shade (the latter  $57^{\circ}$  below the freezing point of water). In May the ships were again afloat, the men having cut the ice around them. But the sea, as far as the eye could reach, was still “one unbroken and continuous surface of solid and impenetrable ice,” not less than six or seven feet in thickness. It was not till the very last day of July that the ice broke up, and on August 1st the ships stood out to sea. Many a “nip” and “heavy rub,” as Parry describes it, did the ships sustain after this; but in spite of perils from the ice, which would become monotonous in the telling, the expedition reached England safely in the latter part of October; and, in spite of all casualties, but one man out of

ninety-four had died during their eighteen months' absence—a fact which certainly speaks volumes for Parry's unremitting care and attention to the health of his crews.



ESQUIMAUX OF WEST GREENLAND.

In 1821-3 we again find the indefatigable Parry in the field, this, the second voyage under his direct command, being undertaken for the discovery of a north-west passage. The vessels employed were the *Fury* and the *Hecla*, and the expedition left the Nore on May 8th, 1821. Most of the experiences recorded in his work were similar to those already mentioned; and only a few general facts and extracts from his journal are therefore presented. Two winters were passed by him among the frozen realms on this voyage, and several geographical examinations of importance made. The Frozen Strait, Repulse Bay, and many islands of the same neighbourhood, were carefully explored. Parry, in his journal of October 8th, gives the following interesting description of the formation of “young” ice upon the surface of the sea, and the obstacle which it forms to navigation.

“The formation of young ice upon the surface of the water is the circumstance which most decidedly begins to put a stop to the navigation of these seas, and warns the seaman that his season of active operations is nearly at an end. It is indeed scarcely possible to conceive the degree of hindrance occasioned by this

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impediment, trifling as it always appears before it is encountered. When the sheet has acquired the thickness of about half an inch, and is of considerable extent, a ship is liable to be stopped by it, unless favoured by a strong and free wind; and even when retaining her way through the water at the rate of a mile an hour her course is not always under the control of the helmsman, though assisted by the nicest attention to the action of the sails; but it depends upon some accidental increase or decrease in the thickness of the sheet of ice with which one bow or the other comes in contact. Nor is it possible in this situation for the boats to render their usual assistance by running out lines or otherwise; for having once entered the young ice, they can only be propelled slowly through it by digging the oars and boat-hooks into it, at the same time breaking it across the bows, and by rolling the boat from side to side. After continuing this laborious work for some time with little good effect, and considerable damage to the planks and oars, a boat is often obliged to return the same way that she came, backing out in the canal thus formed to no purpose. A ship in this helpless state, her sails in vain expanded to a favourable breeze, her ordinary resources failing, and suddenly arrested in her course upon the element through which she has been accustomed to move without restraint, has often reminded me of Gulliver tied down by the feeble hands of Lilliputians; nor are the struggles she makes to effect a release, and the apparent insignificance of the means by which her efforts are opposed the least just or the least vexatious part of the resemblance.”

It was now again time to fix upon winter quarters, and in an extensive opening of the American mainland, which they named Lyon’s Inlet, a suitable harbour was selected. The arrangements for the comfort and employment of the crews were much as before. The Sabbath was carefully observed, schools and harmless amusements provided, while the interests of science were not neglected. An observatory and house were erected for magnetic and astronomical observations. On



AN ESQUIMAUX SNOW VILLAGE.

February 1st a number of Esquimaux arrived, who had erected a temporary village some two miles from the ships. They, unlike some before seen in the vicinity of Hudson's Strait, who had become debased and demoralised by their constant intercourse with whaling vessels, were of the unsophisticated order, and were quiet, peaceable, and, strange to say, reasonably clean. Some of the women, having handsome garments, which attracted the attention of those on board, began, to their astonishment and consternation, to divest themselves of some of their outer clothes, although the thermometer stood at the time at 20° below zero; but every individual among them having on a complete double suit of deer-skin, they did not apparently suffer much in consequence. Parry's description of their little snow village is graphic and interesting. Not a single material was used in the construction of the huts but snow and ice. The inner apartments of each were circular, with arched domes about seven or eight feet high, and arched passage-ways leading into them. The interior of these presented a very uniform appearance. The women were seated on the beds at the side of the huts, each having her little fireplace, a blubber lamp, with all her domestic arrangements and domestic chattels, including all the children and some of the dogs, about her. When first erected these huts had a neat and even comfortable appearance. How differently did they look when the village was broken up at the end of winter. Parry thus describes them:—"On going out to the village we found one-half of the people had quitted their late habitations, taking with them every article of their property, and had gone over the ice, we knew not where, in quest of more abundant food. The wretched appearance which the interior of the huts now presented baffles all description. In each of the larger ones some of the apartments were either wholly or in part deserted, the very snow which composed the beds and fireplaces having been turned up, that no article might be left behind. Even the bare walls, whose original colour was scarcely perceptible for lamp-black, blood,

and other filth, were not left perfect, large holes having been made in sides and roofs for the convenience of handing out the goods and chattels. The sight of a deserted habitation is at all times calculated to excite in the mind a sensation of dreariness and desolation, especially when we have lately seen it filled with cheerful inhabitants; but the feeling is even heightened rather than diminished when a small portion of these inhabitants remain behind to endure the wretchedness which such a scene exhibits. This was now the case at the village, where, though the remaining tenants of each hut had combined to occupy one of the apartments, a great part of the bed-places were still bare, and the wind and drift blowing in through the holes which they had not yet taken the trouble to stop up. The old man Hikkeiera and his wife occupied a hut to themselves, without any lamp or a single ounce of meat belonging to them, while three small skins, on which the former was lying, were all that they possessed in the way of blankets. Upon the whole, I never beheld a more miserable spectacle, and it seemed a charity to hope that a violent and constant cough with which the old man was afflicted would speedily combine with his age and infirmities to release him from his present sufferings. Yet in the midst of all this he was even cheerful, nor was there a gloomy countenance to be seen in the village.”

It was not till July 2nd that the ships were enabled to move from their icy dock, and they at first starting encountered severe dangers. Captain Lyon, Parry's associate in command, thus speaks of the situation of the *Hecla*:—

“The flood-tide, coming down loaded with a more than ordinary quantity of ice, pressed the ship very much between six and seven A.M., and rendered it necessary to run out the stream cable, in addition to the hawsers which were fast to the land ice. This was scarcely accomplished when a very heavy and extensive floe took the ship on her broadside, and, being backed by another large body of ice, gradually lifted her stern as if by the

action of a wedge. The weight every moment increasing obliged us to veer on the hawsers, whose friction was so great as nearly to cut through the bilt-heads, and ultimately set them on fire, so that it became requisite for people to attend with buckets of water. The pressure was at length too powerful for resistance, and the stream cable, with two six and one five inch hawsers, went at the same moment. Three others soon followed. The sea was too full of ice to allow the ship to drive, and the only way by which she could yield to the enormous weight which oppressed her was by leaning over the land ice, while her stern at the same time was entirely lifted more than five feet out of the water. The lower deck beams now complained very much, and the whole frame of the ship underwent a trial which would have proved fatal to any less strengthened vessel. At this moment the rudder was unhung with a sudden jerk, which broke up the rudder-case and struck the driver-boom with great force. In this state I made known our situation by telegraph, as I clearly saw that, in the event of another floe backing the one which lifted us, the ship must inevitably turn over or part in midships. The pressure which had been so dangerous at length proved our friend, for by its increasing weight the floe on which we were borne burst upwards, unable to resist its force. The ship righted, and, a small slack opening in the water, drove several miles to the southward before she could be again secured to get the rudder hung; circumstances much to be regretted at the moment, as our people had been employed, with but little intermission, for three days and nights attending to the safety of the ship in this dangerous tideway.”

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The *Fury* experienced nearly the same dangers, and for days the situation of both vessels was most precarious. Later, the ice having cleared to some extent, they were enabled to make good headway, and on July 16th they discovered a great deal of high land to the northward and eastward. This, from the inspection of a rude chart which had been constructed by an intelligent Esquimaux, was decided to be that island between which and the

mainland lay a strait leading into the Polar Sea, of which they had heard much from the natives. Several land journeys were made, and one attempt at taking the ships through, but though it was abundantly determined to be a passage, they were obliged again to go into winter quarters before they had succeeded. They were not extricated till nearly *one year* afterwards, and then not until a broad canal, 1,100 yards in length, had been cut through the ice to the sea. The scurvy had made its appearance among the crew, and Parry, after consultation with his officers, reluctantly turned the vessels' bows in a homeward direction.

Parry made a third voyage in 1824-5, passing his *fourth* winter in the Arctic regions. The same vessels were employed; and at the end of winter the *Fury* was so terribly damaged by the ice that she had to be abandoned. But Parry, however disappointed with the results of this voyage, once more, as we shall see hereafter, braved the perils of the Arctic; but we must first record the circumstances connected with a northern expedition which in chronological order comes properly before it.

In 1824 Captain George F. Lyon was despatched, in the *Griper*, to complete surveys of north-east America, but not specially to attempt discovery. The *Griper* was an old tub of a vessel, utterly unfitted for its work, and it is rather of the voyage itself, as displaying the advantages of perfect naval discipline under great disadvantages, than for any other reason, this unfortunate expedition is recorded. The vessel was a bad sailer, and constantly shipped seas which threatened to sweep everything from the decks. In Sir Thomas Rowe's Welcome—the passage between Southampton Island and the mainland—fogs and heavy seas were encountered, while no trust could be placed in the compasses, and the water was fast shallowing. Lyon was obliged to bring the vessel “up with three bowers and a stream anchor in succession,” but not before the water had shoaled to five and a half fathoms, the ship all the while pitching bows under. So perilous was their position that the boats were stored



CAPTAIN LYON AND HIS CREW OFFERING PRAYERS  
FOR THEIR PRESERVATION.

with arms, ammunition, and provisions; the officers drew lots for their respective boats, although two of the smaller ones would have inevitably been swamped the moment they were lowered. Heavy seas continued to sweep the decks, and when the fog lifted a little a low beach was discovered astern of the ship, on which the surf was running to an awful height, and where, says Lyon, "no human power could save us if driven upon it." Immediately afterwards the ship, lifted by a tremendous sea, struck with great violence the whole length of the keel, and her total wreck was momentarily expected. In the midst of all their misery the crew remained twenty-four hours on the flooded decks, and Lyon himself did not leave for his berth till exhausted after three nights' watching. Few on board expected to survive the gale. Still, every precaution was taken for the comfort of the men, who were ordered to put on their best and warmest clothing to support life as long as possible. The officers each secured some useful instrument for future work, if, indeed, the slightest hope remained. "And now," says Lyon, "that everything in our power had been done, I called all hands aft, and to a merciful God offered prayers for our preservation. I thanked every one for their excellent conduct, and cautioned them, as we should, in all probability, soon appear before our Maker, to enter His presence as men resigned to their fate. We then all sat down in groups, and, sheltered from the wash of the sea by whatever we could find, many of us endeavoured to obtain a little sleep. Never, perhaps, was witnessed a finer scene than on the deck of my little ship, when all hope of life had left us. Noble as the character of the British sailor is always allowed to be in cases of danger, yet I did not believe it to be possible that among forty-one persons not one repining word should have been uttered. The officers sat about wherever they could find shelter from the sea, and the men lay down, conversing with each other with the most perfect calmness. Each was at peace with his neighbour and all the world; and I am firmly persuaded that the resignation

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which was then shown to the will of the Almighty was the means of obtaining His mercy. God was merciful to us; and the tide almost miraculously fell no lower.” They were spared, and on the weather clearing discovered that they were about the centre of the Welcome. The spot where they had been in such imminent danger was named appropriately the Bay of God’s Mercy.

In the middle of September, when off the mouth of the Wager River, a gale arose, and the sluggish *Griper* made no progress, but “remained actually pitching forecastle under, with scarcely steerage way.” The ship was brought up, and the anchors fortunately held. Thick-falling sleet covered the decks to some inches in depth, and withal the spray froze as it fell. The night was pitchy dark; several streams of drift ice came driving down upon the ship. Lyon says that it was not possible to stand below decks, while on deck ropes had to be stretched from side to side for the men to hold by. Great seas washed over them every minute, and the temporary warmth this gave them was most painfully checked by the water immediately freezing on their clothes. At dawn on the 13th their best bower anchor parted, and later all the cables gave way. The ship was lying on her broadside. Nevertheless, each man stood to his station, and in the end seamanship triumphed; the crippled ship was brought safely to England. The cool, unflinching courage of the men and the undisturbed conduct of the officers were matters for highest praise. The royal navy could not be proud of the *Griper*, but could, most assuredly, of the *Griper’s* crew.

## CHAPTER XIX.

PARRY’S BOAT AND SLEDGE EXPEDITION.

Parry's Attempt at the Pole—Hecla Cove—Boat and Sledge Expedition—Mode of Travelling—Their Camps—Laborious Efforts—Broken Ice—Midnight Dinners and Afternoon Breakfasts—Labours of Sisyphus—Drifting Ice—Highest Latitude Reached—Return Trip to the Ship—Parry's Subsequent Career—Wrangell's Ice Journeys.

Undaunted by the comparative failure of his last voyage, we find Parry in 1826 proposing an attempt to reach the North Pole with sledge-boats over the ice. The reports of several navigators who had visited Spitzbergen agreed in one point—that the ice to the northward was of a nature favourable to such a project. In the two narratives descriptive of Captain Phipps's expedition in 1773 the ice was mentioned as "flat and unbroken," "one continued plain," and so forth. Scoresby the younger, speaking of the ice in the same region, stated that he once saw a field so free from fissure or hummock that he imagined, "had it been free from snow, a coach might have been driven many leagues over it in a direct line without obstruction or danger." Franklin had previously mooted a very similar proposition to that now made by Parry, and his plans were followed in many essential particulars when the sanction of the Admiralty had been given to the attempt. Two twenty-foot boats were specially constructed, nearly resembling what were called "troop-boats," having great flatness of floor, with an even width almost to bows and stern. They were provided with strong "runners," shod with steel in the manner of a sledge, and their construction generally was such as to combine lightness with strength. A bamboo mast, a large sail—answering also for an awning—fourteen paddles, a steer-oar, and a boat-hook, formed an essential part of the equipment of each.

The *Hecla* left the Nore April 4th, 1827, on this her fourth Arctic voyage; and the expedition reached Hammerfest April [179]

19th, where eight reindeer<sup>32</sup> were taken on board, with a supply of moss for their provender. A number of snow-shoes and “kamoogas” (leather shoes, intended to be worn with the former) were also obtained. On May 14th the *Hecla* reached Hakluyt’s Headland, where a severe gale was encountered, which almost laid the ship on her beam-ends, and her canvas had to be reduced to her maintop-sail and storm-sails. Shortly afterwards the vessel was driven into a most perilous position, almost on to the packed ice. It was deemed advisable to try the dangerous and almost last resort of running the ship into the pack, and a tolerably open part of the margin having been found, the ship was forced into it under all sail. The plan succeeded, and the *Hecla* was soon in a secure situation half a mile inside the ice-field, with which she drifted vaguely about for many days. It was not till June 18th that a secure harbour for the vessel was found on the northern Spitzbergen coast, which was named accordingly Hecla Cove.

Having made all necessary arrangements for the safety of the vessel, Parry left the station on June 21st with the two boats, which were named the *Enterprise* and the *Endeavour*, Lieutenant (afterwards Sir) James Clarke Ross having command of the second. Lieutenant Crozier accompanied the boats to Low and Walden Islands, where depôts of provisions were made. Provisions for seventy-one days were taken, which, including the boats and all necessary gear, made up a weight of 260 lbs. per man. Four officers and twenty-four men constituted the party. The boats made good progress until stopped by the ice at noon on the 24th, when they were hauled upon a small floe, the latitude by observation being 81° 12' 51". The plan of travelling on the ice was much as follows: Night—if the term can be used at all in connection with the long Arctic summer day—was selected for travelling, partly because the snow was

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<sup>32</sup> We read little of these animals afterwards in Parry’s narrative, and they were not, and could not be, of service in the perilous and harassing journey, over broken and detached *sea ice*, about to be described.

harder, and they also avoided the glare on its surface produced by the rays of the sun at its greatest altitude, which is the immediate cause of snow blindness. Greater warmth was enjoyed during the hours of rest, and it also gave them a better chance of drying their clothes. "This travelling by night and sleeping by day," says Parry, "so completely inverted the natural order of things that it was difficult to persuade ourselves of the reality. Even the officers and myself, who were all furnished with pocket chronometers, could not always bear in mind at what part of the twenty-four hours we had arrived; and there were several of the men who declared—and I believe truly—that they never knew night from day during the whole excursion." The day was always commenced by prayers, after which they took off their fur sleeping-dresses, and put on those for travelling. Breakfast was rather a light meal, consisting only of warm cocoa and biscuit. After stowing the boats, &c., so as to secure them from wet, they usually travelled five to five and a half hours, halted an hour for dinner, and then again travelled four, five, or even six hours. After this they halted for the "night,"—usually early in the morning—selecting the largest surface of ice in the vicinity for hauling the boats on, in order to lessen the danger of collision with other masses or from its breaking up. The boats were placed close [180] alongside each other, and the sails, supported by the bamboo masts and three paddles, formed awnings over them. Supper over, the officers and men smoked their pipes, usually raising the temperature of their lodging 10° or 15°; the men told their stories and "fought all their battles o'er again, and the labours of the day, unsuccessful as they too often were, were forgotten." The day was concluded with prayer, after which they retired for the night, a watch being set for bears or for the breaking up of the ice. The cook roused them with a bugle call after seven hours' rest, and the work of the day commenced as before. The dietary scale seems to have been very light for such hard work in that severe climate—ten ounces of biscuit, nine ounces of pemmican,

and one ounce of sweetened cocoa-powder, with one gill of rum per day each man. The fuel used consisted exclusively of spirits of wine, the cocoa, or pemmican soup, being cooked in an iron pot over a shallow lamp with seven wicks.



#### THE EDGE OF THE PACK.

The journey commenced with very slow and laborious travelling, the pieces of ice at the margin of the pack being of small extent and very rugged. This obliged them to make three, and sometimes four, journeys with the boats and baggage, and to launch frequently over narrow pools of water. In other words, in making a distance of two miles they had to travel six or eight, and their progress was very tedious. Fog and rain hindered them somewhat, while the condition of much of the ice over which they passed rendered their journey very fatiguing. Much of it “presented a very curious appearance and structure, being composed, on its upper surface, of numberless irregular,

needle-like crystals, placed vertically and nearly close together, their length varying, in different pieces of ice, from five to ten inches." A vertical section of it resembled satin-spar and asbestos when falling to pieces. This kind of ice affords pretty firm footing early in the season, but as the summer advances the needles become loose and movable, rendering progress very difficult, besides cutting into the boots and feet. The men called these ice-spikes "pen-knives." This peculiar formation of ice Parry attributed to the infiltration of rain-water from above. The water was standing in pools on the ice, and they had often to wade through it. On the 28th the party arrived at a floe covered with high and rugged hummocks in successive tiers, and the boats had to be dragged up and down places which were almost perpendicular. While performing this laborious work, one of the men was nearly crushed by a boat falling upon him from one of the hummocks. As an example of the harassing nature of this service, we find them on the 29th, in making a mile of northing by a circuitous route among the ice-masses and open pools, travelling and re-travelling about *ten* miles in order to keep the party and supplies together. They tried for soundings, and found no bottom at two hundred fathoms (1,200 feet); later, a four hundred fathom line gave no bottom. On the 30th snowy and inclement weather rendered the atmosphere so thick that they were obliged to halt; later in the same day they made five miles by rowing in a very winding channel.

"As soon," says Parry, "as we landed on a floe-piece, Lieutenant Ross and myself generally went on ahead, while the boats were unloading and hauling up, in order to select the easiest road for them. The sledges then followed in our track, Messrs. Beverly and Bird accompanying them, by which the snow was much trodden down, and the road thus improved for the boats. As soon as we arrived at the other end of the floe, or came to any difficult place, we mounted one of the highest hummocks of ice near at hand (many of which were from fifteen to five-and-twenty

feet above the sea), in order to obtain a better view around us; and nothing could well exceed the dreariness which such a view presented. The eye wearied itself in vain to find an object but ice and sky to rest upon; and even the latter was often hidden from our view by the dense and dismal fogs which so generally prevailed. For want of variety, the most trifling circumstances engaged a more than ordinary share of our attention—a passing gull or a mass of ice of unusual form became objects which our situation and circumstances magnified into ridiculous importance; and we have since often smiled to remember the eager interest with which we regarded many insignificant occurrences. It may well be imagined, then, how cheering it was to turn from this scene of inanimate desolation to our two little boats in the distance, to see the moving figures of our men winding among the hummocks, and to hear once more the sound of human voices breaking the stillness of this icy wilderness. In some cases Lieutenant Ross and myself took separate routes to try the ground, which kept us almost continually floundering among deep snow and water.” The soft snow encountered was a great hindrance; on one occasion it took the party two hours to make a distance of 150 yards! They had been deviating from their night travelling, and were otherwise feeling the effects of it in that inflammation of the eyes which ends in snow-blindness. The night travelling was therefore resumed. On July 3rd their way at first lay across a number of small loose pieces of ice, most of which were from five to twenty yards apart, or just sufficiently separated to give them all the trouble of launching and hauling up the boats *without* the advantage of making any progress by water. Sometimes the boats were used as a kind of bridge, by which the men crossed from one mass to another. By this means they at length reached a floe about a mile in length, on which the snow lay to the depth of five inches or so, under which, again, there was about the same depth of water. Parry says that snow-shoes would not have been of the least service, as the surface was so irregular that the

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men would have been thrown down at every other step. Among the hummocks noted at this time were smooth, regular cones of ice, "resembling in shape the aromatic pastiles sold by chemists; this roundness and regularity of form indicate age, all the more recent ones being sharp and angular."

Day after day they laboured on, with little variation in the circumstances detailed above. The men worked with great cheerfulness and goodwill, "being animated with the hope of soon reaching the more continuous body which had been considered as composing the 'main ice' to the northward of Spitzbergen," which Captain Lutwidge had described as "one continued plain of smooth, unbroken ice, bounded only by the horizon."<sup>33</sup> They certainly deserved to reach it, if it existed at all; but it is more than probable that this apparently continuous level, mentioned by several navigators, had been seen from an elevation, the "crow's nest" on board ship, or some hill ashore, and that a nearer inspection would have shown it to be full of hummocks and breaks.

It is amusing to read of them *breakfasting* at five p.m., *dining* at midnight, and *taking supper* at six or seven o'clock in the morning! On July 11th, having halted an hour at midnight for dinner, they were again harassed by a heavy rainfall, but although drenched to the skin they made better progress soon after, traversing twelve miles, and making seven and a half in a northerly direction. They had now reached the latitude of 82° 11' 51". Next day's exertions only enabled them to make three and a half miles of direct northing, and the following day but two and a half. Much thin ice was encountered; it was often a nervous thing to see their whole means of subsistence lying on a decayed sheet, with holes quite through it, and which would have broken up with the slightest motion among the surrounding masses. One day the ice on one side of a boat,

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<sup>33</sup> "Phipps's Voyage towards the North Pole."

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heavy with provisions and stores, gave way, almost upsetting her; a number of the men jumped upon the ice and restored the balance temporarily. A rain-storm of twenty-one hours' duration is recorded on the 14th and 15th, which was, as generally the case, succeeded by a thick wet fog. On the 16th the narrative records "the unusual comfort of putting on dry stockings, and the no less rare luxury of delightfully pleasant weather." It was so warm in the sun that the tar exuded from the seams of the boats. Even the sea-water, though loaded with ice, had a temperature of 34°. At this time the ice-floes were larger, though none are recorded over three miles in length. On the 18th, after eleven hours' actual labour, "requiring, for the most part," says Parry, "our whole strength to be exerted, we had travelled over a space not exceeding four miles, of which only two were made good in a NNW. direction." The men, exhausted by their day's work, were treated to a little extra hot cocoa. They were also put into good spirits by having killed a small seal, which next night gave them an excellent supper. "The meat of these young animals is tender," says Parry, "and free from oiliness; but it certainly has a smell and a look which would not have been agreeable to any but very hungry people like ourselves." They utilised its blubber for fuel, after the Esquimaux manner. Some few birds—rotges, dovebies, looms, mollemucks, and ivory and Ross gulls—were very occasionally seen and shot; and one day *a couple of small flies* were found upon the ice, which to them was an event of ridiculous importance, and as so is recorded in the narrative. This at least gives an insight into the terrible monotony of their existence at this period.

Hitherto they had been favoured by the wind, but on the 19th a northerly breeze set in, which, while it was the means of opening several lanes of water, counterbalanced this advantage by drifting the ice—and, by consequence, the party on it—in a southerly direction. Great was their mortification at noon on the 20th to find by observation that since the same hour on the 17th they

had only advanced five miles in a northerly direction. Although they had apparently made good progress in the intervening time, their efforts had been nullified by the ice drifting southward. These facts were carefully concealed from the men. On the 21st the floe broke under the weight of the boats and sledges; some of the men went completely through, and one of them was only held up by his drag-belt being attached to a sledge which happened to be on firmer ice. This day they made nearly seven miles by travelling, and drifted back four and a half; or, in other words, their observation of the latitude showed them to have, in reality, advanced only two miles and a quarter. Under these circumstances we can understand their anxiety when, after a calm of short duration, fog-banks were observed rising both to the southward and north. Which would prevail? That from the south came first, with a light air from that quarter, but soon after the weather became perfectly calm and clear. Next night they made the best travelling during the expedition. The floes were large and tolerably level, and some good lanes of water occurring, they believed that they must have *advanced* ten or eleven miles in a NNE. direction, having traversed a distance of about seventeen. They had done so—*on the ice*; but the ice itself had drifted so much to the southward that they found, to their great disappointment and disgust, by observation of the latitude, that they had only made *four* miles. Still worse was it on the 26th, when they found themselves in latitude  $82^{\circ} 40' 23''$ ; since their last observation on the 22nd they had, though travelling almost incessantly, *lost* by drift no less than thirteen miles and a half, and were more than three miles to the southward of their earlier position. The men unsuspectingly remarked that they “were a long time getting to this  $83^{\circ}$ !” ignorant of the fact that the current was now taking them faster south than all their labours advanced them north. Unlike Sisyphus, they were but exerting an honourable ambition, but like him they were rolling a stone uphill which constantly rolled back again. The eighty-third parallel

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had been for some time past the limit of Parry's ambition, but although he never reached it, he had the proud satisfaction of having hoisted the British flag in a higher latitude than ever attained before. Markham has since beaten him. Parry reached  $82^{\circ} 45'$ , and in reaching it the party had, in the necessarily circuitous course taken, and counting the constant retracing of their steps, travelled a distance nearly sufficient to have reached the North Pole itself in a direct line.

It became evident that the nature and drift of the ice were such as to preclude the possibility of a final success greater than that recorded. They had now been absent from the ship thirty-five days, and one-half their supplies were exhausted. Parry therefore determined to give the party a day's rest, and then set out on the return. He says:—"Dreary and cheerless as were the scenes we were about to leave, we never turned homewards with so little satisfaction as on this occasion." Still, the southern current was now an advantage, and they knew that every mile would tell. The return was made successfully and without any very serious casualties. Lieutenant Ross shot a fat she-bear which had approached within twenty yards. Before the animal had done biting the snow, one of the men was alongside of her with an open knife, cutting out the heart and liver for the pot which happened to be then boiling their supper. Hardly had the bear been dead an hour when all hands were employed in discussing its merits as a viand, and some of them very much over-gorged themselves, and were ill in consequence, though they "attributed this effect to the quality, and not the quantity, of meat they had eaten." On the morning of August 11th the first sound of the ocean swell was heard under the hollow margins of the ice, and they soon reached the open sea, which was dashing with heavy surges against the outer masses. Sailing and paddling, fifty miles further brought them to Table Island, where they found that bears had devoured all the bread left at the depôt, as arranged at the commencement of their voyage. The men naively remarked, says Parry, that

“Bruin was only square with us.” From a document deposited there during his absence, he learned that on July 7th the *Hecla* had been forced on shore by the ice breaking up, but that she had been hove off safely. Taking advantage of a favourable breeze, they steered their boats for Walden Island, but *en route* had bad weather, reaching it completely drenched and worn-out, having had no rest for fifty-six hours. They had barely strength to haul the boats ashore above the surf; but a hot supper, a blazing fire of drift-wood, and a few hours’ quiet rest soon restored them. The party arrived at the ship on August 21st, having been absent sixty-one days. Allowing for the number of times they had to return for their baggage during most of the journeys on the ice, Parry estimated their actual travelling at eleven hundred and twenty-seven statute miles; and as they were constantly exposed to wet, cold, and fatigue, as well as to considerable peril, it was matter for thankfulness that all of the party returned in excellent health, two only requiring some little medical care for trifling ailments.

The future career of Parry was of a very different nature. After being knighted, and fêted by the people of England, in the spring of 1829 he was appointed Commissioner of the Australian Agricultural Company in New South Wales; and one who visited the country a few years later wrote:—“At Port Stephens Sir Edward Parry found a wilderness, but left a land of hope and promise.” Returning to England in 1835, he was appointed Assistant Commissioner of Poor Law in the county of Norfolk, but after a year and a half was forced to resign through ill-health. He was afterwards made Comptroller of Steam Machinery to the Admiralty, a post which he held for nearly nine years, during which time the duties of his office became every day more arduous; and in December, 1846, he received the appointment to the post of Captain Superintendent of the Royal Clarence Yard and of the Naval Hospital at Haslar. He took a prominent part in the founding of a sailors’ home at Portsmouth; and in 1852

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had to resign his post at Haslar in consequence of attaining his rear-admiral's flag. At the close of the following year he was made Governor of Greenwich Hospital, and died on the 8th of July, 1855, at Ems. His remains were brought to England and buried in the mausoleum at Greenwich Hospital.

Parry's Polar journey can hardly be dismissed without some reference to the remarkable expeditions made by Wrangell, the great Russian explorer. Between 1820 and 1823 inclusive he made four expeditions on the ice northward from the Siberian coast, starting from the town or settlement of Nijni Kolymsk, on the Kolyma River. These excursions were made with dog sledges, and the condition of the ice must therefore have been much superior to that encountered by Parry, who found that the reindeers he had intended for the same purpose could not be employed at all. The provisions taken by Wrangell were rye-biscuit, meat, and portable soup; smoked fish; the great Russian speciality, tea; spirits; and tobacco. A conical tent of reindeer skin, *inside* of which a fire was lighted, was part of the outfit. He proceeded on one occasion 140 miles, and on another 170 miles, from the land to the margin of the open sea, having often to cross ridges of broken and hummocky ice sometimes eighty and ninety feet above the general level. At the edge of the frozen field the ice was found to be rotten and unsafe; and on his last journey, when the ice on which he travelled was broken up by a gale while he was seventy miles from land, nothing but the swiftness of his dogs, who tore over the opening gaps, saved him from destruction. A very thankful man was Wrangell when he reached *terra firma* once more.

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## CHAPTER XX.

THE MAGNETIC POLE.—A LAND JOURNEY TO THE POLAR SEA.

Sir John Ross and the *Victory*—First Steam Vessel employed in the Arctic—Discovery of the Magnetic Pole—The British Flag waving over it—Franklin and Richardson's Journeys to the Polar Sea—The Coppermine River—Sea Voyage in Birch-bark Canoes—Return Journey—Terrible Sufferings—Starvation and Utter Exhaustion—Deaths by the Way—A Brave Feat—Relieved at length—Journey to the Mouth of the Mackenzie—Fracas with the Esquimaux—Peace Restored.

Immediately after the return of Parry's expedition in 1827, Sir John Ross submitted to the Admiralty the plans for the voyage of which we are about to speak. Hitherto all voyages of discovery in the Arctic seas had been made in sailing vessels. Ross deserves the credit of having been the first to urge the employment of a steam-ship in that service. His proposals were not accepted, and he therefore laid the scheme before a wealthy friend, Mr. Sheriff Booth. At that time the Parliamentary reward of £20,000 was still outstanding to the discoverer of a north-west passage, and Mr. Booth declined to embark "in what might be deemed by others a mere mercantile speculation." Not long afterwards, the Government reward being withdrawn, Mr. Booth immediately empowered Ross to provide, at his own private expense, all that was necessary for the expedition. A paddle-wheel steamer, the *Victory*, was purchased. The vessel was strengthened and many other improvements made. She was provisioned for a thousand days, and was to have been accompanied for some distance by a store-ship. The men on the latter mutinied at Loch Ryan, and the larger part of them immediately left the ship, which, to make a long story short, never proceeded on this voyage. Misfortune befell the *Victory*; her engines proved a total failure, and at the commencement of the voyage were the cause of much

anxiety and worry to the commander. It must be remembered that *sea-going* steamers were then of very recent introduction, while long *ocean voyages* in steam-ships were almost unthought of. Symington's first *river* steamer had indeed made her first trip on the Clyde as early as 1788, but the earliest *sea-going* steamboat of which we have record did not make a trip till 1815. The voyage was only from Glasgow to London. As we have seen, an American steamer crossed the Atlantic Ocean to Liverpool in 1819; but it was not till 1838, when the *Great Western* and *Sirius* crossed the Atlantic, that this great steamship route was really opened. Ross was therefore very early in the field, and should be regarded as a man of penetration for his epoch. Nowadays, as we all know, vessels with at least auxiliary, if not complete steam power, are nearly always employed in Government expeditions, and even by whalers in the Arctic seas.

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The expedition left England May 23rd, 1829, and arrived home again on October 18th, 1833, having thus been absent for the lengthened period of four years and five months. The coast surveys made by Ross of King William's Land and Boothia Felix (named after the munificent merchant who had so liberally provided the expedition) were careful, and doubtless accurate, but not very extensive. The most interesting feature of all was the determination of the exact locality of the Magnetic Pole, which was accomplished by the nephew of Sir John Ross (later Sir James Ross) on June 1st, 1831.

Before leaving the vessel it was perfectly understood that they were in the immediate vicinity of the Magnetic Pole; and, indeed, it was afterwards proved that Commander Ross had been, in a preceding land journey in 1830, within ten miles of the spot, but had been unprovided with the necessary instruments to determine that fact. The weather on the trip was tempestuous and blustering, but no special disaster occurred, and on the morning of May 31st they found themselves within fourteen miles of the calculated position. Leaving behind the larger part of their

baggage and provisions on the beach, the party hurried forward in a state of excitement pardonable under the circumstances. At eight o'clock the next morning their journey was at an end, and never, doubtless, were exhausted men more thoroughly happy. It will interest the reader to learn how the Magnetic Pole looks.

“The land,” wrote Ross the younger, “at this place is very low near the coast, but it rises into ridges of fifty or sixty feet high about a mile inland. We could have wished that a place so important had possessed more of mark or note. It was scarcely censurable to regret that there was not a mountain to indicate a spot to which so much of interest must ever be attached; and I could even have pardoned any one among us who had been so romantic or absurd as to expect that the Magnetic Pole was an object as conspicuous and mysterious as the fabled mountain of Sinbad, that it was even a mountain of iron, or a magnet as large as Mont Blanc. But Nature had here erected no monument to denote the spot which she had chosen as the centre of one of her great and dark powers, and where we could do little ourselves toward this end.... We were, however, fortunate in here finding some huts of Esquimaux that had not long been abandoned.” A series of scientific observations were at once made, the most conspicuous results of which were as follows:—At their observatory the amount of the dip, as indicated by the dipping-needle, was  $89^{\circ} 59'$ , being thus within one minute of the vertical, while the proximity of the Magnetic Pole was confirmed by the absolute inaction of the several horizontal needles. “These were suspended in the most delicate manner possible, but there was not one which showed the slightest effort to move from the position in which it was placed.” In other words, the magnetic force was dead in that very spot to which millions of compasses are ever pointing. [188]

The British flag was fixed on the spot, and the discoverers took possession of the Magnetic Pole in the name of Great Britain and King William IV. A limestone cairn was erected, in which a canister containing the record of the visit of Ross and his

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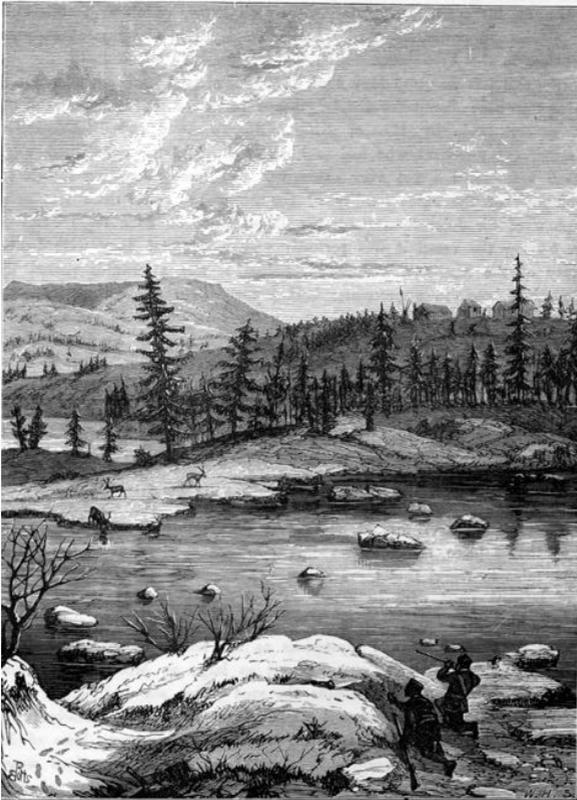
companions was deposited. Ross says that “had it been a pyramid as large as that of Cheops, I am not quite sure that it would have done more than satisfy our ambition under the feelings of that exciting day. The latitude of this spot is  $70^{\circ} 5' 17''$ , and its longitude  $96^{\circ} 46' 45''$ W.” On the return journey to the ship they encountered blinding snow-storms, but eventually reached it in safety, after an absence of twenty-eight days.



DR. (AFTERWARDS SIR) JOHN RICHARDSON.

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In 1819-22 Franklin made a most remarkable and perilous land and river journey to the shores of the Polar Sea, which will be only briefly noticed here for obvious reasons. The party consisted of Franklin, Dr. Richardson, Back, Hood, and a sailor named Hepburn, who is very highly commended in the narrative. They left England May 22nd, 1819, and reached York Factory, Hudson's Bay, at the end of August. Thence they proceeded to Cumberland House, whence Franklin, Back, and Hepburn, travelled to Carlton House and Chipewyan, a winter journey of 857 miles; the others followed, and a number of *voyageurs*



FORT ENTERPRISE.



RICHARDSON'S ADVENTURE WITH WHITE WOLVES.

were engaged. In the spring they again started, reaching Fort Providence on July 28th, 1820, from which place they proceeded to a point situated by Winter Lake, where they determined to erect a house and pass the winter. The house, or post, was named Fort Enterprise. Back and others travelled backwards and forwards this winter 1,104 miles in order to fetch up a sufficient quantity of provisions for their next summer's work, and suffered severely from the intense cold and from something like starvation on many occasions. The last day of June, 1821, the party reached and embarked upon the Coppermine River, and eighteen days later reached the sea-coast, about 317 miles from their last winter quarters. The canoes and baggage had been dragged over snow and ice for 117 miles of this distance, and they had successfully passed many rapids. They were now in the country of the Esquimaux, and exposed to fresh anxieties from the unfriendly feeling which existed between them and the Indians. Dr. Richardson, one night, whilst on the first watch, had seated himself on a hill overhanging the river; his thoughts were possibly engaged with far distant scenes, when he was roused by an indistinct noise behind him, and, on looking round, perceived that nine white wolves had ranged themselves in the form of a crescent, and were advancing, apparently with the intention of driving him into the river. On his rising up they halted, and when he advanced, they made way for his passage down to the tents. He had his gun in his hand, but forbore to fire, lest he should alarm any Esquimaux who might possibly be in the neighbourhood. The Canadian *voyageurs* were delighted with their first view of the sea, and amused at the sight of the seals gambolling and swimming about, but were not unnaturally terrified at the idea of the voyage, through an icy sea, now proposed by Franklin. On July 21st, with only fifteen days' provisions on board, they commenced an eastward trip of 550 miles, which is little less than the direct distance between the Coppermine River and Repulse Bay, which Franklin had at one time fondly hoped to

reach. Storms arose; their canoes were badly shattered and their provisions nearly exhausted, and at a position now marked on the map as Point Turnagain they desisted from further attempts. He determined to steer westward at once for Arctic Sound, and by Hood's River attempt to reach their old quarters at Fort Enterprise. They had a somewhat chilling prospect before them, for as early as August 20th the pools were frozen over, snow on the ground, and the thermometer down to freezing point at noon. The hunters were unsuccessful, and they made "a scanty meal off a handful of pemmican, after which only half a bag remained." Bad as were the canoes, and worse as was the weather, they managed to paddle along bravely till, on the 26th, they reached Hood's River. "Here," says Franklin, "terminated our voyage on the Arctic Sea, during which we had gone over 650 geographical miles." "Our Canadian voyagers," Franklin mentions, "could not restrain their joy at having turned their backs on the sea, and they spent the evening in talking over their past adventures with much humour and no little exaggeration. It is due to their character to mention that they displayed much courage in encountering the dangers of the sea, magnified to them by their novelty." They proceeded a few miles up the river, and then encamped.

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Two small canoes having been constructed from the remains of the older and now almost useless ones, they, on the 1st of September, left the river, the commander having determined to make a direct line for Point Lake, 149 miles distant. Having proceeded a dozen or so miles, they encountered a severe snow-storm, which obliged them to encamp, and it raged so violently that they were obliged to stop there, muffled up in their blankets and skins, for nearly a week. On the 3rd of September the *last* piece of pemmican and a small quantity of arrowroot were served out, and with no fire, a temperature below freezing, and wet garments, they were in a miserable plight. The storm abated on the 7th, but when they attempted to proceed Franklin was seized with a fainting fit, in consequence of sudden exposure and

exhaustion. Several of the men, with much kindness, urged him to eat a morsel of portable soup, the small and only remaining meal, which, after much hesitation, he did, and was much revived. The canoe-carriers were so weak that they were constantly blown down, and one of their little boats was crushed to pieces by a fall. They utilised it by making a fire to cook the remnant of portable soup and arrowroot—their last meal. For the next two days they had to live on the lichen named by the Canadians *tripe de roche*, but on the 10th they killed a large musk ox—which, by-the-bye, was a cow—and they enjoyed a good meal. Soon again all supplies failed them, and a fatal despondency settled upon many of the men, who, giving up all hope, left behind articles of incalculable value to the expedition, including the second canoe and their fishing-nets. It must be remembered that they were passing over a most rugged country, where they had constantly to cross streams and rivers, and were living mainly on a scanty supply of *tripe de roche*. At this depressing moment a fine trait of disinterestedness occurred. As the officers stood together round a small fire, enduring the very intensity of hunger, Perrault, one of the Canadians, presented each of them with a piece of meat out of a little store which he had saved from his allowance. “It was received,” says Franklin, “with great thankfulness, and such an instance of self-denial and kindness filled our eyes with tears.” Back, the most active and vigorous of the party, was sent forward with some of the hunters to apprise the people at Fort Enterprise of the approach of the rest. Credit and Junius followed them, also to hunt. Credit returned, but Junius was missing and was never after heard of. They had now reached a branch of the Coppermine River, and it became necessary to make a raft of willows, which occupied them to the 29th. Then all attempts to cross the river in it failed.

“In this hopeless condition,” says Franklin, “with certain starvation staring them in the face, Dr. Richardson, actuated by the noble desire of making a last effort for the safety of the



PERRAULT DIVIDING HIS LITTLE STORE.

party, and of relieving his suffering companions from a state of misery which could only terminate, and that speedily, in death, volunteered to make the attempt to swim across the stream, carrying with him a line by which the raft might be hauled over.

“He launched into the stream with the line round his middle, but when he had got to a short distance from the opposite bank his arms became benumbed with cold, and he lost the power of moving them; still he persevered, and turning on his back, had nearly gained the opposite shore, when his legs also became powerless, and to our infinite alarm we beheld him sink; we instantly hauled upon the line, and he came again on the surface, [192] and was gradually drawn ashore in an almost lifeless state. Being rolled up in blankets, he was placed before a good fire of willows, and fortunately was just able to speak sufficiently to give some slight directions respecting the manner of treating him. He recovered strength gradually, and through the blessing of God was enabled in the course of a few hours to converse, and by the evening was sufficiently recovered to remove into the tent. We then regretted to learn that the skin of his whole [193] left side was deprived of feeling, in consequence of exposure to too great heat. He did not perfectly recover the sensation of that side until the following summer. I cannot describe what every one felt at beholding the skeleton which the doctor’s debilitated frame exhibited when he stripped; the Canadians simultaneously exclaimed, ‘*Ah! que nous sommes maigres!*’ I shall best explain his state and that of the party by the following extract from his journal:—

“It may be worthy of remark that I should have had little hesitation in any former period of my life at plunging into water even below 38° Fahrenheit; but at this time I was reduced almost to skin and bone, and, like the rest of the party, suffered from degrees of cold that would have been disregarded in health and vigour. During the whole of our march we experienced that no quantity of clothing would keep us warm whilst we

fasted; but on those occasions on which we were enabled to go to bed with full stomachs we passed the night in a warm and comfortable manner.’” Franklin adds:—“In following the detail of our friend’s narrow escape, I have omitted to mention that when he was about to step into the water he put his foot on a dagger, which cut him to the bone; but this misfortune could not stop him from attempting the execution of his generous undertaking.”

But although they had crossed the river they had much before them, and a fearful amount of despondency prevailed. Franklin wishing one day to reach one of his men three-quarters of a mile distant, spent *three hours* in a vain attempt to wade through the snow. Hood was reduced to a perfect skeleton, Richardson was lame as well as exhausted, and even Back, the energetic and unconquerable, had to use a stick. The *voyageurs* were somewhat stronger, but seem to have given up all hope; Hepburn alone seems to have remained cheerful and resigned, and he was indefatigable in collecting *tripe de roche*. On October 4th it was determined that Franklin, with eight of his party, should push forward, and endeavour to send back assistance. Four of these broke down almost immediately, and endeavoured to return to the last camp; only one arrived; the other three *were no more heard of*. Franklin succeeded in reaching Fort Enterprise, where they found neither inhabitants nor supplies. On the way they had literally eaten a part of their boots, and at the house were only too glad to boil bones and pieces of skin for their sustenance. It is almost impossible to give the reader in few words a fair idea of the terrible condition in which they were. Franklin determined to push forward to the next fort, but found that he had made but four miles in the first six hours’ travel, and he, therefore, reluctantly returned to the house, letting two of the Canadians proceed. Eighteen days elapsed, and then Dr. Richardson and Hepburn arrived. Mr. Hood had, meantime, been shot by Michel, one of their Indians, who it was believed

had also been the murderer of the three exhausted men who had been missing. He had remained in strong and vigorous condition when the rest were utterly exhausted. Dr. Richardson, being thoroughly convinced of these facts, killed Michel with a pistol-shot shortly afterwards. “The emaciated countenances of the doctor and Hepburn” gave evidence of their debilitated state. “The doctor,” says Franklin, “particularly remarked the sepulchral tones of our voices, which he requested of us to make more cheerful, if possible, unconscious that his own partook of the same key.” Hepburn had shot a partridge on the way, and the *sixth part of this* was the first morsel of flesh Franklin and his three companions had tasted for thirty-one days. At length the long-expected relief from Back arrived by three Indians, but not till two of the Canadians had succumbed. Back himself, in spite of his splendid constitution, had suffered privations hardly second to those recorded above. But from this period no great difficulties were encountered on the return to Fort York, and Franklin and his brave companions, poor Hood excepted, eventually reached England in safety. [194]

Many would have been content to rest on their laurels; not so Franklin, Richardson, or Back, who almost immediately afterwards volunteered to again dare the perils of these same regions. The “second expedition to the shores of the Polar Sea” was not marked by those disasters which had befallen the previous one, but was none the less remarkable and daring. It was, however, much better provided. Three light boats were built at Woolwich specially for this expedition, and a fourth, covered with india-rubber canvas, called the *Walnut Shell*, was taken for the purpose of crossing rivers and for easy transportation.

Passing over all previous matters, suffice it to say that Franklin and his party successfully reached the mouth of the great Mackenzie River, where, on Garry Island, says Franklin’s narrative, “the men had pitched the tent on the beach, and I caused

the silk union flag to be hoisted which my deeply-lamented wife<sup>34</sup> had made and presented to me as a parting gift, under the express injunction that it was not to be unfurled before the expedition reached the sea. I will not attempt to describe my emotions as it expanded to the breeze; however natural, and, for the moment, irresistible, I felt that it was my duty to suppress them, and that I had no right, by an indulgence of my own sorrows, to cloud the animated countenances of my companions. Joining, therefore, with the best grace that I could command, in the general excitement, I endeavoured to return, with corresponding cheerfulness, their warm congratulations on having thus planted the British flag on this remote island of the Polar Sea.

“Some spirits which had been saved for the occasion were issued to the men, and with three fervent cheers they drank to the health of our beloved monarch and to the continued success of our enterprise. Mr. Kendall and I had also reserved a little of our brandy in order to celebrate this interesting event; but Baptisto, in his delight at beholding the sea, had set before us some salt water, which, having been mixed with the brandy before the mistake was discovered, we were reluctantly obliged to forego the intended draught, and to use it in the more classical form of a libation poured on the ground.”

Severe weather compelled them to return up the river to their station at Fort Franklin on this occasion, but they returned to the mouth of the Mackenzie in the following season, where they nearly had a serious difficulty with the natives. Franklin had been ashore, and had noted on one of the islands a number of tents, with Esquimaux strolling about. He hastened back to the boats to prepare presents for them. Some seventy-three canoes and five large skin boats were soon seen approaching, with perhaps three hundred persons on board. They speedily showed a great desire to trade. Augustus, the interpreter, explained the objects

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<sup>34</sup> Sir John Franklin's first wife died on the day after the departure of the expedition from England.

of the visit, and that if they should succeed in finding a navigable channel for large ships a great trade would be opened with them. This delighted them, and they shouted with the greatest vigour. Unfortunately, just after this, “a kaiyack being overset by one of the *Lion's* (the leading boat) oars, its owner was plunged into the water with his head in the mud, and apparently in danger of being drowned. We instantly extricated him from his unpleasant situation, and took him into the boat until the water could be thrown out of his kaiyack; and Augustus, seeing him shivering with cold, wrapped him up in his own great-coat. At first he was exceedingly angry, but soon became reconciled to his situation, and, looking about, discovered that we had many bales and other articles in the boat, which had been concealed from the people in the kaiyacks by the coverings being carefully spread over all. He soon began to ask for everything he saw, and expressed much displeasure on our refusing to comply with his demands. He also, we afterwards learned, excited the cupidity of others by his account of the inexhaustible riches in the *Lion*, and several of the younger men endeavoured to get into both our boats, but we resisted all their attempts.”

They, however, tried hard to steal everything on which they could lay hands. One of the crew noticed that the native who had been upset had stolen a pistol from Lieutenant Back, which he endeavoured to conceal under his shirt, and the thief, finding it was observed, jumped out of the boat into the shallow water, and escaped.

“Two of the most powerful men,” says Franklin, “jumping on board at the same time, seized me by the wrists, and forced me to sit between them; and as I shook them loose two or three times, a third Esquimaux took his station in front to catch my arm whenever I attempted to lift my gun or the broad dagger which hung by my side. The whole way to the shore they kept repeating the word ‘*teyma*’ beating gently on my left breast with their hands and pressing mine against their breasts. As we

neared the beach two oomiaks, full of women, arrived, and the 'teymas' and vociferations were redoubled. The *Reliance* was first brought to the shore, and the *Lion* close to her a few seconds afterwards. The three men who held me now leaped ashore, and those who had remained in their canoes, taking them out of the water, carried them a little distance. A numerous party then, drawing their knives and stripping themselves to the waist, ran to the *Reliance*, and, having first hauled her as far up as they could, began a regular pillage, handing the articles to the women, who, ranged in a row behind, quickly conveyed them out of sight." In short, Lieutenant Back, who had desisted from any violence up to this period, now ordered his men to level their muskets on them, but not to fire till the word of command. The effect was magical as a stage effect: in a few minutes not an Esquimaux was to be seen. They made for the shore, and hid behind the piles of drift-wood on the beach. Augustus, the interpreter, subsequently made speech to them, showing them that their conduct had been very bad, and that the "white man" could well take care of himself. "Do not deceive yourselves," said he, "and suppose they are afraid of you. I tell you they are not, and that it is entirely owing to their humanity that many of you were not killed to-day; for they have all guns, with which they can destroy you either when near or at a distance. I also have a gun, and can assure you that if a white man had fallen I would have been the first to have revenged his death." The language, of course, is Franklin's; but these were the general sentiments expressed in their tongue. It was received with shouts of applause; and a little later they pleaded that having seen so many fine things new to them they could not resist the temptation of stealing. They promised better behaviour, and, what is more to the point, restored the articles which they had purloined. Thus, what might have proved a serious affray was prevented. The Esquimaux, like all unsophisticated natives, are, or were then, mere children, but children capable of doing much harm.



ESQUIMAUX KAIYACKS AND BOAT.

Franklin traced the coast in a westerly direction to latitude  $70^{\circ} 24'$  N., longitude,  $149^{\circ} 37'$  W., and discovered several large rivers. Fogs, gales, rain, and drift ice interrupted their progress, but they were enabled to examine close on 400 miles of a new coast. Dr. Richardson meantime traced the coast eastward from the Mackenzie to the Coppermine River, afterwards travelling by land and river to Fort Franklin. Thanks to the excellent arrangements made, his party endured no great privations, and this second series of journeys to the Polar Sea formed a pleasant sequel to the first, which were marked by so many disasters.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### VOYAGE OF THE "TERROR."

Back's effort to reach Repulse Bay—Nine Months in the Ice—The *Terror* Nipped and Crushed—A General Disruption—Extreme Peril—Increase of

Pressure—Providential Delivery—Another Nip—Bow of the  
Ship split—Preparations for Emergencies—The Crew—An  
early break-up—Frozen again—A Tremendous Rush of  
Ice—The Day of Release.

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Captain Back was in 1836 appointed to the command of an expedition to the Arctic, partly formed for purposes of survey. He was instructed to proceed to Repulse or Wager Bay, as the case might be; thence he was to take a party across the intervening land to the eastern shore of Prince Regent's Islet. Among other explorations he was to examine the coast line as far as the Point Turnagain of Franklin. It is unnecessary to go into further details, as the expedition, geographically considered, was a failure. But the voyage is, nevertheless, one of the most interesting on record, and gives us a vivid picture, or series of pictures, of the dangers incurred in the Arctic seas. The now historical *Terror* was the vessel employed, and the expedition left England on June 14th, 1836, crossing Davis' Straits six weeks later, where an enormous iceberg, "the perpendicular face of which was not less than 300 feet high," was sighted. The vessel soon became entangled in the ice-floes, and this was only the forerunner of their subsequent experiences. For nine months they were wedged up with massive ice, and four months of this time were, as Back expresses it, on "an icy cradle," lifted out of the water. On September 5th there was a calm, and the whole of the officers and men were despatched to the only open water at all near, where with axes, ice-chisels, hand-spikes, and long poles, they began the laborious process of cutting away the "sludge" that bound the broken ice together, and removing them into the clear space. In this service they were frequently obliged to fasten lines to the heavier masses and haul them out, but though slipping and tumbling about, "the light-hearted fellows pulled in unison to a cheerful song, and laughed and joked with the unreflecting merriment of schoolboys. Every now and then

some luckless wight broke through the thin ice and plunged up to his neck; another endeavouring to remove a piece of ice by pushing against a larger mass, would set himself adrift with it, and every such adventure was followed by shouts of laughter and vociferous mirth." These efforts at releasing the ship were only partially successful, and she was soon again surrounded by the ice. On the morning of September 20th a fresh breeze stirred up the masses. "Shortly after 9 a.m. a floe piece split in two, and the extreme violence of the pressure curled and crumbled up the windward ice in an awful manner, forcing it against the beam fully eighteen feet high. The ship creaked as it were in agony, and strong as she was must have been stove and crushed had not some of the smaller masses been forced under her bottom, and so diminished the strain by actually lifting her bow nearly two feet out of the water. In this perilous crisis steps were taken to have everything in readiness for hoisting out the barge, and, without creating unnecessary alarm, the officers and men were called on the quarter-deck, and desired, in case of emergency, to be active in the performance of their duties at the respective stations then notified to them. It was a serious moment for all, as the pressure still continued, nor could we expect much, if any, abatement until the wind changed.

"At noon the weather and our prospects remained the same. The barometer was falling, and the temperature was 26°-, with unceasing snow. Much ice had been sunk under her bottom, and a doubt existed whether it was not finding its way beneath the lee floe also; for the uplifted ruins, within fifty paces of the weather beam, were advancing slowly towards us like an immense wave fraught with destruction. Resistance would not, could not, have been effectual beyond a few seconds; for what of human construction could withstand the impact of an icy continent driven onward by a furious storm? In the meantime symptoms too unequivocal to be misunderstood demonstrated the intensity of the pressure. The butt-ends began to start, and the



THE "TERROR" NIPPED IN THE ICE.

copper in which the galley apparatus was fixed became creased, sliding-doors refused to shut, and leaks found access through the bolt-heads and bull's-eyes. On sounding the well, too, an increase of water was reported, not sufficient to excite apprehension in itself, but such as to render hourly pumping necessary. Moved by these indications, and to guard against the worst, I ordered the provisions and preserved meats, with various other necessaries, to be got up from below and stowed on deck, so as to be ready at a moment to be thrown upon the large floe alongside. To add to our anxiety night closed prematurely, when suddenly, from some unknown cause, in which, if we may so deem without presumption, the finger of Providence was manifest, the floe which threatened instant destruction turned so as in a degree to protect us against an increase of pressure, though for several hours after the same creaking and grinding sounds continued to annoy our ears. The barometer and the other instruments fell with a regularity unprecedented, yet the gale was broken, and by midnight it had abated considerably.

“Sept. 21st. There was a lateral motion in some pieces of the surrounding ice, and, after several astounding thumps under water against the bottom, the ship, which had been lifted high beyond the line of flotation, and thrown somewhat over to port, suddenly started up and almost righted. Still, however, she inclined more than was agreeable to port, nor was it until one mass of ponderous dimensions burst from its imprisonment below that she altogether regained her upright position. On beholding the walls of ice on either side between which she had been nipped, I was astonished at the tremendous force she had sustained.” Her mould was stamped as perfectly as in a die. Astonishment, however, soon yielded to a more grateful feeling, an admiration of the genius and mechanical skill by which the *Terror* had been so ably prepared for this service. There were many old Greenland seamen on board, and they were unanimously of opinion that no ship they had ever seen could [199]

have resisted such a pressure. On sounding the well she was found not to leak, though the carpenters had employment enough in caulking the seams on deck.

They had now been a month beset, and were about to attempt the cutting of a dock in the ice round the ship, when there was a general commotion, and the entire body by which they were hampered separated into single pieces, tossing into heaps, and grinding to powder whatever interrupted its course. The ship bore well up against this hurly-burly, but the situation was not improved. For several days the *Terror* was in a helpless condition, her stern raised seven and a half feet above its proper position, and her bows correspondingly depressed, by the pressure of huge ice-masses. Her deck was in consequence a slippery and dangerous inclined plane.

On October 1st the vessel gradually righted, and the men were kept employed in building snow-walls round the ship, and in the erection of an observatory on the floe. "Meantime," says Back, "we were not unobservant of the habits and dispositions of the crew, hastily gathered together, and for the most part composed of people who had never before been out of a collier. Some half a dozen, indeed, had served in Greenland vessels, but the laxity which is there permitted rendered them little better than the former. A few men-of-wars-men who were also on board were worth the whole put together. The want of discipline and of attention to personal comfort was most conspicuous; and though the wholesome regulations practised in His Majesty's service were most rigidly attended to in the *Terror*, yet such was the unsociability, though without any ill-will, that it was only by a steady and undeviating system pursued by the first lieutenant that they were brought at all together with the feeling of messmates. At first, though nominally in the same mess, and eating at the same table, many of them would secrete their allowance, with other unmanly and unsailor-like practices. This was another proof added to the many I had already witnessed,

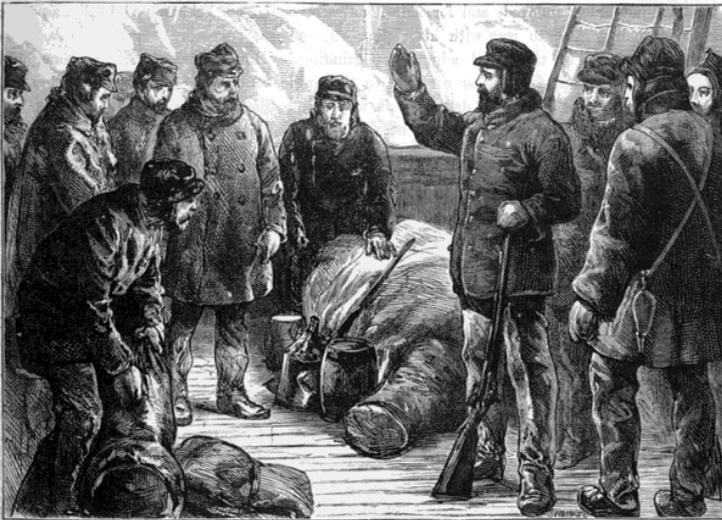
how greatly discipline improves the mind and manners, and how much the regular service men are to be preferred for all hazardous or difficult enterprises. Reciprocity of kindnesses, a generous and self-denying disposition, a spirit of frankness, a hearty and above-board manner—these are the true characteristics of the British seaman, and the want of these is seldom compensated by other qualities. In our case—and I mention this merely to show the difference of olden and modern times—there were only three or four in the ship who could not write. All read, some recited whole pages of poetry, others sang French songs. Yet, with all this, had they been left to themselves I verily believe a more unsociable, suspicious, and uncomfortable set of people could not have been found. Oh, if the two are incompatible, give me the old Jack Tar, who would stand out for his ship, and give his life for his messmates.” Back, in common with so many Arctic commanders before and since, saw the necessity of occupying and amusing his men; and on the 22nd October a general masquerade was held on board, which gave rise to much hilarity and fun. Later, theatrical entertainments were organised. [200]

Some observations by Back on the gradual growth of ice, by layers forced together above or underneath, will explain the apparent discrepancies in Arctic works, where one reads of ice of so many different thicknesses formed in the same winter. It is probable that the very thick ice found in many parts of floes is formed by an accumulation of such layers, cemented together in bights or bays, sheltered by projecting capes or headlands, and less liable to disturbance from currents and tides; for they had ocular demonstration, that with a very low temperature and calm weather, in the severest portion of the winter, no addition of bulk takes place from the surface downwards when protected, as their floe was, by a hard coating of snow and drift. The doubling and packing of ice during gales of wind and when exposed to severe pressure, as well as the growth and the extensive fields, are phenomena which the attentive observations of modern voyagers

have rendered familiar; and by an extension of the above remark, another explanation besides the action of the waves (for the mere heat of the sun has little influence) is afforded as to how the destruction of the immense fields of ice is effected, not, indeed, by pointing out the agents of the destruction, but by showing how little may in many instances be added in successive winters to the bulk to be destroyed. The fact that no new deposition takes place underneath seems also at once to account for the decayed and wasting appearance, which every one accustomed to polar navigation must have noticed in what is called the old ice, of which sailors will sometimes say—"Aye, sir, that piece is older than I am, but it cannot last above another summer." The writer well remembers the idea of age, in another form, being associated with snow: "That there snow," said one of the sailors to him, "is three hundred year old, if it's a day. Why, don't you see the wrinkles all over the face of it?" Every one has noticed the wrinkles and ridges in snow, but the idea of associating great age with them was original.

The winter passed slowly, with many false and some true alarms of the ice being in motion. On February 20th they were in imminent peril. For three hours after midnight the ice opened and shut, threatening to crack the vessel like a nutshell. At 4 a.m. the whole of the ice was in motion, great fissures opening on every side. Back writes:—"After 8 a.m. we had some quiet; and at divisions I thought it necessary to address the crew, reminding them, as Christians and British seamen, they were called upon to conduct themselves with coolness and fortitude, and that independently of the obligations imposed by the Articles of War, every one ought to be influenced by the still higher motive of a conscientious desire to perform his duty. I gave them to understand that I expected from one and all, in the event of any disaster, an implicit obedience to and energetic execution of every order that they might receive from the officers, as well as kind and compassionate help to the sick. On their observance

of these injunctions, I warned them, our ultimate safety might depend. Some fresh articles of warm clothing were then dealt out to them; and as the moment of destruction was uncertain, I desired that the small bags in which those things were contained [201] should be placed on deck with the provisions, so as to be ready at an instant. The forenoon was spent in getting up bales of blankets, bear-skins, provisions, pyroligneous acid for fuel, and, in short, whatever might be necessary if the ship should be suddenly broken up; and spars were rigged over, the quarters to hoist them out. Meanwhile the ice moved but little, though the hour of full moon was passed; but at noon it began to drift slowly to the northward. We were now from five to eight miles of the nearest land.



BACK ADDRESSING THE SEAMEN.

“Though I had seen vast bodies of ice from Spitzbergen to 150° west longitude under various aspects, some beautiful, and all more or less awe-inspiring, I had never witnessed, nor even imagined, anything so fearfully magnificent as the moving towers and ramparts that now frowned on every side. Had the still extensive pieces of which the floe was formed split and divided like those further off, the effect would have been far less injurious to the ship; but though cracked and rent, the parts, from some inexplicable cause, closed again for a time, and drove with accelerated and almost irresistible force against the defenceless vessel. In the forenoon the other boats were hoisted higher up, to save them from damage in the event of the ship being thrown much over on her broadside. For three hours we remained unmolested, though the ice outside of the floe was moving in various directions, some pieces almost whirling round, and of course, in the effort, disturbing others. At 5 p.m., however, the piece near the ship having previously opened enough to allow of her resuming a nearly upright position, collapsed again with a force that made every plank complain; and further pressure being added at 6 o’clock, an ominous cracking was heard, that only ceased on her being lifted bodily up eighteen inches. The same unwelcome visitation was repeated an hour afterwards in consequence of the closing of a narrow lane directly astern. The night was very fine, but the vapour which arose from the many cracks as well as from the small open space alongside, quickly becoming converted into small spiculæ of snow, rendered the cold intolerably keen to those who faced the wind. Up to midnight we were not much annoyed, and for four hours afterwards, on February 21st, all was quiet. Every man had gone to rest with his clothes on, and was agreeably surprised on being so long undisturbed by the usual admonitory grinding. However, at 4 a.m. a commotion was heard, which appeared to be confined to the angle contained between west and north-west. On looking round at daybreak it was found that the ship had been released by

the retreating of the ice, and had nearly righted; but at 5 a.m. she rose eighteen inches as before; she was then at intervals jerked up from the pressure underneath, with a groan each time from the woodwork." And so it went on from day to day, Back and his men being kept incessantly at their duties, and constantly at work examining, and, where it was possible, strengthening the ship. Up to the middle of March they were, however, still safe, but on the 15th they were destined to witness trials of a more awful nature.

"While we were gliding quickly along the land," says Back—"which I may here remark, had become more broken and rocky, though without obtaining an altitude of more than perhaps one or two hundred feet—at 1.45 p.m., without the least warning, a heavy rush came upon the ship, and, with a tremendous pressure on the larboard quarter, bore her over upon the heavy mass upon her starboard quarter. The strain was severe in every part, though from the fore-castle she appeared to be moving in the easiest manner towards the land ice. Suddenly, however, a loud crack was heard below the mainmast, as if the keel were broken or carried away; and simultaneously the outer stern-post from the ten-foot mark was split down to an unknown extent, and projected to the larboard side upwards of three feet. The ship was thrown up by the stern to the seven-and-a-half feet mark; and that damage had been done was soon placed beyond doubt by the increase of leakage, which now amounted to three feet per hour. Extra pumps were worked, and while some of the carpenters were fixing diagonal shores forward, others were examining the orlops and other parts. It was reported to me by the first lieutenant, master, and carpenter, that nothing could be detected inside, though apprehensions were entertained by the two former that some serious injury had been inflicted. In spite of the commotion the different pieces of our floe still remained firm; but being unable to foresee what might take place in the night, I ordered the cutters and two whale-boats to be lowered

[203] down, and hauled with their stores to places considered more secure; this was accordingly done, though not under two hours and a half, even with the advantage of daylight. The ship was still setting fast along shore, and much too close to the fixed ice; but it was not till past 8 p.m. that any suspicious movement was noticed near us; then, however, a continually increasing rush was heard, which at 10.45 p.m. came on with a heavy roar towards the larboard quarter, upturning in its progress and rolling onward with it an immense wall of ice. This advanced so fast that though all hands were immediately called they had barely time, with the greatest exertion, to extricate three of the boats, one of them, in fact, being hoisted up when only a few feet from the crest of the solid wave, which held a steady course directly for the quarter, almost overtopping it, and continuing to elevate itself until about twenty-five feet high. A piece had just reached the rudder slung athwart the stern, and at the moment when, to all appearances, both that and a portion at least of the framework were expected to be staved in and buried beneath the ruins, the motion ceased; at the same time the crest of the nearest part of the wave toppled over, leaving a deep wall extending from thence beyond the quarter. The effect of the whole was a leak in the extreme run, oozing, as far as could be ascertained, from somewhere about the sternpost. It ran in along the lining like a rill for about half an hour, when it stopped, probably closed by a counter pressure. The other leaks could be kept under by the incessant use of one pump.

“Our intervals of repose were now very short, for at 12.50 a.m., March 16th, another rush drove irresistibly on the larboard quarter and stern, and, forcing the ship ahead, raised her upon the ice. A chaotic ruin followed; our poor and cherished courtyard, its walls and arched doors, gallery, and well-trodden paths, were rent, and in some parts ploughed up like dust. The ship was careened fully four streaks, and sprang a leak as before. Scarcely were ten minutes left us for the expression of our astonishment

that anything of human build could outlive such assaults, when, at 1 a.m., another equally violent rush succeeded; and, in its way towards the starboard quarter, threw up a rolling wave thirty feet high, crowned by a blue square mass of many tons, resembling the entire side of a house, which, after hanging for some time in doubtful poise on the ridge, at length fell with a crash into the hollow, in which, as in a cavern, the after-part of the ship seemed imbedded. It was indeed an awful crisis, rendered more frightful from the mistiness of the night and dimness of the moon. The poor ship cracked and trembled violently; and no one could say that the next minute would not be her last, and, indeed, his own too, for with her our means of safety would probably perish. The leak continued, and again (most likely as before, from counter pressure) the principal one closed up. When all this was over, and there seemed to be a chance of a respite, I ordered a double allowance of preserved meat, &c., to be issued to the crew, whose long exposure to the cold rendered some extra stimulant necessary. Until 4 a.m. the rushes still kept coming from different directions, but fortunately with diminished force. From that hour to 8 a.m. everything was still, and the ice quite stationary, somewhat to the westward of the singular point, terminating as it were in a knob, which was the farthest eastern extreme yesterday. We certainly were not more than three miles from the barren and irregular land abeam, which received the name of Point Terror. To this was attached a rugged shelf of what for the time might be called shore ice, having at its seaward face a mural ridge of unequal, though in many parts imposing, height, certainly not less than from fifty to sixty feet.”

At last the long-delayed day of release drew nigh. The ship had now been three-fourths of a year enclosed in the ice, with which it had drifted several hundred miles, when, on July 11th, “the crew had resumed their customary labour, and, as they drew nearer to the stern-post, various noises and crackings beneath them plainly hinted that something more than usual was in progress.

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After breakfast I visited them and the other parties as previously stated. Scarcely had I taken a few turns on deck and descended to my cabin when a loud rumbling notified that the ship had broken her icy bonds, and was sliding gently down into her own element. I ran instantly on deck, and joined in the cheers of the officers and men, who, dispersed on different pieces of ice, took this significant method of expressing their feelings. It was a sight not to be forgotten. Standing on the taffrail, I saw the dark bubbling water below, and enormous masses of ice gently vibrating and springing to the surface; the first lieutenant was just climbing over the stern, while other groups were standing apart, separated by this new gulf; and the spars, together with working implements, were resting half in the water, half on the ice, whilst the saw, the instrument whereby this sudden effect had been produced, was bent double, and in that position forcibly detained by the body it had severed." Having cut to within four feet of the stern-post, the crew had ceased work for a few moments, when the disruption took place, barely giving them time to clamber up as they could for safety. Shortly afterwards a very curious incident occurred. The *Terror* was almost capsized by a small submerged berg which had been released by the breaking up of the floe. On July 14th the ship righted; and from that time to their arrival in England, after they had managed to patch up, caulk, and render her seaworthy, little of special interest occurred. It is questionable whether any vessel has ever gone through more of the special perils which beset ice navigation than did the *Terror*; but although terribly shattered, we shall meet her again staunchly braving the dangers of the Arctic.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## FRANKLIN'S LAST VOYAGE.

Sir John Franklin and his Career—His Last Expedition—Takes the Command as his Birthright—The last seen of his Ships—Alarm at their long absence—The Search—A few faint traces discovered by Parry—A Fleet beset in the Ice—Efforts made to communicate with Franklin—Rockets and Balloons—M'Clure's Expedition—Discovery of the North-West Passage—Strange Arrival of Lieutenant Pim over the Ice—The *Investigator* abandoned—Crew Saved—Reward of £10,000 to M'Clure and his Ship's Company.

The name of Sir John Franklin, whose sad destiny it was to perish at the moment of triumph, stands pre-eminent as one of the brightest ornaments in our long list of naval heroes. Peculiarly adapted by the bent of his mind to the profession he had adopted, he brought to his aid the love of adventure, a perfect knowledge of seamanship, and a zeal for geographical discovery, combined with an integrity of purpose and a hardy intrepidity, that, even in the service he so highly adorned, have never been surpassed. Tried alike in peace and war, and illustrious in both, this noble knight-errant of the northern seas, irresistible as one of those icebergs that tried to bar his way, was always ready to do his duty for his native land. Whether on the quarter-deck, in the midst of the enemy's hottest fire, or daring the dangers of the frozen ocean, among ice and snow, blinded by dense fogs and endless nights, without guides or sea room, he always showed the same fearless spirit, unwearied perseverance, and love for the welfare of his country which caused him to succeed in the end, although that success was so dearly bought. [205]



SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

The purest heroism of England has been found in that land of desolation which a wealth of valour has consecrated, and the hearts of the tars who fought under Nelson were not more brave than those who sailed to meet their fate under “good Sir John.” Setting little value on his own personal comfort, but never neglecting the well-being of his crew, he made himself beloved and respected by all, and when he passed away to “the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns,” he left behind him the memory of his brave deeds as an example to the youth of his fatherland. The most triumphant death is that of a martyr; the most glorious martyr is he who dies for his fellow-men. Successful in death, Franklin and his brave followers reached the goal, and perished. Well may the inscription on their monument say, “They forged the last link with their lives.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> It is not desirable here to enter into the detailed consideration of who first discovered the North-west Passage. When Franklin sailed in 1845 there was but a comparatively small gap between Parry’s furthest western point (Melville Island) and Back’s Great Fish River, unexplored, and Franklin did undoubtedly

Sir John Franklin, a native of Spilsby, in Lincolnshire, was destined for the Church by his father, who purchased an advowson for him. While at the Louth Grammar School, during a holiday walk, he first saw the sea. This was the turning-point of his life, and he determined henceforth to be a sailor. In the hope of disgusting him his father sent him on a trial voyage in a merchantman to Lisbon, but this trip only confirmed his decision, and he joined the *Polyphemus*, in the year 1800, the vessel which, under Captain Lawford, led the line in the glorious battle of Copenhagen. Two months after this engagement he was transferred to the *Investigator*, commanded by his relative, Captain Flinders, and set out on his first voyage of discovery to Australia, where he obtained a correctness in astronomical observations and a skill in surveying that became of the greatest service to him in his future career. Returning home in the *Porpoise*, he was wrecked on a coral reef, and, with ninety-four persons, remained on a narrow bank of sand only four feet above the level of the water for fifty days, until Captain Flinders, who made the voyage of 250 leagues to Port Jackson in an open boat, returned to their rescue. On reaching England Franklin joined the *Bellerophon*, and performed the duties of signal-midshipman with the greatest coolness, in the memorable battle of Trafalgar, where all his companions on the poop were, with exception of four or five, killed or wounded. In his next ship, the *Bedford*, he attained the rank of lieutenant, served in the blockade of Flushing, and was wounded in the disastrous attack on New Orleans. Shortly afterwards he entered on that career in the Arctic regions with which his name is so intimately identified,

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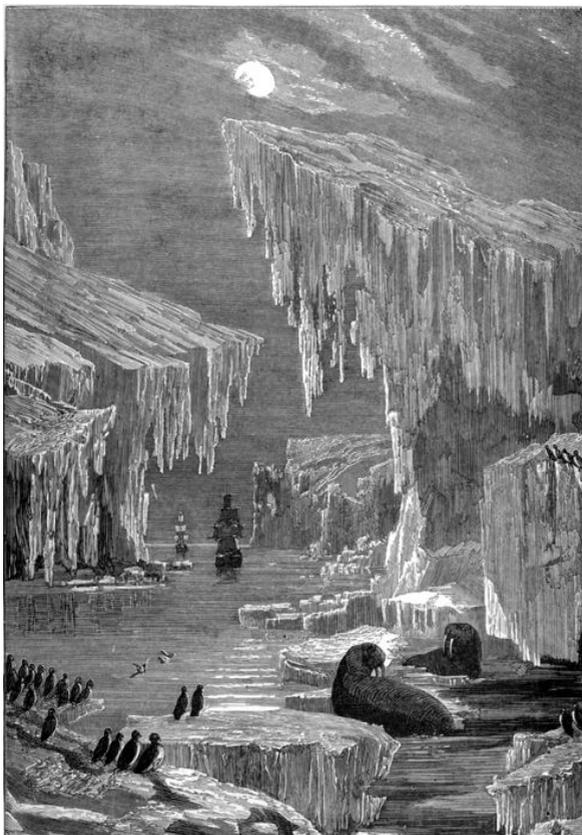
complete this missing link. M'Clure, as we shall afterwards see, made the passage successfully and independently, and his discoveries were published long before the world knew anything of Franklin's fate or the extent of his last voyage. The late Sir Roderick Murchison considered Franklin "the first real discoverer of the North-west Passage," and the inscription on his monument bears witness to the same effect.

and which has been recorded. We now come to the last sad closing scene of that grand life.

In 1845 a new expedition was organised by the Admiralty to make one more attempt at the North-west Passage. For more than a year previously many of the leading scientific men and old Arctic explorers had been urging it upon the attention of the Government, and many were the volunteers who desired to join it. The late Admiral Sherard Osborn, Franklin's biographer, tells us that it was at one time intended that Fitzjames, whose genius and energy marked him for no common officer, should have the command; but just about this time Sir John Franklin was heard to say that he considered it his birthright, as the senior Arctic explorer in England. He had then only recently returned from Tasmania, where he had been acting as Lieutenant-Governor, and where he had held an unthankful post, owing to some unmerited and disagreeable treatment from the then Secretary for the Colonies. "Directly it was known," says Osborn, "that he would go if asked, the Admiralty were, of course, only too glad to avail themselves of the experience of such a man; but Lord Haddington, with that kindness which ever distinguished him, suggested that Franklin might well rest at home on his laurels. 'I might find a good excuse for not letting you go, Sir John,' said the peer, 'in the telling record which informs me that you are sixty years of age.' 'No, no, my lord,' was Franklin's rejoinder, 'I am only fifty-nine.' Before such earnestness all scruples ceased. The offer was officially made, and accepted. To Sir John Franklin was confided the Arctic expedition, consisting of H.M.S. *Erebus*, in which he hoisted his pennant, and H.M.S. *Terror*, commanded by Captain Crozier, who had recently accompanied Sir James Ross in his wonderful voyage to the antarctic seas."

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The two vessels were completely overhauled and much strengthened, auxiliary screws, engines, and fuel provided, and they were provisioned for three years. The vessels left Greenhithe on May 19th, and by the third week of July reached a point near



THE *EREBUS* AND THE *TERROR* AMONG ICEBERGS.

Disco, Greenland, where a transport which had accompanied them took on board the last letters of officers and crews for home. They were seen on July 26th by a whaler, and were at that date moored to an iceberg, waiting for a favourable opportunity to enter the ice of Baffin's Bay. From that day to the present no one of that gallant band has ever been seen alive except by the wandering Esquimaux, and not till 1854 was anything certain gleaned concerning their fate. Even the meagre outlines then obtained were not filled in till 1859, when M'Clintock made his memorable discoveries, and brought to light one of the saddest of modern tragedies.

Subsequent researches enable us to state that their first winter was passed near Beechey Island, where they lost three men. They had reached it by sailing through a channel discovered between Cornwallis and Bathurst Islands, and thence by Barrow's Straits. For a year and a half after the expedition had left no anxiety about it was felt; but after a council of naval officers had been called by the Admiralty, it was decided that should no news arrive that summer, preparations should be made for its relief. This was done. Light boats and supplies were forwarded to Hudson's Bay, and in 1848, when the public alarm became general, several expeditions were sent out. Later, as we all know, the Government fitted out a whole series of vessels; the Hudson's Bay Company sent forth several land parties; Lady Franklin spent the larger part of her private fortune, and America came bravely to the rescue. No less than thirty-two vessels were sent out on the search by England up to 1859, and three by the United States, while there were five land expeditions provided in large part by the Hudson's Bay Company. We must necessarily only speak of the more interesting of these gallant attempts. Strangely enough, as we shall see, almost the only information of value concerning the fate of Franklin and his brave band was obtained by private enterprise, in spite of the gallant efforts of so many in the royal navy.

One of the very first attempts made to communicate with the missing party was sent in 1848, *viâ* Behring Straits. Captain Kellett, of H.M.S. *Herald*, and Captain Moore, H.M.S. *Plover*, added much to our knowledge of the northern coasts of Siberia and north-western America; and Lieutenant Pullen, of the *Herald*, made an adventurous boat journey from Behring Straits to the mouth of the Mackenzie. But not the merest spark of information was obtained concerning Franklin.

Some few traces were discovered by Captain Penny in 1850, at a period when the fears of all were at their culminating point. In this and the following year several vessels were sent out by Government, among them H.M.S. *Resolute*, Captain Austin; H.M.S. *Assistance*, Captain Ommaney; *Lady Franklin*, W. Penny, master; *Sophia*, A. Stewart, master; H.M.S. *Pioneer*, Lieut. Osborn; also, at the expense of the Hudson's Bay Company, the yacht *Felix*, Rear-Admiral Sir John Ross. The whole of these entered the Arctic regions from the Atlantic side, and either met at various times or were in company. Osborn has recorded many facts and incidents concerning them, from which we shall only cull a few of the more interesting. [208]

Describing the feat of cutting docks in the ice, to partially avoid the pressure of the floes when they come crashing together, he says:—"Smart things are done in the navy, but I do not think anything could excel the alacrity with which the floe was suddenly peopled by about 300 men (crews of whalers chiefly), triangles rigged, and the long saws, called ice-saws, manned.

"A hundred songs from hoarse throats resounded through the gale, the sharp chipping of the saws told that the work was flying, and the laugh and broad witticisms of the crews mingled with the words of command and encouragement to exertion given by the officers.

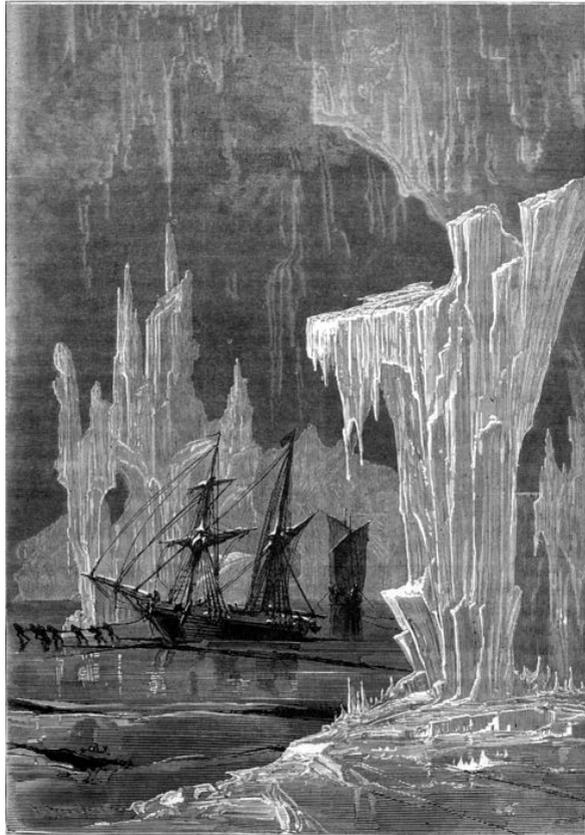
"The pencil of a Wilkie could hardly convey the characteristics of such a scene, and it is far beyond my humble pen to tell of the stirring animation exhibited by twenty ships' companies, who



CUTTING ICE DOCKS.

knew that on their own exertions depended the safety of their vessels and the success of their voyage. The ice was of an average thickness of three feet, and to cut this, saws of ten feet long were used, the length of stroke being about as far as the men directing the saw could reach up and down. A little powder was used to break up the pieces that were cut, so as to get them easily out of the mouth of the dock—an operation which the officers of our vessels performed while the men cut away with the saws. In a very short time all the vessels were in safety, the pressure of the pack expending itself on a chain of bergs some ten miles north of our present position. The unequal contest between floe and iceberg exhibited itself there in a fearful manner; for the former, pressing onward against the huge grounded masses, were torn into shreds, and thrown back piecemeal, layer on layer of many feet in elevation, as if mere shreds of some flimsy material, instead of solid, hard ice, every cubic yard of which weighed nearly a ton.” [210]

They were not always so fortunate. A little later they were again beset, and escape seemed hopeless. The commander, called from his berth to deck, found the vessel thrown considerably over by the pressure of the ice on one side, while every timber was straining, cracking, and groaning. “On reaching the deck,” says Osborn, “I saw, indeed, that the poor *Pioneer* was in sad peril: the deck was arching with the pressure on her sides, the scupper pieces were turned up out of the mortices, and a quiver of agony wrung my craft’s frame from stem to taffrail, whilst the floe, as if impatient to overwhelm its victim, had piled up as high as the bulwark in many places. The men who, whaler fashion, had without orders brought their clothes on deck, ready to save their little property, stood in knots waiting for directions from their officers, who, with anxious eyes, watched the floe-edge as it ground past the side to see whether the strain was easing. Suddenly it did so, and we were safe. But a deep dent in the *Pioneer’s* side, extending for some forty feet, and the fact, as we



ICE MOUNTAINS.

afterwards learned, of twenty-one timbers being broken on one side, proved that the trial had been a severe one."

After overtaking Captain Penny, Osborn learned of the former's discoveries on Beechey Island, the first wintering place of Sir John Franklin, and on August 29th paid a visit to the spot. "It needed not," says he, "a dark wintry sky or a gloomy day to throw a sombre shade around my feelings as I landed on Beechey Island and looked down upon the bay on whose bosom had ridden Her Majesty's ships *Erebus* and *Terror*. There was a sickening anxiety of the heart as one involuntarily clutched at every relic which they of Franklin's squadron had left behind, in the vain hope that some clue as to the route they had taken hence might be found." The hope was vain: no document of any kind was discovered, although a carefully constructed cairn, formed of meat-tins filled with gravel, was found and carefully searched. There was the embankment of a house, with a carpenter's and armourer's workshops, coal-bags, tubs, pieces of old clothing, rope, cinders, chips, &c.; the remnants of a garden, probably made in joke, but with neat borders of moss and lichens, and even poppies and anemones transplanted from some more genial part of the island. The graves of three of the crews of the *Erebus* and *Terror*, bearing the dates of 1845 and 1846, proved conclusively that the expedition had wintered there.

Osborn's description of an Arctic dinner is interesting. "The pemmican is all ready, sir," reports our Soyer. In troth, appetite need wait on one, for the greasy compound would pall on moderate taste or hunger. Tradition said that it was composed of the best rump-steaks and suet, and cost 1s. 6d. per pound. To our then untutored tastes it seemed composed of broken-down horses and Russian tallow. If not sweet in savour, it was strong in nourishment, and after six table-spoonfuls we cried, 'Hold! enough!' But there came a day when we sat hungry and lean, longing for this coarse mess, and eating a pound of it with avidity, and declaring it to be delicious!" Frozen cold pork was found

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delicious with biscuit and a steaming cup of tea.

During the long winter, fancying it possible they were in the neighbourhood of Franklin's party, rockets were fired and small balloons sent off. The latter carried slow matches five feet long, which, as they burned, let loose pieces of coloured paper, on which were printed their position and other information. A carrier pigeon, despatched on one occasion by Sir John Ross from his quarters in the Arctic in 1850, reached its old home in Ayr, Scotland, in five days, having flown 3,000 miles! Numerous sledging parties were despatched from the various ships above-named, but without obtaining any further information regarding Franklin.

M'Clure's expedition has been generally regarded only in connection with the discovery of the North-west Passage, but he also engaged in the search for Franklin. With him was associated Captain Collinson, and both were ordered to proceed *viâ* Behring Straits to the Arctic. The *Enterprise*, commanded by the latter, proceeded a little in advance of the *Investigator*, commanded by M'Clure, which left Plymouth on January 20th, 1850. Late in July the Arctic Circle was crossed, and shortly afterwards, at different dates, the *Plover* and *Herald* were met. Captain Kellett, of the latter, reported the discovery of the new land north of Behring Straits since always associated with his name. It was covered with lofty and broken peaks, and Kellett thought it to be the same as described by Wrangell, the Russian explorer, on the authority of natives. Some doubt has at times been thrown on this discovery, but it has been since sighted by an American whaler.

On August 21st the *Investigator* reached the Pelly Islands, and crossed the mouth of the great Mackenzie River. Little did M'Clure think that the day after, Lieutenant Pullen, H.M.S. *Herald*, with a boat's crew, was returning from a visit to Cape Bathurst, and must have passed at a distance of a few miles, a convincing proof of the easiness of missing one another in the

Arctic seas. Shortly afterwards they met a number of natives, and held some communication with them. Osborn says that “when asked why they did not trade with the white men up the big river (*i.e.*, the Mackenzie), the reply was they had given the Indians a water which had killed a great many of them, and had made others foolish, and they did not want any of it!” This statement is rather doubtful, as the Hudson’s Bay Company does not, as the writer well knows, trade in spirits, at least in those remote districts; and further, if they did, it would be a very unusual circumstance for natives to decline it, as the whalers and traders on the coast know full well.

“On September 17th the *Investigator* had reached her farthest eastward position in long.  $117^{\circ} 10'$ ; and a couple of days afterwards, it was decided, instead of returning to seek a harbour, to winter in the pack ice. It was a dangerous, though a daring experiment, but the fact that it might facilitate expeditions for the relief of Franklin seems to have been uppermost in the commander’s mind. The ice was not yet strong enough to remain tranquil, and M’Clure had provisions and fuel on deck, and boats ready, in case of the vessel being crushed. On September 27th a change of wind set the ice in motion, and drove the vessel towards some abrupt and dangerous cliffs, 400 feet high, where there was no beach, and not a ledge where a goat could get a foothold. Should the vessel strike their only hope was in the boats. Happily the ice current changed, and swept them past the rocks. At this period the crashing of the ice and creaking and straining of the vessel’s timbers were deafening, and the officer of the watch when speaking had to put his mouth close to his commander’s ear, and shout out. The neighbouring land was searched for game, the unpleasant discovery having been made that nearly 500 pounds of their preserved meat had become putrid.” [212]

The 26th of October, 1850, was an important day in the history of Arctic adventure. Five days before, M’Clure, with six men

and a sledge, had left the ship, and had since travelled through Barrow's Straits. On the clear and cloudless morning of the 26th they ascended a hill before dawn. "As the sun rose the panorama slowly unveiled itself. First, the land called after H.R.H. Prince Albert showed out on an easterly bearing, and from a point, since called after the late Sir Robert Peel, it evidently turned away to the east, and formed the northern entrance to the channel upon that side. The coast of Bank's Land, on which the party stood, terminated at a low point about twelve miles further on.... Away to the north, and across the entrance of Prince of Wales Straits, lay the frozen waters of Barrow, or, as it is now called, Melville Straits, and raised as our explorers were, at an altitude of 600 feet above its level, the eyesight embraced a distance which precluded the possibility of any land lying in that direction between them and Melville Island. A *north-west passage* was discovered. All doubt as to the existence of a water communication between the two great oceans was removed." On the return journey M'Clure, hastening forward to order a warm meal for his men at the ship, lost his way in a snow-storm and had to wander about all night. In the morning he found that he had passed the *Investigator* by four miles.

The winter passed away, and, as the spring advanced, preparations were made for continuing the voyage. On May 21st a curious event occurred. "About 10.30 a large bear was passing the ship, when Captain M'Clure killed it with a rifle shot. On examining the stomach, great was the astonishment of all present at the medley it contained. There were raisins that had not been long swallowed, a few small pieces of tobacco leaf, bits of pork fat cut into cubes, which the ship's cook declared must have been used for making mock turtle soup, an article often found on board a ship in a preserved form; and, lastly, fragments of sticking-plaster, which, from the forms into which they had been cut, must evidently have passed through the hands of a surgeon." Better evidences of the proximity of some other

vessel or exploring party could not be afforded. But from which of them had this miscellaneous collection been derived?

On July 17th the vessel got out of the ice, and soon passed round the south end of Bank's Land; but, after many perils, did not succeed in making a further eastward progress, and had again to go into winter quarters towards the end of September. This was a severe winter for them. The scurvy made its appearance, and the provisions were running short. M'Clure had now decided to keep only thirty men in the vessel, and send the remainder in two divisions, one up Mackenzie River, the other to Beechey Island, where Captain Pullen, of H.M.S. *North Star* was stationed for purposes of relief. At the beginning of April all the preparations for these sledge parties had been made, when an unexpected event occurred, which M'Clure's own words will best describe:— [213]



CAPTAIN ROBERT LE MESURIER M'CLURE.

While walking near the ship with the first lieutenant “we perceived a figure walking rapidly towards us from the rough ice at the entrance of the bay. From his pace and gestures we both naturally supposed at first that he was some one of our party pursued by a bear; but, as we approached him, doubts arose as to who it could be. He was certainly unlike any of our men; but, recollecting that it was possible some one might be trying on a new travelling dress preparatory to the departure of our sledges, and certain that no one else was near, we continued to advance. When within about two hundred yards of us, this strange figure threw up his arms, and made gesticulations resembling those used by Esquimaux, besides shouting, at the top of his voice, words which, from the wind and intense excitement of the moment, sounded like a wild screech, and this brought us fairly to a standstill. The stranger came quietly on, and we saw that his face was as black as ebony; and really at the moment we might be pardoned for wondering whether he was a denizen of this or the other world; and had he but given us a glimpse of a tail or a cloven hoof, we should assuredly have taken to our legs. As it was, we gallantly stood our ground; and, had the skies fallen upon us we could hardly have been more astonished than when the dark stranger called out—

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“‘I’m Lieutenant Pim, late of the *Herald*, and now in the *Resolute*. Captain Kellett is in her at Dealy Island!’

“To rush at and seize him by the hand was the first impulse, for the heart was too full for the tongue to speak. The announcement of relief being close at hand, when none was supposed to be within the Arctic Circle, was too sudden, unexpected, and joyous, for our minds to comprehend it at once. The news flew with lightning rapidity. The ship was all in commotion; the sick, forgetful of their maladies, leaped from their hammocks; the artificers dropped their tools, and the lower deck was cleared of men; for they all rushed for the hatchway, to be assured that a stranger was actually amongst them, and that his tale was true.

Despondency fled from the ship, and Lieutenant Pim received a welcome which he will never forget.”



THE SLEDGE PARTY OF THE *RESOLUTE*, UNDER LIEUT. BEDFORD PIM, FINDING THE *INVESTIGATOR*.

Of course M'Clure immediately started to visit Captain Kellett. At first there were some hopes of saving the *Investigator*; but the reports of both ships' surgeons on the state of the crew were so unfavourable, that the men were at once transferred to the *Resolute* and *Intrepid*, and the former abandoned. These also had in their turn to be abandoned; but the united crews in the end reached England in safety. A court-martial was held on M'Clure, and he was, of course, honourably acquitted. In the following session a reward of £10,000 was awarded to the officers and crew of the *Investigator*, and every one of its brave company received a medal from the Queen, which, doubtless, they have treasured

as a memento of the three dreary yet eventful winters passed by them on the ice.<sup>36</sup>

Among the earlier vessels employed in the search for Franklin were the *Advance* and *Rescue*, sent out from America in 1850, at the expense of H. Grinnell, Esq., a noble-hearted New York merchant. Lieutenant De Haven had charge of the expedition, while the afterwards celebrated Dr. Kane accompanied him as surgeon. De Haven fell in with Ross and Penny, and examined the first winter quarters of Franklin's party, discovered by the latter, and of which mention has been already made. He was very much hampered by the ice, and at the end of the season returned to the United States from a somewhat fruitless expedition. In addition to the several expeditions already briefly mentioned here, many attempts, both by land and sea, to rescue Franklin's band were made between 1851 and 1855. Captains Inglefield, Frederick, Sir Edward Belcher, Kellett, M'Clintock (first voyage), Pullen, Maguire, Dr. Kane, and others, sought in vain for traces of the lost expedition. As we shall see in our succeeding chapter, Dr. John Rae, an indefatigable and experienced traveller, was more successful; whilst the crowning discoveries, which for ever settled the fate of Franklin, were reserved for the gallant M'Clintock of the ever memorable *Fox* expedition.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

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<sup>36</sup> It will have been observed that Captain Collinson, who was to have accompanied M'Clure, was never able to communicate with him. This vessel, however, passed some time in the Arctic waters, and some pieces of wreck purchased by him from the Esquimaux, and *supposed* to have been parts of Franklin's vessels, the *Erebus* and *Terror*, were the only relics which were ever obtained by any naval commander acting under Government orders. Captain Parry's discoveries, however interesting in regard to the early progress of the expedition, threw no light on its fate.

## THE FRANKLIN SEARCH.

The Franklin Expedition—The First Relics—Dr. Rae's Discoveries—The Government tired of the Search—Noble Lady Franklin—The Voyage of the *Fox*—Beset in the Ice for Eight Months—Enormous Icebergs—Seal and Bear Hunts—Unearthly Noises under the Floes—Guy Fawkes in the Arctic—The Fiftieth Seal Shot—A Funeral—A Merry Christmas—New Year Celebration—Winter Gales—Their Miraculous Escape—Experience of a Whaler—Breakfast and Ship lost together.

In October, 1854, the startling news came from Dr. Rae that he had at length found some definite traces of the lost expedition. For several years he had been engaged in the search—principally at the expense of the Hudson's Bay Company—during which time he had descended the Mackenzie and Coppermine Rivers, and explored the shores and islands of the Polar Ocean without success. During his last journey, however, in 1853-4, he had obtained positive evidence from the Esquimaux regarding the fate of the *Erebus* and *Terror* and their crews. Six years before, in the spring-time, some forty white men had been seen painfully straggling over the ice, dragging with them a boat and sledges. They had indicated by signs that their vessels had been crushed in the ice, and that they were now trying to reach a habitable part of the country where they might find game. They were much emaciated from the effects of starvation, exposure, and unwonted exertion. Later in the same year the corpses of some thirty persons and some graves were discovered by the Esquimaux on the mainland, and five other bodies were subsequently found on an island close to it, and about a day's journey north-west of Back's Great Fish River. Several of them had died in their tents, and one, believed to have been an officer, was described as lying on his double-barrelled gun, with his telescope yet strapped to

his shoulders. Dr. Rae obtained a number of relics from the Esquimaux, including pieces of plate and other articles known to have belonged to the officers. The Government was satisfied that these facts indicated the entire loss of the party, and the long outstanding reward of £10,000 offered to any one who should bring intelligence of their fate was paid to Dr. Rae and his party. Next season, Mr. John Anderson, a chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, while making a canoe voyage down Great Fish River to Montreal Island and Point Ogle, obtained some confirmatory evidence and a few more relics from the natives.



BACK'S GREAT FISH RIVER.

The Government had now become tired of the search, and perhaps for good reason, for its own officers had not been, as we have seen, successful in obtaining the desired information, while there had been an immense expenditure of the public money in fruitless expeditions. It cannot, however, be wondered at that Lady Franklin had not abandoned all hope, and that she, in common with many others, was not satisfied with the meagre evidence of their fate so far obtained. That it pointed to the loss of the larger part of the officers and men could not be doubted, but there was yet the possibility of some of them surviving at some distant point it might be among the Esquimaux. Backed by distinguished naval officers and men of science and influence, she appealed to the Government to make one more last effort. It was in vain, and there was nothing for it but a private expedition. Lady Franklin purchased the steam-yacht *Fox*, and aided, in a limited degree only, by private subscriptions and some Government aid, fitted her out most completely. She was soon gratified by obtaining the willing and gratuitous services of several distinguished officers. Captain (now Sir) F. L. M'Clintock, who had braved the dangers of the Arctic with (James) Ross, Austin, and Kellett; Lieutenant W. R. Hobson, an officer of much experience; Captain Allen Young, of the merchant marine, who not merely threw his services into the cause, but subscribed £500 in furtherance of it; and Dr. David Walker, an accomplished surgeon and scientific man—were all volunteers whose services were secured. [216] “Many worthy old shipmates,” says M'Clintock, “my companions in the previous Arctic voyages, most readily volunteered their services, and were as gratefully accepted, for it was my anxious wish to gather around me well-trying men, who were aware of the duties expected of them and accustomed to naval discipline. Hence, out of the twenty-five souls composing our small company, seventeen had previously served in the Arctic search.” Just before starting, Carl Petersen, now so well known to Arctic readers on account of

his subsequent connection with Dr. Kane's expedition, joined the vessel as interpreter. The vessel was amply provisioned for twenty-eight months, and the supplies included preserved vegetables, lemon-juice, and pickles, for daily consumption. The Admiralty caused 6,682 lbs. of pemmican<sup>37</sup> to be prepared for the expedition, and the Board of Ordnance furnished the arms, powder and shot, rockets, and powder for ice blasting. M'Clintock, being anxious to retain for his vessel the privileges she formerly enjoyed as a yacht, was enrolled as a member of several of the leading clubs.

The *Fox* left England on the last day of June, 1857, and after visiting some of the Greenland settlements, turned seawards. Seventy miles to the west of Upernavik the edge of the "middle ice" was reached, and the vessel caught in its margin of loose ice. They soon steamed out of what might have been to a sailing vessel a serious predicament, and closely examined the field for forty miles without finding an opening. M'Clintock, being satisfied that he could not force a passage through it across Baffin's Bay, steered to the northward, and on August 12th was in Melville Bay, where the vessel was made fast to an iceberg which was *grounded* in fifty-eight fathoms (348 feet) of water. Here they were again beset by the ice. Alas! this was but the commencement of their troubles. For 242 days—or, in other words, for eight months after this—the little *Fox* was helplessly and, as it often appeared, hopelessly, drifting with the ice packed and piled around her, with but a feeble chance of escape, and with a very strong probability of being crushed to nothing without a moment's warning. Some extracts from M'Clintock's journal

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<sup>37</sup> Although there is some variation in the mode of preparing this comestible, it is essentially always the same: lean meat, dried and cut into shreds, which is then pounded up and mixed with melted beef fat, and pressed into cases. Among the Indians, who have not this latter resource of civilisation, gut and skins are employed, and their pemmican is not, therefore, unlike a rather substantial and solid sausage.

will be found interesting at this juncture.

“20th. No favourable ice-drift; this detention has become most painful. The *Enterprise* reached the open water upon this day in 1848, within fifty miles of our present position. Unfortunately, our prospects are not so cheering. There is no relative motion in the floes of ice, except a gradual closing together, the small spaces and streaks of water being still further diminished. The temperature has fallen, and is usually below the freezing point. I feel most keenly the difficulty of my position. We cannot afford to lose many more days. [217]

“The men enjoy a game of rounders on the ice each evening. Petersen and Christian are constantly on the look-out for seals, as well as Hobson and Young occasionally. If in good condition and killed instantaneously the seals float. Several have already been shot. The liver fried with bacon is excellent.

“Birds have become scarce. The few we see are returning southward. How anxiously I watch the ice, weather, barometer, and thermometer! Wind from any other quarter than south-east would oblige the floe-pieces to re-arrange themselves, in doing which they would become loose, and then would be our opportunity to proceed.

“24th. Fine weather, with very light northerly winds. We have drifted seven miles to the west in the last two days. The ice is now a close pack, so close that one may walk for many miles over it in any direction by merely turning a little to the right or left to avoid the small water spaces. My frequent visits to the crow’s-nest are not inspiriting. How absolutely distressing this imprisonment is to me no one without similar experience can form any idea. As yet the crew have but little suspicion how blighted our prospects are. [218]

“The dreaded reality of wintering in the pack is gradually forcing itself upon my mind; but I must not write on this subject: it is bad enough to brood over it unceasingly. We can see the land all round Melville Bay, from Cape Walker nearly to Cape

York. Petersen is indefatigable at seal shooting; he is so anxious to secure them for our dogs. He says they must be hit in the head; ‘if you hit him in the beef that is not good,’ meaning that a flesh wound does not prevent their escaping under the ice. Petersen and Christian practise an Esquimaux mode of attracting the seals. They scrape the ice, thus making a noise like that produced by a seal in making a hole with its flippers, and then place one end of a pole in the water and put their mouths close to the other end, making noises in imitation of the snorts and grunts of their intended victims. Whether the device is successful or not I do not know, but it looks laughable enough.

“Christian came back a few days ago, like a true seal hunter, carrying his kaiyack on his head, and dragging a seal behind him. Only two years ago Petersen returned across this bay with Dr. Kane’s retreating party. He shot a seal, which they devoured, and which, under Providence, saved their lives. Petersen is a good ice pilot, knows all these coasts as well as, or better than, any man living, and, from long experience and habits of observation, is almost unerring in his prognostications of the weather. Besides his great value to us as interpreter, few men are better adapted for Arctic work—an ardent sportsman, an agreeable companion, never at a loss for occupation or amusement, and always contented and sanguine. But we have, happily, many such dispositions in the *Fox*.

“30th. The whole distance across Melville Bay is 170 miles; of this we have performed about 120, forty of which we have drifted in the last fourteen days.

“Yesterday we set to work as usual to warp the ship along, and moved her ten feet. An insignificant hummock then blocked up the narrow passage. As we could not push it before us, a two-pound blasting charge was exploded, and the surface ice was shattered; but such an immense quantity of broken ice came up from beneath that the difficulty was greatly increased instead of being removed. This is one of the many instances in which

our small vessel labours under very great disadvantages in ice navigation; we have neither sufficient manual power, steam power, nor impetus to force the floes asunder. I am convinced that a steamer of moderate size and power, with a crew of forty or fifty men, would have got through a hundred miles of such ice in less time than we have been beset."

And so it went on from day to day, M'Clintock knowing that it was fast becoming hopeless to expect a release, but, nevertheless, keeping his men well employed in preparations for wintering and sledge-travelling. Every now and then a "lane" of water opening in the ice would mock their hopes. On one occasion such an opening appeared within 170 yards of the vessel, and by the aid of steam and blasting powder they advanced 100 yards towards it, when the floes again closed up tightly, and they had their trouble for their pains. Numerous large icebergs were around them. Allen Young examined one, which was 250 feet high, and aground in 83 fathoms (498 feet) of water. In other words, the enormous mass was nearly 750 feet from top to bottom. The reader can judge of such dimensions by comparison: St. Paul's is only 370 feet in height. The looser ice drifting past this berg was crushed, and piled up against its sides to a height of fifty feet. [219]

Meantime they were very successful in the hunt. Seals were caught in numbers, and their twenty-nine dogs kept in good condition on the meat. The dogs were at this period kept on the ice outside the ship, and occasionally one would start out on a solitary expedition, remaining away all night, but invariably returning for meal-time. On the evening of November 2nd there was a sudden call "to arms," and every one, whether "sleeping, prosing, or schooling"—for Dr. Walker held a school on board—flew to the ice, where a large he-bear was seen struggling with the dogs. He had approached within twenty-five yards of the ship before the quartermaster's eye detected his indistinct outline against the snow. In crossing some very thin ice he broke through into the water, where he was surrounded by yelping dogs. Hobson,

Young, and Petersen, had each lodged a bullet in him, but these only seemed to increase his rage. At length he got out of the water, and would doubtless have demolished some of the dogs, when M'Clintock, with a well-directed shot, put a bullet through his brain. The bear was a large one, and its carcass fed the dogs for nearly a month. M'Clintock says:—"For the few moments of its duration the chase and death was exciting. And how strange and novel the scene! A misty moon affording but scanty light, dark figures gliding singly about, not daring to approach each other, for the ice trembled under their feet, the enraged bear, the wolfish, howling dogs, and the bright flashes of the deadly rifles."

About this period, and while the weather was reasonably fair, unearthly noises were heard under the ice, and alarming disruptions occurred close to the ship. Of one of the former occasions M'Clintock writes:—"A renewal of ice-crushing within a few hundred yards of us; I can hear it in my bed. The ordinary sound resembles the roar of distant surf breaking heavily and continuously; but when heavy masses come in collision with much impetus it fully realises the justness of Dr. Kane's descriptive epithet, 'ice artillery.' Fortunately for us, our poor little *Fox* is well within the margin of a stout old floe; we are therefore undisturbed spectators of ice-conflicts which would be irresistible to anything of human construction. Immediately about the ship all is still, and, as far as appearances go, she is precisely as she would be in a secure harbour, housed all over, banked up with snow to the gunwales. In fact, her winter plumage is so complete that the masts alone are visible."

Whenever it was possible to employ or amuse the men among these dreary scenes M'Clintock was most desirous that it should be done. Dr. Walker's school was a genuine success, and the rather old school-boys most diligent in their studies, which were at first confined to the three R's—reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic. Later, however, lectures and readings were organised,

and subjects adapted to interest the crew, such as the trade winds, the atmosphere, the uses of the thermometer, barometer, and so forth, were chosen. Healthful exercise was afforded to the men in banking up the ship with snow. On November 5th, says M'Clintock, "in order to vary our monotonous routine, we determined to celebrate the day." Extra grog was issued, and one of Lady Franklin's thoughtful presents, in the shape of preserved plum-pudding, helped to mark the occasion. In the evening a procession was organised, and the crew sallied forth, with drum, gong, and discord, to burn a huge effigy of Guy Fawkes upon the ice. "Their blackened faces, extravagant costumes, glaring torches, and savage yells, frightened away all the dogs; nor was it till after the fireworks were let off and the traitor consumed that they crept back again. It was school-night, but the men were up for fun, so gave the Doctor a holiday."

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ESQUIMAUX CATCHING SEALS.

On November 15th Captain Young shot the fiftieth seal, an event which was celebrated by the drinking of *the* bottle of champagne which had been reserved for the occasion of reaching the North Water—an unhappy failure, the more keenly felt from being so very unexpected. On November 16th "Petersen saw and fired a shot into a narwhal which brought the blubber out. When most Arctic creatures are wounded in the water, blubber

more frequently appears than blood, particularly if the wound is superficial; it spreads over the surface of the water like oil. Bills of fare vary much in Greenland. I have inquired of Petersen, and he tells me that the Greenland Esquimaux (there are many Greenlanders of Danish origin) are not agreed as to which of their animals affords the most delicious food; some of them prefer reindeer venison, others think more favourably of young dog, the flesh of which, he asserts, is 'just like the beef of sheep.' He says a Danish captain, who had acquired the taste, provided some for his guests, and they praised his *mutton*! After dinner he sent for the skin of the animal, which was no other than a large red dog! This occurred in Greenland, where his Danish guests had resided for many years, far removed from European *mutton*. Baked puppy is a real delicacy all over Polynesia; at the Sandwich Islands I was once invited to a feast, and had to feign disappointment as well as I could when told that puppy was so extremely scarce it could not be procured in time, and therefore sucking-pig was substituted!"

On December 2nd an event occurred which cast a gloom over the little party. One of the engineers, Mr. Scott, had fallen down a hatchway, and died shortly afterwards from the effect of internal injuries then received. "A funeral at sea," says M'Clintock, "is always peculiarly impressive; but this evening, at seven o'clock, as we gathered around the sad remains of poor Scott, reposing under a Union Jack, and read the Burial Service by the light of lanterns, the effect could not fail to awaken very serious emotions.

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"The greater part of the Church Service was read on board, under shelter of the housing; the body was then placed upon a sledge, and drawn by the messmates of the deceased to a short distance from the ship, where a hole through the ice had been cut; it was then 'committed to the deep,' and the service completed. What a scene it was! I shall never forget it. The lonely *Fox*, almost buried in snow, completely isolated from the habitable



A NATURAL ARCH IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS.

world, her colours half-mast high, and bell mournfully tolling; our little procession slowly marching over the rough surface of the frozen sea, guided by lanterns and direction-posts, amid the dark and dreary depth of Arctic winter; the death-like stillness, the intense cold, and threatening aspect of a murky overcast sky; and all this heightened by one of those strange lunar phenomena which are but seldom seen even here—a complete halo encircling the moon, through which passed a horizontal band of pale light that encompassed the heavens; above the moon appeared the segments of two other halos, and there were also mock moons, to the number of six. The misty atmosphere lent a very ghastly hue to this singular display, which lasted for rather more than an hour.

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“27th. Our Christmas was a very cheerful, merry one. The men were supplied with several additional articles, such as hams, plum-puddings, preserved gooseberries and apples, nuts, sweetmeats, and Burton ale. After Divine Service they decorated the lower deck with flags, and made an immense display of food. The officers came down with me to see their preparations. We were really astonished! Their mess-tables were laid out like the counters in a confectioner’s shop, with apple and gooseberry tarts, plum and sponge cakes in pyramids, besides various other unknown puffs, cakes, and loaves of all sizes and shapes. We bake all our own bread, and excellent it is. In the background were nicely-browned hams, meat-pies, cheeses, and other substantial articles. Rum-and-water in wine-glasses and plum cake were handed to us. We wished them a happy Christmas, and complimented them on their taste and spirit in getting up such a display. Our silken sledge-banners had been borrowed for the occasion, and were regarded with deference and peculiar pride.

“In the evening the officers were enticed down amongst the men again, and at a late hour I was requested, as a great favour, to come down and see how much they were enjoying themselves.

I found them in the highest good-humour with themselves and all the world. They were perfectly sober, and singing songs, each in his turn. I expressed great satisfaction at having seen them enjoying themselves so much and so rationally; I could therefore the better describe it to Lady Franklin, who was deeply interested in everything relating to them. I drank their healths, and hoped our position next year would be more suitable for our purpose. We all joined in drinking the healths of Lady Franklin and Miss Cracroft, and amid the acclamations which followed I returned to my cabin, immensely gratified by such an exhibition of genuine good-feeling, such veneration for Lady Franklin, and such loyalty to the cause of the expedition. It was very pleasant also that they had taken the most cheering view of our future prospects. I verily believe I was the happiest individual on board that happy evening." New Year's Day was a second edition of Christmas. At midnight on December 31st the arrival of 1858 was announced by the band, consisting of two flutes and an accordion, striking up at the cabin door. It was accompanied by *other* music from frying-pans, gridirons, kettles, pots, and pans, in the hands of the crew, who were determined to have as much fun as possible under the circumstances.

The monotonous winter passed on, and still the *Fox* remained enclosed in the pack, although occasional disruptions of the ice occurred, some of them of an alarming nature. The field one day cracked within ten yards of the ship, and on another occasion M'Clintock, returning from a visit to an iceberg, was cut off close to the vessel by the sudden opening of a long streak of water, and had to run a considerable distance before he found a crossing place, where the jagged edges of the floe met. The little yacht bore out bravely, although one day hurled up at bows and the next at stern. Strong gales now and again blew furiously, and drifting, whirling snow prevented them from seeing or hearing a few yards off. On March 25th, with a strong north-west wind blowing, the ship rocked in the ice and rubbed against it, straining

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and groaning in a manner which caused some alarm. The boats, provisions, sledges, knapsacks, and other equipments, were kept ready for a hasty departure. As long as their friendly barrier lasted there was little cause for fear; but who could tell the moment when it might be demolished, and the ship crack like a nutshell among the grinding, crashing ice masses? On the 27th and 28th strong gales broke up the ice to some extent, and in two days the *Fox* drifted thirty-nine miles. But the story would be as monotonous in the telling as was their life in reality were we to detail it day by day. Suffice it to say, on April 24th, after they had drifted 1,385 miles, the vessel, although not by any means clear of the ice, which was dashed against it by the swell, and which often choked their screw and brought the engines to a dead stop, was out of imminent danger. Their escape had been little short of miraculous, and a sailing vessel, however strong, would probably never have so successfully braved the dangers of the pack as did the little steam-yacht *Fox*. Its commander writes feelingly on the 26th:—"At sea! How am I to describe the events of the last two days? It has pleased God to accord to us a deliverance in which His merciful protection contrasts—how strongly!—with our own utter helplessness; as if the successive mercies vouchsafed to us during our long winter and mysterious ice-drift had been concentrated and repeated in a single act. Thus forcibly does His great goodness come home to the mind!" Their troubles, anxieties, and doubts, were over, and two days later they were safely anchored off Holsteinborg, enjoying the hospitalities of the Danes.

M'Clintock refers, *àpropos* of his own experience, to a whaler, whose vessel, nipped in the ice, was lost in little less time than it takes to tell the story. "It was a beautiful morning; they had almost reached the North Water, and were anticipating a very successful voyage; the steward had just reported breakfast ready, when Captain Deuchars, seeing the floes closing together ahead of the ship, remained on deck to see her pass safely between them.

But they closed too quickly; the vessel was *almost* through when the points of ice caught her sides, abreast of the mizen-mast, and, passing through, held the wreck up for a few minutes, barely long enough for the crew to escape and save their boats! Poor Deuchars thus suddenly lost his breakfast and his ship; within *ten minutes* her royal yards disappeared beneath the surface." The vessel was a strong one, supposed to be exactly adapted for whaling, but the powerful nip she received was too much for her. The *Fox*, in spite of her long imprisonment, was far more fortunate.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE LAST TRACES.

M'Clintock's Summer Explorations—The Second Winter—Sledging Parties—Snow Huts—Near the Magnetic Pole—Meeting with Esquimaux—Franklin Relics obtained—Objection of Esquimaux to Speak of the Dead—Hobson's Discovery of the Franklin Records—Fate of the *Erebus* and *Terror*—Large Quantity of Relics Purchased from the Natives—The Skeleton on the Beach—Fate of Crozier's Party—"As they Fell they Died"—The Record at Point Victory—Boat with Human Remains Discovered—The Wrecks never Seen—Return of the *Fox*.

During the summer of 1858 M'Clintock made several detailed examinations of Eclipse Sound, Pond's Bay, Peel Strait, Regent's Inlet, and Bellot Strait, without discovering the faintest trace of

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the lost party. The *Fox* was again to winter in the Arctic—this time, however, under favourable circumstances—Port Kennedy, a harbour of Bellot Strait, being selected. The early winter of 1858-9 passed away without any occurrences of great importance, the ship being safely placed and the crew still well provisioned. One important member of the expedition, Mr. Brand, the chief engineer, died of apoplexy on November 7th, and, in consequence, M'Clintock himself had, at a later period, not merely to navigate the vessel, but to manage the engines.



CAPTAIN (AFTERWARDS SIR LEOPOLD) M'CLINTOCK.

Again their Christmas was spent in the happiest manner, and, says M'Clintock, “with a degree of loyalty to the good old English custom at once spirited and refreshing. All the good things which could possibly be collected together appeared upon the snow-white deal tables of the men as the officers and myself walked, by invitation, round the lower deck. Venison, beer, and a fresh supply of clay pipes, appeared to be the most prized luxuries; but the abundance and variety of the eatables, tastefully

laid out, were such as well might support the delusion which all seemed desirous of imposing upon themselves—that they were in a land of plenty—in fact, *all but* at home! We contributed a large cheese and some preserves, and candles superseded the ordinary smoky lamps. With so many comforts, and the existence of so much genuine good feeling, their evening was a joyous one, enlivened also by songs and music.” Without, the scene was widely different. A fierce nor’-wester howled through the rigging, the snow-drift rustled swiftly past, no star appeared through the oppressive gloom, and the thermometer varied between 76° and 80° *below the freezing* point. At one time it was impossible to visit the magnetic observatory, although only 210 yards distant, and with a rope stretched along, breast high, upon poles the whole way. After making all proper arrangements, M’Clintock and Young started out on February 17th, in different directions, with sledges and searching parties. The cold was intense: on the 18th the thermometer registered 48° (80° below freezing); and even the poor dogs felt the effects, their feet becoming lame and sore in consequence of the hardness of the snow. [225]

We are now approaching the *dénoûment*—the climax of the painful story which tells us of the sad fate of two whole ships’ companies amid the perils and horror of the frozen seas. We cannot do better than present the narrative for the most part in the graphic words of M’Clintock. “On the 1st of March,” he writes, “we halted to encamp at about the position of the Magnetic Pole, for no cairn remains to mark the spot. I had almost concluded that my journey would prove to be a work of labour in vain, because hitherto no traces of Esquimaux had been met with, and in consequence of the reduced state of our provisions and the wretched condition of the poor dogs—six out of the fifteen being quite useless—I could only advance one more march.

“But we had done nothing more than look *ahead*; when we halted and turned round, great indeed was my surprise and joy to see four men walking after us. Petersen and I immediately



AN ESQUIMAUX SLEDGE AND TEAM OF DOGS.

buckled on our revolvers, and advanced to meet them. The natives halted, made fast their dogs, laid down their spears, and received us without any evidence of surprise....

“We gave them to understand that we were anxious to barter with them, and very cautiously approached the real object of our visit. A naval button upon one of their dresses afforded the opportunity; it came, they said, from some white people who were starved upon an island where there are salmon (that is, in a river), and that the iron of which their knives were made came from the same place. One of these men said he had been to the island to obtain wood and iron, but none of them had seen the white men. Another man had been to ‘*Ei-wil-lik*’ (Repulse Bay), and counted on his fingers seven individuals of Rae’s party whom he remembered having seen....

“Despite the gale which howled outside, we spent a comfortable night in our roomy hut.

“Next morning the entire village population arrived, amounting to about forty-five souls, from aged people to infants in arms, and bartering commenced very briskly. First of all we purchased all the relics of the lost expedition, consisting of six silver spoons and forks, a silver medal the property of Mr. A. McDonald, assistant surgeon, part of a gold chain, several buttons, and knives made of the iron and wood of the wreck; also bows and arrows constructed of materials obtained from the same source. Having secured these, we purchased a few frozen salmon, some seal’s blubber, and venison, but could not prevail upon them to part with more than one of their fine dogs. One of their sledges was made of two stout pieces of wood, which might have been a boat’s keel.

“All the old people recollected the visit of the *Victory*. An old man told me his name was ‘*Ooblooria*.’ I recollected that Sir James Ross had employed a man of that name as a guide, and reminded him of it; he was, in fact, the same individual, and he inquired after Sir James by his Esquimaux name of ‘*Agglugga*.’

“I inquired after the man who was furnished with a wooden leg by the carpenter of the *Victory*; no direct answer was given, but his daughter was pointed out to me. Petersen explained to me that they do not like alluding in any way to the dead, and that, as my question was not answered, it was certain the man was no longer amongst the living.”

M’Clintock returned to the *Fox*, having travelled 420 miles in their twenty-five days’ absence, and having also completed the survey of the coast line of continental America, thereby adding about 120 miles to our charts. On reaching the ship the crew was at once assembled, and the information obtained laid before the men, M’Clintock pointing out that one of the ships still remained unaccounted for, and that they must carry out to the full all the projected lines of search.

After several sledge journeys to the various depôts previously made, to collect provisions deposited there, the search was resumed, M’Clintock and Hobson leading two parties in different directions.

On their return M’Clintock writes as follows, under date of June 24th:—“I have visited Montreal Island, completed the exploration and circuit of King William’s Island, passing on foot through the only feasible North-west Passage; but all this is as nothing to the interest attached to the *Franklin records* picked up by Hobson, and now safe in my possession. We now know the fate of the *Erebus* and *Terror*. The sole object of our voyage has at length been completed, and we anxiously await the time when escape from these bleak regions will become practicable.”

On April 20th two families of the same people previously encountered at Cape Victoria were found in their snow huts upon the ice. M’Clintock says:—“After much anxious inquiry we learned that two ships had been seen by the natives of King William’s Island: one of them was seen to sink in deep water, and nothing was obtained from her, a circumstance at which they expressed much regret; but the other was forced on shore by the

ice, where they suppose she still remains, but is much broken. From this ship they have obtained most of their wood, &c., and Oot-loo-lik is the name of the place where she grounded.

“Formerly many natives lived there, now very few remain. All the natives have obtained plenty of wood.

“The most of this information was given us by the young man who sold the knife. Old Oo-na-lee, who drew the rough chart for me in March to show where the ship sank, now answered our questions respecting the one forced on shore; not a syllable about her did he mention on the former occasion, although we asked whether they knew of only one ship. I think he would willingly have kept us in ignorance of a wreck being upon their coasts, and that the young man unwittingly made it known to us.

“The latter also told us that the body of a man was found on board the ship; that he must have been a very large man, and had long teeth: this is all he recollected having been told, for he was quite a child at the time.

“They both told us it was in the fall of the year—that is, August or September—when the ships were destroyed; that all the white people went away to the ‘large river,’ taking a boat or boats with them, and that in the following winter their bones were found there.”<sup>38</sup> [227]

On May 7th, to avoid snow-blindness, the party commenced night marching. Crossing over from Matty Island towards the King William’s Island shore, they continued their march southward until midnight, when they had the good fortune to

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<sup>38</sup> Conjecture is perhaps wrong at this point, but the painful thought has often occurred to the writer that the Esquimaux, not always quite so innocent as some writers would have us believe, were the murderers of some at least of the enfeebled party. Broken down by starvation, and exhausted by painful travel, they would be an easy prey to the hardy natives, whose cupidity might be excited by the many useful articles they possessed. We have before seen how Franklin was nearly involved in a serious *fracas* with those people, and in later days it is on record that Dr. Hayes, the American explorer, discovered a plot for the destruction of his party.

arrive at an inhabited snow village. They halted at a little distance, and pitched their tent, the better to secure small articles from being stolen whilst they bartered with them. M'Clintock purchased from them six pieces of silver plate bearing the crests or initials of Franklin, Crozier, Fairholme, and McDonald; they also sold them bows and arrows of English woods, uniform and other buttons, and offered a heavy sledge made of two short stout pieces of curved wood, which no mere boat could have furnished them with; but this, of course, could not be taken away; the silver spoons and forks were readily sold for four needles each. The narrative continues:—

“Having obtained all the relics they possessed, I purchased some seal's flesh, blubber, frozen venison, dried and frozen salmon, and sold some of my puppies. They told us it was five days' journey to the wreck—one day up the inlet still in sight, and four days overland: this would carry them to the western coast of King William's Land; they added that but little now remained of the wreck which was accessible, their countrymen having carried almost everything away. In answer to an inquiry, they said she was without masts; the question gave rise to some laughter amongst them, and they spoke to each other about *fire*, from which Petersen thought they had burnt the masts through close to the deck in order to get them down.

“There had been *many books*, they said, but all have long ago been destroyed by the weather. The ship was forced on shore in the fall of the year by ice. She had not been visited during this past winter, and an old woman and a boy were shown to us who were the last to visit the wreck; they said they had been at it during the winter of 1857-8.

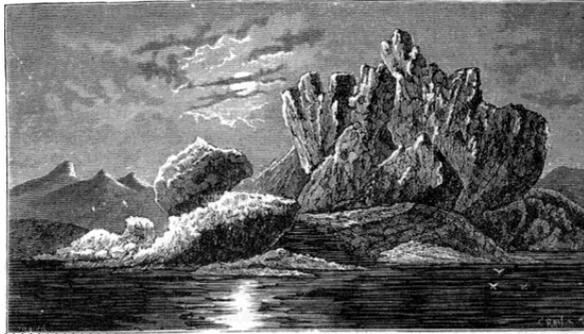
“Petersen questioned the woman closely, and she seemed anxious to give all the information in her power. She said many of the white men dropped by the way as they went to the Great River; that some of them were buried and some were not. They did not themselves witness this, but discovered their bodies

during the winter following.”

Having examined Montreal and King William’s Island, they started on the return journey. After three weeks’ travel M’Clintock continues:—“We were now upon the shore along which the retreating crews must have marched. My sledges, of course, travelled upon the sea-ice close along the shore; and although the depth of snow which covered the beach deprived us of almost every hope, yet we kept a very sharp look-out for traces; nor were we unsuccessful. Shortly after midnight of the 25th of May, when slowly walking along a gravel ridge near the beach, which the winds kept partially bare of snow, I came upon a human skeleton, partly exposed, with here and there a few fragments of clothing appearing through the snow. The skeleton—now perfectly bleached—was lying upon its face, the limbs and smaller bones either dissevered or gnawed away by small animals. [228]

“A most careful examination of the spot was, of course, made, the snow removed, and every scrap of clothing gathered up. A pocket-book afforded strong grounds for hope that some information might be subsequently obtained respecting the unfortunate owner and the calamitous march of the lost crews, but at the time it was frozen hard. The substance of that which we gleaned upon the spot may thus be summed up:—

“This victim was a young man, slightly built, and perhaps above the common height; the dress appeared to be that of a steward or officer’s servant, the loose bow-knot in which his neck-handkerchief was tied not being used by officers or seamen. In every particular the dress confirmed our conjectures as to his rank or office in the late expedition—the blue jacket with slashed sleeves and braided edging, and the pilot-cloth great-coat with plain covered buttons. We found a clothes-brush near and a horn pocket-comb. This poor man seems to have selected the bare ridge-top as affording the least tiresome walking, and to have fallen on his face in the position in which we found him.



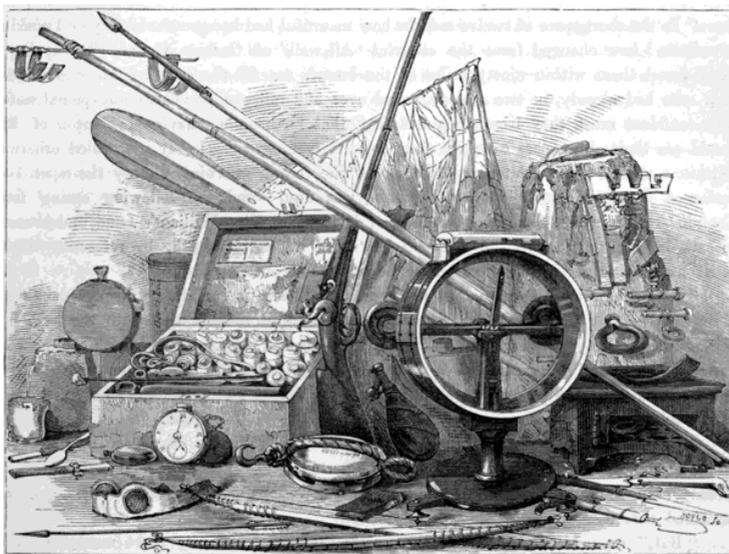
CAPE YORK, MELVILLE BAY.

“It was a melancholy truth that the old woman spoke when she said, ‘They fell down and died as they walked along.’

“I do not think the Esquimaux had discovered this skeleton, or they would have carried off the brush and comb. Superstition prevents them from disturbing their own dead, but would not keep them from appropriating the property of the white man, if in any way useful to them. Dr. Rae obtained a piece of flannel marked ‘F. D. V., 1845,’ from the Esquimaux of Boothia or Repulse Bay; it had doubtless been a part of poor Des Vœux’s garments.”

It is impossible with the space at command to give in detailed form the interesting narrative of M’Clintock’s and Hobson’s careful explorations. “The Voyage of the *Fox*” should be read in the original by all interested in Arctic adventure, for the modest and graphic account of it given by M’Clintock bears the impress of absolute truth, without the slightest attempt at fine writing or exaggeration.

About twelve miles from Cape Herschel M’Clintock found a small cairn, built by Hobson’s party, and containing a note for the commander. He had reached this, his extreme point, six days previously, without having seen anything of the wreck or of natives, but he had found a record—the record, so ardently



RELICS BROUGHT BACK BY THE FRANKLIN SEARCH EXPEDITION.

sought for, of the Franklin expedition—at Point Victory, on the north-west coast of King William’s Land. It read as follows:—

“‘28th May, 1847.—H.M. ships *Erebus* and *Terror* wintered in the ice in lat. 70° 05' N., long. 98° 23' W.

“‘Having wintered, in 1846-7, at Beechey Island, in lat. 74° 43' 28" N., long. 91° 39' 15" W., after having ascended Wellington Channel to lat. 77°, and returned by the west side of Cornwallis Island.

“‘All well.

“‘Party, consisting of two officers and six men, left the ships on Monday, 24th May, 1847.

“‘GM. GORE, Lieut.

“‘CHAS. F. DES VŒUX, Mate.’

“‘Had this been all, it would have been the record of a grand success. But, alas! round the margin of the paper upon which Lieutenant Gore, in 1847, wrote those words of hope and promise another had subsequently written the following words:—

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“‘April 25th, 1848.—H.M. ships *Terror* and *Erebus* were deserted on the 22nd April, five leagues NNW. of this, having been beset since 12th September, 1846. The officers and crews, consisting of 105 souls, under the command of Captain F. R. M. Crozier, landed here in lat. 69° 37' 42" N., long. 98° 41' W. Sir John Franklin died on the 11th June, 1847; and the total loss by deaths in the expedition has been, to this date, nine officers and fifteen men.

“(Signed)“ ‘F. R. M. CROZIER,“ ‘Captain, and Senior Officer.      “(Signed)“ ‘JAMES  
 “ ‘And start (on) to-morrow, 26th, for Back’s Fish River.’<sup>39</sup>

“In the short space of twelve months how mournful had become the history of Franklin’s expedition! how changed from the cheerful ‘All well’ of Graham Gore! The spring of 1847 found them within ninety miles of the known sea off the coast of America; and to men who had already, in two seasons, sailed over 500 miles of previously unexplored waters, how confident must they have then felt that that forthcoming navigable season of 1847 would see their ships pass over so short an intervening space! It was ruled otherwise. Within a month after Lieutenant Gore placed the record on Point Victory the much-loved leader of the expedition, Sir John Franklin, was dead; and the following spring found Captain Crozier, upon whom the command had devolved, at King William’s Land, endeavouring to save his starving men, 105 souls in all, from a terrible death, by retreating to the Hudson’s Bay territories up the Back or Great Fish River.

“A sad tale was never told in fewer words. There is something deeply touching in their extreme simplicity, and they show in the strongest manner that both the leaders of this retreating party were actuated by the loftiest sense of duty, and met with calmness and decision the fearful alternative of a last bold struggle for life rather than perish without effort on board their ships. We well know that the *Erebus* and *Terror* were only provisioned up to July, 1848.”

M’Clintock reached the western extremity of King William’s Island on May 29th, and on the following day encamped alongside

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<sup>39</sup> There are slight discrepancies in the above records, which, however, can be readily understood were made in the hurry and excitement of the moment.

a deserted boat of considerable size, which had already been examined by Hobson, who had left a note. A quantity of tattered clothing, &c., remained near it.

“But,” says M’Clintock, “all these were after observations; there was that in the boat that transfixed us with awe. It was portions of two human skeletons. One was that of a slight young person; the other of a large, strongly-made, middle-aged man. The former was found in the bow of the boat, but in too much disturbed a state to enable Hobson to judge whether the sufferer had died there; large and powerful animals, probably wolves, had destroyed much of this skeleton, which may have been that of an officer. Near it we found the fragment of a pair of worked slippers.... Besides these slippers there were a pair of small, strong, shooting half-boots. The other skeleton was in a somewhat more perfect state<sup>40</sup>, and was enveloped with clothes and furs; it lay across the boat, under the after thwart. Close beside it were found five watches; and there were two double-barrelled guns—one barrel in each loaded and cocked—standing muzzle upwards against the boat’s side. It may be imagined with what deep interest these sad relics were scrutinised, and how anxiously every fragment of clothing was turned over in search of pockets and pocket-books, journals, or even names. Five or six small books were found, all of them Scriptural or devotional works, except the ‘Vicar of Wakefield.’ One little book, ‘Christian Melodies,’ bore an inscription on the title-page from the donor to G. G. (Graham Gore?). A small Bible contained numerous marginal notes and whole passages underlined. Besides these books, the covers of a New Testament and Prayer Book were found.

“Amongst an amazing quantity of clothing there were seven or eight pairs of boots of various kinds—cloth winter boots, sea-boots, heavy ankle-boots, and strong shoes. I noted that there

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<sup>40</sup> No part of the skull of either skeleton was found, with the exception only of the lower jaw of each.

were silk handkerchiefs—black, white, and figured—towels, soap, sponge, tooth-brush, and hair-combs; macintosh gun-cover marked outside with paint A 12, and lined with black cloth. Besides these articles we found twine, nails, saws, files, bristles, wax-ends, sailmakers' palms, powder, bullets, shot, cartridges, wads, leather cartridge-case, knives—clasp and dinner ones—needle and thread cases, slow-match, several bayonet-scabbarbs cut down into knife-sheaths, two rolls of sheet-lead, and, in short, a quantity of articles of one description and another truly astonishing in variety, and such as, for the most part, modern sledge-travellers in these regions would consider a mere accumulation of dead weight, but slightly useful, and very likely to break down the strength of the sledge crews.

“The only provisions we could find were tea and chocolate: of the former very little remained, but there were nearly forty pounds of the latter. These articles alone could never support life in such a climate, and we found neither biscuit nor meat of any kind. A portion of tobacco, and an empty pemmican-tin capable of containing twenty-two pounds weight, were discovered. The tin was marked with an E; it had probably belonged to the *Erebus*. None of the fuel originally brought from the ships remained in or about the boat, but there was no lack of it, for a drift-tree was lying on the beach close at hand, and had the party been in need of fuel they would have used the paddles and bottom boards of the boat.” In the after part of the boat twenty-six pieces of plate—spoons and forks—were found, bearing the crests or initials of Franklin and his officers. The reader can see all these interesting relics at Greenwich Hospital, and he will hardly examine them without dropping a tear at the remembrances they recall.

Although M'Clintock and Hobson put forth almost superhuman effort to discover the wrecks, they were never found, and the probability is that they had broken up and were carried to sea at the disruption of the ice. After making every

attempt possible to discover further traces of the lost party, M'Clintock and the rest returned to the *Fox*. On August 10th the vessel's bows were pointed homewards, and forty days later she reached the English Channel, after one of the most remarkable and successful Arctic voyages ever made.

The narrative is finished. It records one of the saddest tragedies of modern days. Amidst all the perils of wreck, and fire, and flood, there has generally been a loophole of escape for some few; here every man of those gallant crews perished, the larger part while helplessly endeavouring to reach a haven of safety. "They fell down and died as they walked along."

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The Arctic medal was awarded to all the officers and crew of the *Fox*, and one of the first uses made by the men of their pay was to purchase for Captain M'Clintock a handsome gold chronometer. That brave and successful explorer was deservedly fêted and honoured wherever he went, and, as most readers are aware, was subsequently knighted.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### KANE'S MEMORABLE EXPEDITION.

Dr. Kane's Expedition—His short but eventful Career—Departure of the *Advance*—Dangers of the Voyage—Grinding Ice—Among the Bergs—A Close Shave—Nippings—The Brig towed from the Ice-beach—Smith's Sound—Rensselaer Harbour—Winter Quarters—Return of an Exploring Party—Fearful Sufferings—To the Rescue—Saved—Curious Effects of Intense Cold.

Although the expedition about to be described left the United States in 1852—several years before M'Clintock's memorable voyage—and although it was organised especially for the Franklin search, its consideration has been deferred till now, in order not to interfere with the narrative of the discoveries relative to the lost expedition. Dr. Kane was not, indeed, to share with Rae and M'Clintock the honour of determining the fate of Franklin and his brave companions, but he was, and long must be, destined to hold a foremost place among the great Arctic explorers of all ages, while his work is one of the classics of Arctic literature.<sup>41</sup>

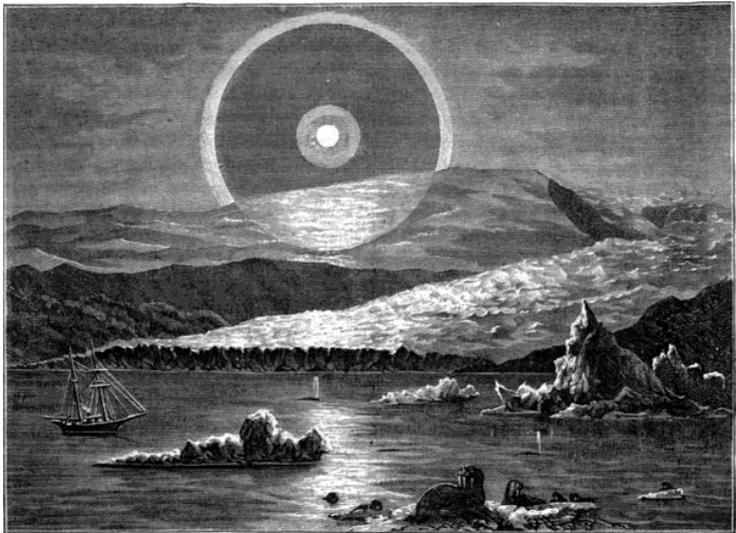
Dr. Kane was in the field of action he eventually chose one of the most ardent and enthusiastic workers; indeed, the untiring energy and perseverance with which he laboured in the face of all difficulties entitle him to be considered a model explorer. His short life had been full of adventure. Born on February 3rd, 1820, he became at a very early age an assistant-surgeon in the United States navy, and visited most parts of the world, including China, India, Ceylon, and the coasts of Africa. At a station of the latter he was stricken down with "coast fever," and never entirely recovered from the effects. He was engaged in the Mexican war with the United States, and succeeded in passing through the enemy's lines with an oral despatch to the American head-quarters, when several others had failed. On the voyage from New Orleans to Mexico he was shipwrecked, and was afterwards laid low with typhus fever in the latter country. His first visit to the Arctic was, as already mentioned, in company with Lieutenant De Haven. He died at Havana, shortly after his return from the expedition we are about to record. His slight frame had been too severely tested; the flesh was weaker than the spirit; and at the early age of thirty-seven he passed away, leaving behind a reputation scarcely second to that of any

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<sup>41</sup> "Arctic Explorations in the Years 1853, '54, '55," by Elisha Kent Kane, M.D., U.S.N.

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Arctic explorer. Ambitious always, he was nevertheless one of the most thoughtful and humane of commanders. When his men were almost starving, he travelled, sometimes alone, long distances on the ice and snow for succour and relief; when nearly every member of his party was stricken down with scurvy, he nursed, cooked, and cared for them, oft-times when enfeebled, downhearted, and scarcely able to stand himself. His naval education had made him appreciate the value of discipline, but where humanity was concerned self-abnegation was his leading characteristic. Kane could most assuredly be termed a *practical* Christian. All honour to his memory!



WHALE SOUND, GREENLAND

Dr. Kane received special orders in December, 1852, from the then Secretary of the United States navy, "to conduct an expedition to the Arctic seas in search of Sir John Franklin." The noble-hearted American merchant, Mr. Grinnell of New York, who had organised De Haven's expedition, placed a brig, the *Advance*, at his disposal. Mr. Peabody, the American benefactor of the London poor, contributed handsomely to the outfit, which was aided by several scientific institutions. The United States Government detailed ten officers and men from the navy, which with seven others made up the full complement of the expedition. Leaving New York on May 30th, 1853, South Greenland was reached on July 1st. Several Danish settlements were visited on the way north, where they received much hospitality, and obtained skins, fur clothing, and native dogs.

As we have already seen, Baffin was the discoverer of Smith's Sound. From the year 1616, the date of his visit, until Kane explored it, no European or American had sailed over its waters. The voyage of the *Advance* thither was one of peril and difficulty. Storm succeeded storm; the little brig was constantly beset and nearly crushed in the ice, and sometimes heeled over to such an extent that it seemed a miracle when she righted. Dr. Kane's description of some of the dangers through which they passed is very graphic.

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"At seven in the morning we were close on to the piling masses. We dropped our heaviest anchor with the desperate hope of winding the brig; but there was no withstanding the ice-torrent that followed us. We had only time to fasten a spar as a buoy to the chain, and let her slip. So went our best bower.

"Down we went upon the gale again, helplessly scraping along a lee of ice seldom less than thirty feet thick; one floe, measured by a line as we tried to fasten to it, more than forty. I had seen such ice only once before, and never in such rapid motion. One upturned mass rose above our gunwale, smashing in our bulwarks, and depositing half a ton of ice in a lump upon our

decks. Our staunch little brig bore herself through all this wild adventure as if she had a charmed life.

“But a new enemy came in sight ahead. Directly in our way, just beyond the line of floe-ice against which we were alternately sliding and thumping, was a group of bergs. We had no power to avoid them; the only question was, whether we were to be dashed in pieces against them, or whether they might not offer us some providential nook of refuge against the storm. But as we neared them we perceived that they were at some distance from the floe-edge, and separated from it by an interval of open water. Our hopes rose as the gale drove us towards this passage and into it; and we were ready to exult when, from some unexplained cause—probably an eddy of the wind against the lofty ice-walls—we lost our headway. Almost at the same moment we saw that the bergs were not at rest, that with a momentum of their own they were bearing down upon the other ice, and that it must be our fate to be crushed between the two.

“Just then a broad sconce-piece, or low water-washed berg, came driving up from the southward. The thought flashed upon me of one of our escapes in Melville Bay; and as the sconce moved rapidly alongside us, M’Garry managed to plant an anchor on its slope and hold on to it by a whale line. It was an anxious moment. Our noble tow-horse, whiter than the pale horse that seemed to be pursuing us, hauled us bravely on, the spray dashing over his windward flanks, and his forehead ploughing up the lesser ice as if in scorn. The bergs encroached upon us as we advanced; our channel narrowed to a width of perhaps forty feet; we braced the yards to clear the impending ice-walls.... We passed clear, but it was a close shave—so close that our port quarter-boat would have been crushed if we had not taken it in from the davits—and found ourselves under the lee of a berg, in a comparative open lead. Never did heart-tried men acknowledge with more gratitude their merciful deliverance

from a wretched death.” And so the narrative continues—a long series of hairbreadth escapes from the nippings and crushing of the ice. Kane says at this juncture:—

“During the whole of the scenes I have been trying to describe I could not help being struck by the composed and manly demeanour of my comrades. The turmoil of ice under a heavy sea often conveys the impression of danger when the reality is absent; but in this fearful passage the parting of our hawsers, the loss of our anchors, the abrupt crushing of our stoven bulwarks, and the actual deposit of ice upon our decks, would have tried the nerves of the most experienced ice-man. All—officers and men—worked alike. Upon each occasion of collision with the ice which formed our lee coast, efforts were made to carry out lines, and some narrow escapes were incurred by the zeal of the parties leading them into positions of danger. Mr. Bonsall avoided being crushed by leaping to a floating fragment; and no less than four of our men at one time were carried down by the drift, and could only be recovered by a relief party after the gale had subsided. [235]

“As our brig, borne on by the ice, commenced her ascent of the berg, the suspense was oppressive. The immense blocks piled against her, range upon range, pressing themselves under her keel and throwing her over upon her side, till, urged by the successive accumulations, she rose slowly, and as if with convulsive efforts, along the sloping wall. Still there was no relaxation of the impelling force. Shock after shock, jarring her to her very centre, she continued to mount steadily on her precarious cradle. But for the groaning of her timbers and the heavy sough of the floes we might have heard a pin drop; and then as she settled down into her old position, quietly taking her place among the broken rubbish, there was a deep breathing silence, as though all were waiting for some signal before the clamour of congratulation and comment should burst forth.” After the storm had abated, the crew went on the ice-beach and towed the vessel a considerable distance, being harnessed up, as Kane says, “like mules on a canal.” Shortly

afterwards a council was called to consider the feasibility of proceeding northward or returning southward to find a wintering place, and the latter idea was the more favourably received. After some further discussion it was resolved to cross the bay in which they now were to its northern headland, and thence despatch sledging parties in quest of a suitable spot to “dock” the brig. On the way across the vessel grounded and heeled over, throwing men out of their berths and setting the cabin-deck on fire by upsetting the stove. She was surrounded with ice, which piled up in immense heaps. These alarming experiences were repeated on several occasions. Dr. Kane meantime took a whale-boat, well sheathed with tin, ahead of the brig, and after about twenty-four hours came to a solid ice-shelf or table, clinging round the base of the cliffs. They hauled up the boat and then prepared for a sledge journey. The rough and difficult nature of their icy route may be inferred from the fact that it took them five days to make a *direct* distance of forty miles, while they had travelled twice that distance in reality. They then arrived at a bay into which a large river fell. This Kane considers the largest stream of North Greenland; its width at the mouth was three-fourths of a mile. Its course was afterwards pursued to an interior glacier, from the base of which it was found to issue in numerous streams. By the banks of this river they encamped, lulled by the unusual music of running waters. “Here,” says Kane, “protected from the frost by the infiltration of the melted snows, and fostered by the reverberation of solar heat from the rocks, we met a flower growth, which, though drearily Arctic in its type, was rich in variety and colouring. Amid festuca and other tufted grasses twinkled the purple lychnis, and the white star of the chickweed; and, not without its pleasing associations, I recognised a solitary hesperis—the Arctic representative of the wallflowers of home.” After a careful examination of the bays and anchorages, Rensselaer Harbour, the spot where he had left the *Advance*, was chosen for their winter quarters, and a

storehouse and observatory were erected ashore.

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The return of an exploring party, which had suffered severely, is well described by Kane. "We were at work cheerfully, sewing away at the skins of some mocassins by the blaze of our lamps, when, towards midnight, we heard the noise of steps above, and the next minute Sontag, Ohlsen, and Petersen, came down into the cabin. Their manner startled me even more than their unexpected appearance on board. They were swollen and haggard, and hardly able to speak.

"Their story was a fearful one. They had left their companions in the ice, risking their own lives to bring us the news. Brooks, Baker, Wilson, and Pierre, were all lying frozen and disabled. Where? They could not tell. Somewhere in among the hummocks to the north and east. It was drifting heavily round them when they parted. Irish Tom had stayed by to feed and care for the others, but the chances were sorely against them. It was in vain to question them further. They had evidently travelled a great distance, for they were sinking with fatigue and hunger, and could hardly be rallied enough to tell us the direction in which they had come."

Kane's promptness saved the party. A sledge was hastily loaded, Ohlsen deposited upon it, wrapped in furs, and an immediate departure made. The thermometer stood at 76° below freezing. For sixteen hours they struggled on, till at length they came to a place where Ohlsen had to acknowledge he was quite "at sea," and could not recognise the landmarks. Kane continues:—"Pushing ahead of the party, and clambering over some rugged ice-piles, I came to a long level floe, which I thought might probably have attracted the eyes of weary men in circumstances like our own. It was a light conjecture, but it was enough to turn the scale, for there was no other to balance it. I gave orders to abandon the sledge, and disperse in search of footmarks. We raised our tent, placed our pemmican in cache, except a small allowance for each man to carry on his person,

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DR. KANE.

and poor Ohlsen, now just able to keep his legs, was liberated from his bag. The thermometer had fallen by this time to minus 49° 3' and the wind was setting in sharp from the north-west. It was out of the question to halt; it required brisk exercise to keep us from freezing. The men 'extended' in skirmishing order, but kept nervously closing up; several were seized with trembling fits, and Dr. Kane fainted twice from the effect of the intense cold. At length a sledge track was discovered, which followed, brought them in sight of a small American flag fluttering from a hummock, and lower down a little masonic banner, hanging from a tent-pole hardly above the drift. It was the camp of our disabled comrades; we reached it after an unbroken march of twenty-one hours.

“The little tent was nearly covered.... As I crawled in, and coming upon the darkness, heard before me the burst of welcome gladness that came from the four poor fellows stretched on their backs, and then for the first time the cheer outside, my

weakness and my gratitude together almost overcame me. They had expected me; they were sure I would come!" The tent only being capable of holding eight, while there were fifteen souls in all, they had to take "watch and watch" by turns. When sufficiently rested and refreshed, the sick men were sewn up in reindeer skins and placed on the sledge. Although they left all superfluous articles behind, the load was eleven hundred pounds. "We made by vigorous pulls and lifts nearly a mile an hour.... Almost without premonition, we all became aware of an alarming failure of our energies. I was of course familiar with the benumbed and almost lethargic sensation of extreme cold.... But I had treated the *sleepy comfort* of freezing as something like the embellishment of romance. I had evidence now to the contrary.

"Bonsall and Morton, two of our stoutest men, came to me, begging permission to sleep. 'They were not cold, the wind did not enter them now; a little sleep was all they wanted.' Presently Hans was found nearly stiff under a drift, and Thomas, bolt upright, had his eyes closed, and could hardly articulate. At last John Blake threw himself into the snow, and refused to rise. They did not complain of feeling cold, but it was in vain that I wrestled, boxed, ran, argued, jeered, or reprimanded—an immediate halt could not be avoided." The tent was pitched with much difficulty, and then Kane with one man pushed on to a tent and cache left the previous day, his object being to prepare some hot food before the rest arrived. He continues:—"I cannot tell how long it took us to make the nine miles, for we were in a strange kind of stupor, and had little apprehension of time. It was probably about four hours. We kept ourselves awake by imposing on each other a continued articulation of words; they must have been incoherent enough! I recall these hours as amongst the most wretched I have ever gone through. We were neither of us in our right senses, and retained a very confused recollection of what preceded our arrival at the tent. We both of us, however, remember a bear who walked leisurely before

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us, and tore up as he went a jumper that Mr. M'Garry had improvidently thrown off the day before. He tore it into shreds and rolled it into a ball, but never offered to interfere with our progress. I remember this, and with it a confused sentiment that our tent and buffalo robe might probably share the same fate." This was a really wonderful example of the almost *intoxicating* and bewildering effect of intense cold, frequently noted by arctic explorers. They were dazed, and walked as in a dream. But they arrived safely at the tent, and by the time the others came up had a good steaming pemmican soup ready. When they again started, Kane tried the effect of brief *three-minute* naps in the snow, the men taking it in turns to wake each other, and he considered the result satisfactory. After many a halt they reached the brig. Two of the men had to undergo amputation of parts of the foot, and two died, in spite of unremitting care. The searching party had been out seventy-two hours, during which they had only rested eight.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### KANE'S EXPEDITION (*continued*).

Arrival of Esquimaux at the Brig—A Treaty  
 Concluded—Hospitality on Board—Arctic  
 Appetites—Sledge Journeys—A Break-down—Morton's  
 Trip—The Open Sea—The Brig hopelessly Beset—A  
 Council Called—Eight Men stand by the  
*Advance*—Departure of the Rest—Their Return—Terrible  
 Sufferings—A Characteristic Entry—Raw Meat for  
 Food—Fruitless Journeys for Fresh Meat—A Scurvied

Crew—Starving Esquimaux—Attempted Desertion—A  
Deserter brought back from the Esquimaux Settlements.

The arrival and visit of a number of Esquimaux at the brig caused some little excitement. They were fine specimens of the race, and evidently inclined for friendship. At first only one of them was admitted on board. His dress is described as a kind of hooded capôte or jumper of mixed blue and white fox-skins arranged with some taste, and booted trousers of white bear-skin, which at the end of the foot were made to terminate with the claws of the animal. Kane soon came to an understanding with this individual, and the rest were admitted to the brig, where they were hospitably treated. When offered, however, good fresh wheaten bread and corned pork, and large lumps of white sugar, they could not be induced to touch them, but much preferred gorging on walrus meat. They were greatly amazed at the coal on board—too hard for blubber, and so unlike wood. They were allowed to sleep in the hold. Next morning a treaty was made whereby they pledged themselves, before departing, to return in a few days with more meat, and to allow Kane to use their dogs and sledges in the proposed excursions.

Kane with a party attempted in the spring of 1854 a journey to the great glacier of Humboldt, from which point he had hoped “to cross the ice to the American side.” They had made some progress when the winter’s scurvy reappeared painfully among the party. The now soft snow made travelling very difficult for both men and dogs; indeed, the former sank to their waists, and the latter were nearly buried. Three of the men were taken with snow blindness; one was utterly, and another partially disabled. Kane was, while taking an observation for latitude, seized with a sudden pain, and fainted. His limbs became rigid, and he had to be strapped on the sledge. On May 5th he became delirious, and fainted every time he was taken from the tent to the sledge. The last man to give in, he owns that on this occasion he succumbed

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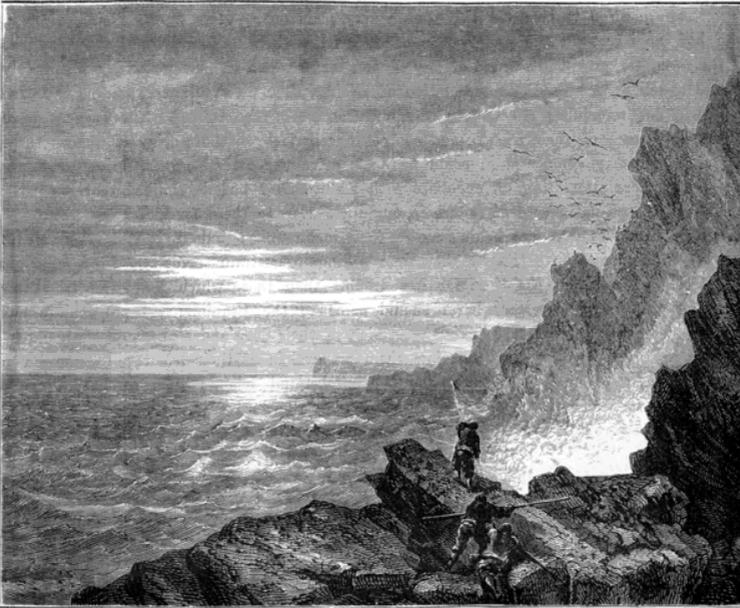
entirely, and that to five brave men—Morton, Riley, Hickey, Stephenson, and Hans—themselves scarcely able to travel, he owed his preservation. They carried him back to the brig by forced marches, and he long lay there in a very critical state. A few days after the return of the party, Schubert, one of the merriest and best liked of the little band, died. Dr. Hayes, the surgeon of the ship, worked zealously in the discharge of his duties, and with the better diet obtained in the summer—fresh seal-meat, reindeer, ptarmigan, and rabbits—the invalids gradually recovered strength, and set about their duties.

The most important sledge journey undertaken at this time was that made by Morton. After travelling a considerable distance, “due north over a solid area choked with bergs and frozen fields, he was startled by the growing weakness of the ice; its surface became rotten, and the snow wet and pulpy. His dogs, seized with terror, refused to advance. Then for the first time the fact broke upon him that a long dark band seen to the north beyond a protruding cape, Cape Andrew Jackson, was water.” He retraced his steps, and leaving Hans and his dogs, passed between Sir John Franklin Island and the narrow beach line, the coast becoming more wall-like and dark masses of porphyritic rock abutting into the sea. With growing difficulty he managed to climb from rock to rock in hopes of doubling the promontory and sighting the coasts beyond, but the water kept encroaching more and more on his track.

“It must have been an imposing sight as he stood at this termination of his journey looking out upon the great waste of waters before him. Not ‘a speck of ice,’ to use his own words, could be seen. There, from a height of 480 feet, which commanded a horizon of almost forty miles, his ears were gladdened with the novel music of dashing waves; and a surf breaking in among the rocks at his feet, stayed his further progress.... The high ridges to the north-west dwindled off into low blue knobs, which blended finally with the air. Morton called

the cape which baffled his labours after his commander, but I have given it the more enduring name of 'Cape Constitution.' I do not believe there was a man among us who did not long for the means of embarking upon its bright and lonely waters. But he who may be content to follow our story for the next few months will feel as we did, that a controlling necessity made the desire a fruitless one."

Morton had undoubtedly seen an open sea, but the water which he described we now know to be simply Kennedy Channel, a continuation of Smith Sound. He had reached a latitude (about  $80^{\circ} 30'$ ) further north than any previous explorer of the Greenland coast.



MORTON DISCOVERS THE OPEN SEA.

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A year and three months had passed since the starting of the expedition, and still the little brig was fast in the ice. The men were, as Kane calls it, "scurvy riddled" and utterly prostrated, their supplies were rapidly becoming exhausted, and Kane determined to hold a council of both officers and crew. At noon of August 26th all hands were called, and the situation fully explained to them, the doctor, however, counselling them to stay by the brig, although he gave them full permission to make any attempt at escape they might deem feasible. Eight out of seventeen resolved to stand by the vessel. Dr. Hayes and eight others determined to make an effort to reach the settlements. Kane divided their remaining resources, and they left on the 28th. One of them, George Riley, returned a few days afterwards, and, three and a half months later, the rest were only too glad to rejoin the vessel, after enduring many sufferings. On December 12th, says Kane, "Brooks awoke me with the cry of 'Esquimaux again!' I dressed hastily, and groping my way over the pile of boxes that leads up from the hold to the darkness above, made out a group of human figures, masked by the hooded jumpers of the natives. They stopped at the gangway, and, as I was about to challenge, one of them sprang forward and grasped my hand. It was Dr. Hayes. A few words, dictated by suffering, certainly not by any anxiety as to his reception, and at his bidding the whole party came upon deck. Poor fellows! I could only grasp their hands, and give them a brother's welcome." The thermometer stood at  $-50^{\circ}$  ( $82^{\circ}$  below freezing); they were covered with rime and snow, and were fainting with hunger. It was necessary to use caution in taking them in to the warm cabin, or it would have prostrated them completely. "Poor fellows," says Kane, "as they threw open their Esquimaux garments by the stove, how they relished the scanty luxuries which we had to offer them! The coffee and the meat biscuit soup, and the molasses and the wheat bread, even the salt pork which our scurvy forbade the rest of us to touch—how they relished it all! For more than two months

they had lived on frozen seal and walrus meat." They were all in danger of collapse, and had long to be nursed very carefully. Dr. Hayes was much prostrated, and three of his frost-bitten toes had to suffer amputation.

Their hope at starting was that they might reach Upernavik, the nearest Danish settlement in Greenland, a distance of about one thousand miles, and that they might, at all events next spring, send succour to the party left behind. Dr. Kane furnished them with such necessaries as could be properly spared, with sledges: they were to take a life-boat previously deposited near Lyttelton Island, and a whale-boat which had been left at the Six-mile Ravine—a spot so called from being that distance from the brig. Before leaving Dr. Kane called them into the cabin, where in some nook or corner of the aft locker the careful steward had stowed a couple of bottles of champagne, the existence of which was only known to the commander and himself. One of these was drawn from its hiding-place, and in broken-handled tea-cups they exchanged mutual pledges.

Their hopes had been to reach open water at about ten miles from the brig, but in this they were entirely disappointed, and they had to drag their boats, sledges, and provisions, over ice so rough and broken, that in one place it took them three days to make six miles. Little wonder if some of them thought of returning almost as soon as they started!

The reader would not thank us were we to record the long series of weary marches over the ice which form the bulk of Dr. Hayes' narrative. Winter was fast approaching, their provisions were nearly exhausted, and it behoved them to erect some place of shelter. A hut was constructed of boulders, a sail doing duty for roof, and a piece of greased linen—part of an old shirt—for window-glass. Like Franklin and Richardson, they tried to eke out their supplies by eating *tripe de roche*, the rock lichen, which, as it most commonly does, produced diarrhœa, and weakened them still more. Esquimaux visitors arrived at

the hut, and brought them some limited supplies of blubber, but declined altogether to sell their dogs or help them to Upernavik. Whether or no Hayes was mistaken, he did not trust much to that innocence and simplicity which are supposed to be the prevailing characteristics of the Esquimaux; and on one or two occasions he seems to have had very good reason for his doubts. Petersen and Godfrey, on the way, during November, to the brig for succour, overheard some natives plotting their destruction, and immediately started from the settlement with their sledge. The Esquimaux followed them with savage cries, but the determined front shown to them seemed to have altered their minds.

“I now,” says Hayes, “repeated to Kalutunah a request which had been made on previous occasions, viz., that his people should take us upon their sledges and carry us northward to the Oomeaksoak. His answer was the same as it had been hitherto. It was then proposed to him and his companions that we should hire from them their teams; but this they also declined to do. No offers which we could make seemed to produce the slightest impression upon them, and it was clear that nothing would induce them to comply with our wishes, nor even give us any reason for their refusal. In fact, they thoroughly understood our situation; and we now entertained no doubt that they had made up their minds, with a unanimity which at an earlier period seemed improbable, to abandon us to our fate and to profit by it.

“The question to be decided became a very plain one. Here were six civilised men, who had no resort for the preservation of their lives, their usefulness, and the happiness of their families, except in the aid of sledges and teams which the savage owners obstinately refused to sell or to hire. The expectation of seizing, after we should have starved or frozen to death, our remaining effects, was the only motive of the refusal. The savages were within easy reach of their friends, and could suffer little by a short delay of their return. For their property compensation could be made after our arrival at the brig. For my own part, before

attempting to negotiate with Kalutunah I had determined that his party should not escape us in case of failure in our application to them for aid.

“My comrades were not behind me in their inclinations; indeed, it is to their credit that in so desperate an extremity they were willing to restrain themselves from measures of a kind to give us at the time far less trouble than those which I suggested. Being unwilling that any unnecessary harm should come to the Esquimaux, I proposed to put them to sleep with opium; then taking possession of their dogs and sledges, to push northward as rapidly as possible, and leaving them to awaken at their leisure; to stop for a few hours of rest among our friends at Northumberland Island; then to make directly for Cape Alexander, with the hope of getting so far the start of Kalutunah and his companions that before they could arrive at Netlik and spread the alarm we should be beyond their reach.

“This plan met with the unanimous sanction of the party, and we prepared to put it into immediate execution. In the way of this were some difficulties. Our guests were manifesting great uneasiness, and a decided disinclination to remain. Many threatening glances and very few kind words had been bestowed upon them, and they were evidently beginning to feel that they were not in a safe place. It became now our first duty to reassure them, and accordingly the angry looks gave place to friendly smiles. The old, familiar habits of our people were resumed. Many presents were given to them. I tore the remaining pictures from my ‘Anatomy,’ and the picture of the poor footsore boy who wanted washing from ‘Copperfield,’ and gave them to Kalutunah for his children. Such pieces of wood as remained to us were distributed amongst them. Each received a comb. This last they had sometimes seen us use, and they proceeded immediately to comb out their matted hair, or rather to attempt that work; but forty years of neglect, blubber, and filth, had so glued their locks together that there was no possibility of getting a comb through

them. The jests excited by these attempts to imitate our practices did more to restore confidence than anything else.

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“At length was reached the climax of our hospitalities. The stew which we had been preparing for our guests was ready and was placed before them, and they were soon greedily devouring it. This proceeding was watched by us with mingled anxiety and satisfaction, for while the pot was over the fire I had turned into it unobserved the contents of a small vial of laudanum. The soup, of course, contained the larger part of the opium, but being small in quantity it had been made so bitter that they would not eat more than the half of it. In order to prevent either of them from getting an over-dose we divided the fluid into three equal portions, and then with intense interest awaited the result, apprehensive that the narcotic had not been administered in sufficiently large quantity to ensure the desired effect.

“After an interval of painful watchfulness on the part of my companions the hunters began to droop their eyelids, and asked to be allowed to lie down and sleep. We were not long in granting their wish, and never before had we manifested more kindly dispositions towards them. We assisted them in taking off their coats and boots, and then wrapped them up in our blankets, about which we were no longer fastidious.

“Our guests were in a few minutes asleep, but I did not know how much of their drowsiness was due to fatigue (for they had been hunting), and how much to the opium; nor were we by any means assured that their sleep was sound, for they exhibited signs of restlessness which greatly alarmed us. Every movement had, therefore, to be conducted with the utmost circumspection.

“To prepare for starting was the work of a few minutes. We were in full travelling dress—coats, boots, and mittens, and some of us wore masks; the hunters’ whips were in our hands, and nothing remained to be done but to get a cup from the shelf. The moment was a critical one, for if the sleepers should awake our scheme must be revealed. Godfrey reached up for the desired

cup, and down came the whole contents of the shelf, rattling to the ground. I saw the sleepers start, and, anticipating the result, instantly sprang to the light and extinguished it with a blow of my mittened hand. As was to be expected, the hunters were aroused. Kalutunah gave a grunt, and inquired what was the matter. I answered him by throwing myself upon the breck, and, crawling to his side, hugged him close, and cried ‘Singikpok’ (sleep). He laughed, muttered something which I could not understand, and, without having suspected that anything was wrong, again fell asleep.” Dr. Hayes and his companions made their escape.

The dogs, however, gave them a great deal of trouble; and they were not surprised when, after a halt for coffee, and to make some necessary repairs, they saw the prisoners left in the snow hut coming after them in full pursuit. There was nothing for it but a determined front. Hayes and his companions got their rifles ready, and on the approach of the natives, levelled them, ready to fire. This brought the Esquimaux to their senses, and with many deprecatory gestures they promised to do all that was asked of them. The affair ended, happily, without bloodshed, and the natives accompanied Hayes to the brig, which he reached safely, as before recorded, after many adventures.

Kane makes the following characteristic entry for January 6th, 1855:—“If this journal ever gets to be inspected by other eyes, the colour of its pages will tell of the atmosphere it is written in. We have been emulating the Esquimaux for some time in everything else; and now, last of all, this intolerable temperature and our want of fuel have driven us to rely on our lamps for heat. Counting those which I have added since the wanderers came back, we have twelve constantly going, with the grease and soot everywhere in proportion. I can hardly keep my charts and registers in anything like decent trim. Our beds and bedding are absolutely black, and our faces begrimed with fatty carbon like the Esquimaux of South Greenland.”

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Still the scurvy kept a number of the men in an unserviceable

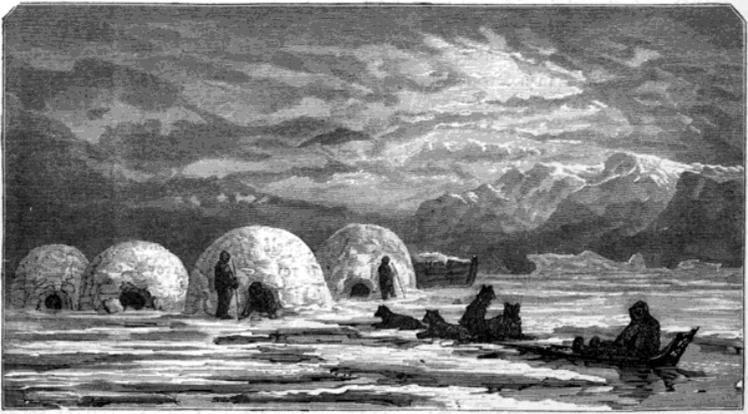


KALUTUNAH.

condition. Some of Kane's remarks on the use of raw meats *à propos* of their value in a medicinal sense, are interesting:—"I do not know," says he, "that my journal anywhere mentions our habituation to raw meats, nor does it dwell upon their strange adaptation to scorbutic disease. Our journeys have taught us the wisdom of the Esquimaux appetite, and there are few amongst us who do not relish a slice of raw blubber or a chunk of frozen walrus-beef. The liver of a walrus (awuktanuk) eaten with little slices of his fat, of a verity it is a delicious morsel! Fire would ruin the curt, pithy expression of vitality which belongs to its uncooked pieces. Charles Lamb's roast pig was nothing to awuktanuk. I wonder that raw beef is not eaten at home. Deprived of extraneous fibre, it is neither indigestible nor difficult to masticate. With acids and condiments it makes a salad which an educated palate cannot help relishing; and as a powerful and condensed heat-making and anti-scorbutic food it has no rival...

"My plans for sledging, simple as I once thought them, and simple certainly as compared with those of the English parties, have completely changed. Give me an eight-pound reindeer-fur bag to sleep in, an Esquimaux lamp with a lump of moss, a sheet-iron snow-melter or a copper soup-pot, with a tin cylinder to slip over it and defend it from the wind, a good *pièce de résistance* of raw walrus-beef, and I want nothing more for a long journey, if the thermometer will keep itself as high as minus 30°. Give me a bear-skin bag, and coffee to boot, and with the clothes on my back I am ready for minus 60°, but no wind. [245]

"The programme runs after this fashion:—Keep the blood in motion, without loitering on the march; and for the halt raise a snow-house; or, if the snow lies scant or impracticable, ensconce yourself in a burrow or under the hospitable lee of an inclined hummock-slab. The outside fat of your walrus sustains your little moss fire; its frozen slices give you bread, its frozen blubber gives you butter, other parts make the soup. The snow supplies



### ESQUIMAUX SNOW HOUSES.

[246] you with water; and when you are ambitious of coffee there is a bagful stowed away in your boot. Spread out your bear-bag, your only heavy movable; stuff your reindeer-bag inside, hang your boots up outside, take a blade of bone and scrape off all the ice from your furs. Now crawl in, the whole party of you, feet foremost, draw the top of your dormitory close headlong to leeward. Fancy yourself in Sybaris, and, if you are only tired enough, you may sleep—like St. Lawrence on his gridiron, or even a trifle better.”

On January 17th Kane sadly admits that the “present state of things cannot last.” They required meat above all things, and he determined to make a sledge journey to the Esquimaux huts at Etah in search of it. The preparations made, he started on the 22nd, Hans Christian being the only available man to accompany him, the rest being nearly all prostrated with scurvy, and some in a most dangerous condition. His journal gives a graphic account of the attempt, which was a failure.

“Washington’s birthday, February 22nd, was, however, a day of better omen. Hans had had a shot—a long shot—at a deer, but

he had wounded him, and the injured animal, they knew, would not run far. Next morning Hans was out early on the trail of the wounded deer. Rhina, the least barbarous of the sledge dogs, assisted him. He was back by noon with the joyful news, 'The tukkuk dead only two miles up big fiord!' The cry found its way through the hatch, and came back in a broken huzza from the sick men.

"We are so badly off for strong arms that our reindeer threatened to be a great embarrassment to us. We had hard work with our dogs carrying him to the brig, and still harder, worn down as we were, in getting him over the ship's side. But we succeeded, and were tumbling him down the hold, when we found ourselves in a dilemma like the Vicar of Wakefield with his family picture. It was impossible to drag the prize into our little moss-lined dormitory; the *tossut* was not half big enough to let him pass; and it was equally impossible to skin him anywhere else without freezing our fingers in the operation.

"It was a happy escape from the embarrassments of our hungry little council to determine that the animal might be carved before skinning as well as he could be afterwards; and, in a very few minutes we proved our united wisdom by a feast on his quartered remains.

"It was a glorious meal, such as the compensations of Providence reserve for starving men alone. We ate, forgetful of the past, and almost heedless of the morrow; cleared away the offal wearily, and now, at 10 P.M., all hands have turned in to sleep, leaving to their commanding officer the solitary honour of an eight hours' vigil.

"The deer was among the largest of all the northern specimens I have seen. He measured five feet one inch in girth, and six feet two inches in length, and stood as large as a two years' heifer. We estimated his weight at three hundred pounds."

But such a happy experience was quite exceptional at this time. Other expeditions to the Esquimaux at this time demonstrated

that they themselves were in a starving condition. On March 20th two of the men attempted to desert, but Kane had learned of their intentions, and confronted them as they were about to leave the vessel. One man, Godfrey, however, did succeed, his intention being apparently to reach the settlement at Etah Bay, and robbing Hans, their hunter, of sledge and dogs, proceed south to Netlik. He afterwards returned to the brig with this very sledge, reporting that Hans was lying sick at Etah, and that he himself intended to settle down among the Esquimaux. Both Bonsall and Kane were at this time hardly able to walk, while the rest, thirteen in all, were down with the scurvy. Shots were fired at him to make him change his mind, but he again escaped, and this circumstance, with Hans' continued absence, naturally caused the commander much anxiety. Kane, though weak and dispirited, determined to go in search of both. The sequel was, that disguising himself as an Esquimaux, he succeeded in deceiving the deserter when he arrived at the village, and handcuffing him made him yield unconditionally; he returned to the brig as a prisoner. Hans, however, had been really ill.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

### KANE'S EXPEDITION (*concluded*).

A Sad Entry—Farewell to the Brig—Departure for the South—Death of Ohlsen—Difficult Travelling—The Open Water—The Esquimaux of Etah—A Terrible Gale—Among the broken Floes—A Greenland Oasis—The Ice Cliff—Eggs by the Hundred—An Anxious Moment—A Savage

Feast—The First Sign of Civilisation—Return to the  
Settlements—Home once more.

Kane had now been two years in the arctic regions, and the day of release, so far at least as their little brig was concerned, seemed as far off as ever. Nearly all the men were invalids, and it took all the doctor's unremitting attention to keep them from utter despondency; others, again, wanted only strength to become mutinous. Kane writes at the beginning of March that his journal "is little else than a chronicle of sufferings." Brooks, his first officer, "as stalwart a man-o'-war's-man as ever faced an enemy," burst into tears when he first saw himself in the glass. On the 4th their last remnant of fresh meat had been doled out, and the region about their harbour ceased to yield any game.

May arrived, and with returning spring, and some supplies obtained from the natives, the crew were so far restored to health that all but three or four could take some part in the preparations for an immediate start to the southward. It had become only too evident that their vessel, now almost dismantled to the water's edge—the woodwork having been needed for fuel—*must* be abandoned. But one month's provisions remained, and they were thirteen hundred miles from the nearest Danish settlement.

The last farewell to the brig was made with some degree of solemnity. It was Sunday. After prayers and a chapter of the Bible had been read, Kane addressed his men, not affecting to disguise from them the difficulties still to be overcome, but reminding them how often an unseen Power had already rescued them from peril. He was met in a right spirit, and a memorial was shortly afterwards brought to him, signed by the whole company, which stated that they entirely concurred in his attempt to reach the south by means of boats, and that they were convinced of the necessity of abandoning the brig. All then went on deck. The flags were hoisted and hauled down again, and the men walked once or twice around the brig, looking at her timbers,

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and exchanging comments upon the scars, which reminded them of every stage of her dismantling. The figure-head—the fair Augusta, the little blue girl with pink cheeks, who had lost her breast by an iceberg and her nose by a nip off Bedevilled Reach—was taken from the bows. “She is at any rate wood,” said the men, when Kane hesitated about giving them the extra burden, “and if we cannot carry her far we can burn her.”

Their boats were three in number, all of them well battered by exposure to ice and storm, almost as destructive of their seaworthiness as the hot sun of other regions. Two of them were cypress whale-boats, twenty-six feet long, with seven feet beam, and three feet deep. These were strengthened with oak bottom-pieces and a long string-piece bolted to the keel. A washboard of light cedar, about six inches high, served to strengthen the gunwale and give increased depth. A neat housing of light canvas was stretched upon a ridge-line sustained fore and aft by stanchions. The third boat was the little *Red Eric*. They mounted her on the old sledge, the *Faith*, hardly relying on her for any purposes of navigation, but with the intention of cutting her up for firewood in case their guns should fail to give them a supply of blubber. Indeed, in spite of all the ingenuity of the carpenter, Mr. Ohlsen, well seconded by the persevering labours of M’Garey and Bonsall, not one of the boats was positively seaworthy. The *Hope* would not pass even charitable inspection, and they expected to burn her on reaching water. The planking of all of them was so dried up that it could hardly be made tight by caulking. The three boats were mounted on the sledges, the provisions stowed snugly under the thwarts; the chronometers, carefully boxed and padded, placed in the stern-sheets of the *Hope*, in charge of Mr. Sontag. With them were such of the instruments as they could venture to transport. Their powder and shot, upon which their lives depended, were carefully distributed in bags and tin canisters.

“There was,” says Kane, “no sign or affectation of spirit or

enthusiasm upon the memorable day when we first adjusted the boats to their cradles on the sledges, and moved them off to the ice-foot. But the ice immediately around the vessel was smooth, and as the boats had not received their lading, the first labour was an easy one. As the runners moved, the gloom of several countenances was perceptibly lightened. The croakers had protested that we could not stir an inch. These cheering remarks always reach a commander's ears, and I took good care, of course, to make the onset contradict them. By the time we reached the end of our little level the tone had improved wonderfully, and we were prepared for the effort of crossing the successive lines of the belt-ice, and forcing a way through the smashed material which interposed between us and the ice-foot.

“This was a work of great difficulty, and sorrowfully exhausting to the poor fellows not yet accustomed to heave together. But in the end I had the satisfaction, before twenty-four hours were over, of seeing our little arks of safety hauled up on the higher plane of the ice-foot, in full time for ornamental exhibition from the brig; their neat canvas housing rigged tent-fashion over the entire length of each; a jaunty little flag, made out of one of the commander's obsolete linen shirts, decorated in stripes from a disused article of stationery—the red-ink bottle—and with a very little of the blue-bag in the star-spangled corner. All hands after this returned on board. I had ready for them the best supper our supplies afforded, and they turned in with minds prepared for their departure next day.

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“They were nearly all of them invalids, unused to open air and exercise. It was necessary to train them very gradually. We made but two miles the first day, and with a single boat; and, indeed, for some time after this I took care that they should not be disheartened by overwork. They came back early to a hearty supper and warm beds, and I had the satisfaction of marching them back each recurring morning refreshed and cheerful. The weather, happily, was superb.”

Repeated sledge journeys back to the brig, and afterwards from station to station, were made, as they could not transport all their goods at one time in their enfeebled state. No one worked harder than did the commander himself. On one of his last visits to the brig, he, with the aid of Morton and an Esquimaux, baked 150 lbs. of bread, and performed other culinary operations for the benefit of the whole party.

Their journey was one of peril and difficulty, and constantly interrupted by gales. The reflection would now and again force itself upon their minds that a single storm might convert the precarious platform on which they travelled into a tumultuous ice-pack. While crossing a weak part of the ice one of their sledge-runners broke through, and but for the presence of mind of Ohlsen, the load, boat and all, would have gone under. He saw the ice give way, and by a violent exercise of strength, passed a capstan-bar under the sledge, and thus bore the load till it was hauled on to safer ice. He was a very powerful man, and might have done this without injuring himself; but it would seem his footing gave way under him, forcing him to make a still more desperate effort to extricate himself. It cost him his life: he died three days afterwards, from the strain on his system.

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But there were times when travelling was not so difficult, and when they could hoist their sails, and run rapidly before the wind over solid ice. It was a new sensation to the men. Levels which, under the slow labour of the drag-rope, would have delayed them for hours, were glided over without a halt, and the speed of the sledges made rotten ice nearly as available as sound. They made more progress in one day in this manner than they had previously in five. The spirits of the men rose; “the sick mounted the thwarts; the well clung to the gunwale; and, for the first time for nearly a year, broke out the sailors’ chorus, ‘Storm along, my hearty boys!’ ”

“Though the condition of the ice assured us,” says Kane, writing several days later, “that we were drawing near the end of

our sledge-journeys, it by no means diminished their difficulty or hazards. The part of the field near the open water is always abraded by the currents, while it remains apparently firm on the surface. In some places it was so transparent that we could even see the gurgling eddies below it; while in others it was worn into open holes that were already the resort of wild fowl. But in general it looked hard and plausible, though not more than a foot or even six inches in thickness.

“This continued to be its character as long as we pursued the Lyttelton Island channel, and we were compelled, the whole way through, to sound ahead with the boat-hook or narwal-horn. We learned this precaution from the Esquimaux, who always move in advance of their sledges when the ice is treacherous, and test its strength before bringing on their teams. Our first warning impressed us with the policy of observing. We were making wide circuits with the whale-boats to avoid the tide-holes, when signals of distress from men scrambling on the ice announced to us that the *Red Eric* had disappeared. This unfortunate little craft contained all the dearly-earned documents of the expedition. There was not a man who did not feel that the reputation of the party rested in a great degree upon their preservation. It had cost us many a pang to give up our collections of natural history, to which every one had contributed his quota of labour and interest; but the destruction of the vouchers of the cruise—the log-books, the meteorological registers, the surveys, and the journals—seemed to strike them all as an irreparable disaster.

“When I reached the boat everything was in confusion. Blake, with a line passed round his waist, was standing up to his knees in sludge, groping for the document-box, and Mr. Bonsall, dripping wet, was endeavouring to haul the provision-bags to a place of safety. Happily the boat was our lightest one, and everything was saved. She was gradually lightened until she could bear a man, and her cargo was then passed out by a line and hauled upon the ice. In spite of the wet and the cold and our thoughts of poor

Ohlsen, we greeted its safety with three cheers.

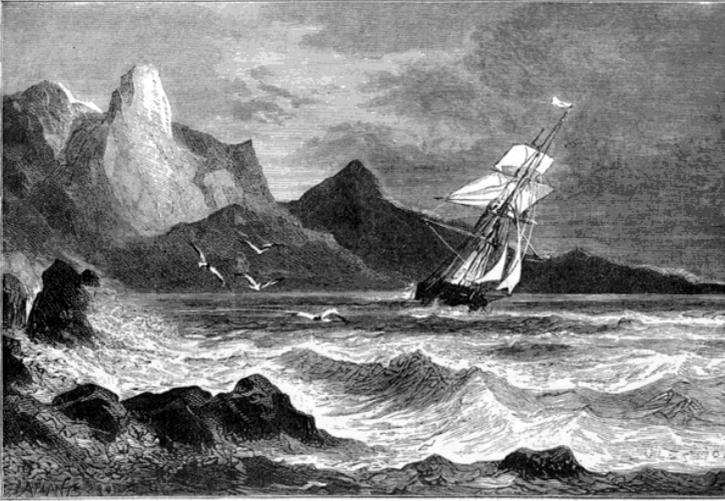
“It was by great good fortune that no lives were lost. Stephenson was caught as he sank by one of the sledge-runners, and Morton while in the very act of drifting under the ice was seized by the hair of the head by Mr. Bonsall, and saved!”

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On June 16th their boats were at the open water. “We see,” says Kane, “its deep indigo horizon, and hear its roar against the icy beach. Its scent is in our nostrils and our hearts.” They had their boats to prepare now for a long and adventurous navigation. They were so small and heavily laden as hardly to justify much confidence in their buoyancy; but, besides this, they were split with frost and warped by sunshine, and fairly open at the seams. They were to be caulked, and swelled, and launched, and stowed, before they could venture to embark in them. A rainy south-wester too, which had met them on arrival, was now spreading with its black nimbus over the sky as if they were to be storm-stayed on the precarious ice-beach. It was a time of anxiety.

Kane writes on July 18th, “The Esquimaux are camped by our side—the whole settlement of Etah congregated around the ‘big caldron’ of Cape Alexander, to bid us good-bye. There are Meteh and Mealik his wife, our old acquaintance Mrs. Eiderduck, and their five children, commencing with Myouk my body-guard, and ending with the ventricose little Accomadah. There is Nessark and Anak his wife; and Tellerk, ‘the right-arm,’ and Amannalik his wife; and Sip-see, and Marsumah, and Aniugnah—and who not? I can name them every one, but they know us as well. We have found brothers in a strange land.”

For many days after leaving their Esquimaux friends they were more or less beset with broken floating ice, and the weather was often extremely bad. Kane describes a gale, during which the boats were nearly swamped. At length they reached a cleft or cave in the cliff, and were shoring up their boat with blocks of ice, when they saw the welcome sight of a flock of eider ducks,

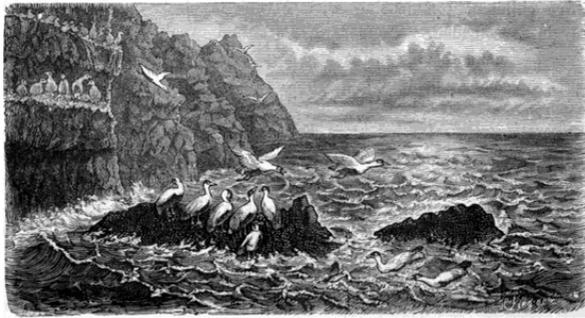


CAPE ALEXANDER, GREENLAND.

and they knew that they were at their breeding grounds.

“We remained almost three days in our crystal retreat, gathering eggs at the rate of 1,200 a day. Outside the storm raged without intermission, and our egg-hunters found it difficult to keep their feet; but a merrier set of gourmands than were gathered within never surfeited in genial diet.” It was the 18th of July before the ice allowed them to depart. In launching the *Hope* she was precipitated into the sludge below, carrying away rail and bulwark, tumbling their best shot-gun into the sea, and, worst of all, their kettle—soup-kettle, paste-kettle, tea-kettle, water-kettle, all in one—was lost overboard. For some days after they made fair progress.

A little later and matters had not improved. The ice was again before them in an almost unbroken mass. “Things grew worse and worse with us,” says Kane; “the old difficulty of breathing came back again, and our feet swelled to such an extent that we



THE HOME OF THE EIDER DUCK.

were obliged to cut open our canvas boots. But the symptom which gave me most uneasiness was our inability to sleep. A form of low fever which hung by us when at work had been kept down by the thoroughness of our daily rest. All my hopes of escape were in the refreshing influences of the halt.

“It must be remembered that we were now in the open bay, in the full line of the great ice-drift to the Atlantic, and in boats so frail and unseaworthy as to require constant baling to keep them afloat.

[252] “It was at this crisis of our fortunes that we saw a large seal floating—as is the custom of these animals—on a small patch of ice, and seemingly asleep. It was an ussuk, and so large that I at first mistook it for a walrus. Signal was made for the *Hope* to follow astern, and, trembling with anxiety, we prepared to crawl down upon him.

“Petersen, with the large English rifle, was stationed in the bow, and stockings were drawn over the oars as mufflers. As we neared the animal our excitement became so intense that the men could hardly keep stroke. I had a set of signals for such occasions, which spared us the noise of the voice; and when about three hundred yards off the oars were taken in, and we moved on in deep silence with a single scull astern.

“He was not asleep, for he reared his head when we were almost within rifle-shot; and to this day I can remember the hard, careworn, almost despairing expression of the men’s thin faces as they saw him move: their lives depended on his capture.

“I depressed my hand nervously, as a signal for Petersen to fire. M’Gary hung upon his oar, and the boat, slowly but noiselessly sagging ahead, seemed to me within certain range. Looking at Petersen, I saw that the poor fellow was paralysed by his anxiety, trying vainly to obtain a rest for his gun against the cut-water of the boat. The seal rose on his fore-flippers, gazed at us for a moment with frightened curiosity, and coiled himself for a plunge. At that instant, simultaneously with the crack of our rifle, he relaxed his long length on the ice, and, at the very brink of the water, his head fell helpless to one side.

“I would have ordered another shot, but no discipline could have controlled the men. With a wild yell, each vociferating according to his own impulse, they urged both boats upon the floes. A crowd of hands seized the seal, and bore him up to safer ice. The men seemed half crazy: I had not realised how much we were reduced by absolute famine. They ran over the floe, crying and laughing, and brandishing their knives. It was not five minutes before each man was sucking his bloody fingers, or mouthing long strips of raw blubber.

“Not an ounce of this seal was lost. The intestines found their way into the soup-kettles without any observance of the preliminary home processes. The cartilaginous parts of the fore-flippers were cut off in the *mêlée* and passed round to be chewed upon; and even the liver, warm and raw as it was, bade fair to be eaten before it had seen the pot. That night, on the large halting-floe, to which, in contempt of the dangers of drifting, we happy men had hauled our boats, two entire planks of the *Red Eric* were devoted to a grand cooking-fire, and we enjoyed a rare and savage feast... [253]

“Two days after this a mist had settled down upon the islands

which embayed us, and when it lifted we found ourselves rowing in lazy time, under the shadow of Karkamoot. Just then a familiar sound came to us over the water. We had often listened to the screeching of the gulls or the bark of the fox, and mistaken it for the ‘Huk’ of the Esquimaux; but this had about it an inflection not to be mistaken, for it died away in the familiar cadence of a ‘halloo.’

“‘Listen, Petersen! oars, men!’ ‘What is it?’—and he listened quietly at first, and then, trembling, said, in a half whisper, ‘Dannemarkers!’

“I remember this the first tone of Christian voice which had greeted our return to the world. How we all stood up and peered into the distant nook; and how the cry came to us again, just as, having seen nothing, we were doubting whether the whole was not a dream; and then how, with long sweeps, the white ash cracking under the spring of the rowers, we stood for the cape that the sound proceeded from, and how nervously we scanned the green spots, which our experience, grown now into instinct, told us would be the likely camping-ground of wayfarers!

“By-and-by—for we must have been pulling for a good half-hour—the single mast of a small shallop showed itself; and Petersen, who had been very quiet and grave, burst out into an incoherent fit of crying, only relieved by broken exclamations of mingled Danish and English. ‘’Tis the Upernavik oil-boat, the *Fraulein Flaischer*! Carlie Mossyn, the assistant cooper, must be on his road to Kingatok for blubber. The *Mariane* (the one annual ship) has come, and Carlie Mossyn’—and here he did it all over again, gulping down his words and wringing his hands.

“It was Carlie Mossyn, sure enough. The quiet routine of a Danish settlement is the same year after year, and Petersen had hit upon the exact state of things. The *Mariane* was at Proven, and Carlie Mossyn had come up in the *Fraulein Flaischer* to get the year’s supply of blubber from Kingatok.

“Here we first got our cloudy vague idea of what had passed

in the world during our absence. The friction of its fierce rotation has not much disturbed this little outpost of civilisation, and we thought it a sort of blunder as he told us that France and England were leagued with the Mussulman against the Greek Church. He was a good Lutheran, this assistant cooper, and all news with him had a theological complexion.

“‘What of America? eh, Petersen?’—and we all looked, waiting for him to interpret the answer.

“‘America?’ said Carlie; ‘we don’t know much of that country here, for they have no whalers on the coast; but a steamer and a barque passed up a fortnight ago, and have gone out into the ice to seek your party.’

“How gently all the lore of this man oozed out of him! he seemed an oracle, as, with hot tingling fingers pressed against the gunwale of the boat, we listened to his words. ‘Sebastopol aint taken.’ Where and what was Sebastopol?

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“But ‘Sir John Franklin?’ There we were at home again—our own delusive little speciality rose uppermost. Franklin’s party, or traces of the dead which represented it, had been found nearly a thousand miles to the south of where we had been searching for them. He knew it; for the priest (Pastor Kraag) had a German newspaper which told all about it. And so we ‘out oars’ again, and rowed into the fogs.

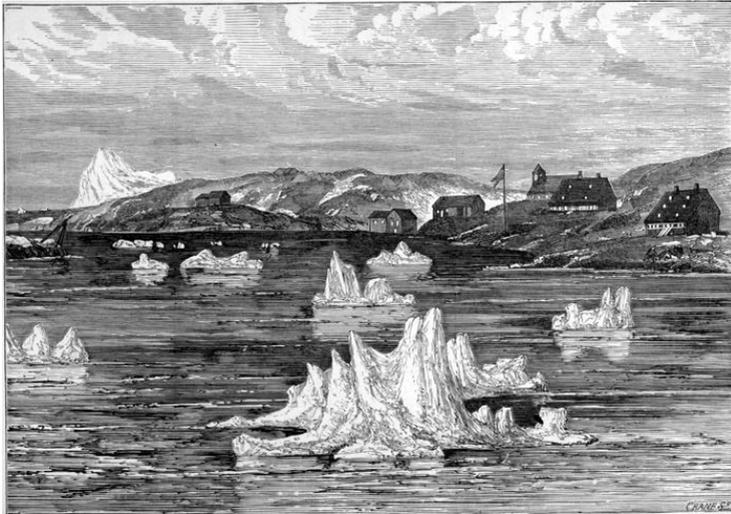
“Another sleeping halt was passed, and we have all washed clean at the fresh-water basins, and furbished up our ragged furs and woollens. Kasarsoak, the snow top of Sanderson’s *Hope*, shows itself above the mists, and we hear the yelling of the dogs. Petersen had been foreman of the settlement, and he calls my attention, with a sort of pride, to the tolling of the workmen’s bell. It is six o’clock. We are nearing the end of our trials. Can it be a dream?

“We hugged the land by the big harbour, turned the corner by the brewhouse, and, in the midst of a crowd of children, hauled our boats for the last time upon the rocks.

“For eighty-four days we had lived in the open air. Our habits were hard and weatherworn. We could not remain within the four walls of a house without a distressing sense of suffocation. But we drank coffee that night before many a hospitable threshold, and listened again and again to the hymn of welcome, which, sung by many voices, greeted our deliverance.” They had been eighty-four days on the trip.

Kane and his party received all manner of kindness from the Danes of Upernavik. After stopping there nearly a month, and recruiting their health, they left for Godhavn on a Danish vessel, the captain of which had engaged to drop them at the Shetland Islands, should no other or better opportunity occur. Just as they were leaving Godhavn, however, the look-out man at the hill-top announced a steamer in the distance. It drew near, with a barque in tow, and they soon recognised the stars and stripes of their own country. All the boats of the settlement put out to her. “Presently,” says the interesting narrative we have followed, “we were alongside. An officer whom I shall ever remember as a cherished friend, Captain Hartstene, hailed a little man in a ragged flannel shirt, ‘Is that Dr. Kane?’ and with the ‘Yes!’ that followed the rigging was manned by our countrymen, and cheers welcomed us back to the social world of love which they represented.” This U.S. man-of-war which had been sent especially to search for them, had been several weeks among the northward ice before they returned, so fortunately, to Godhavn. A few weeks later Kane was being honoured as only Americans honour those whom they highly esteem. Later, in many ways, he received the fullest recognition in our own country. It is sad to know that he, who had laboured so hard for the welfare of his men, and not merely for science or personal ambition, was the first to pass away. His slight frame could not stand the many drafts which had been put on its endurance, and scarcely fourteen months elapsed from the period of his return till the sad news of his death shocked not merely the world of science but a world of

friends, many of whom had never known him in the flesh, but who, from his writings and good report, had learned to love him.



GODHAVN, A DANISH SETTLEMENT IN DISCO ISLAND,  
GREENLAND.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

HAYES' EXPEDITION—SWEDISH EXPEDITIONS.

Voyage of the *United States*—High Latitude attained—In  
 Winter Quarters—Hardships of the Voyage—The dreary  
 Arctic Landscape—Open Water once more—1,300 Miles of  
 Ice traversed—Swedish Expeditions—Perilous Position of  
 the *Sofia*.

It will be remembered that Dr. Hayes was associated with Dr. Kane at the period when Morton discovered that open water which seemed to many scientific men of the day positive proof of the existence of an “open polar sea.” Dr. Hayes was an evident believer in the theory, and his enthusiastic advocacy of it induced many in the United States to come forward and lend material aid towards the solution of the problem. A private subscription, to which that worthy New Yorker Mr. Grinnell, who had already done so much to further Arctic exploration, contributed largely, enabled Dr. Hayes to purchase and fit a schooner—the *United States*—for the arduous work in which she was to be engaged. The vessel was of no great size, merely some 130 tons burden, but was considerably strengthened and suitably provided for her coming struggle with the ice. The expedition, which numbered only fourteen persons all told, left Boston on July 6th, 1860.

Hayes’ idea at starting was to proceed *viâ* Smith Sound and Kennedy Channel as far north as might be; then to winter on the Greenland coast, and attempt to reach with sledges the northern water. Dangers, the description of which would be but a recapitulation of previous accounts recorded in these pages, were passed successfully, and eventually he laid up the vessel in Port Foulke, where the winter was passed in comparative ease. In the months of April and May, 1861, he made an important exploration, at the end of which he had the pleasure of reaching a point north of that attained by Morton. The journey was one of the very greatest peril. Gales, fogs, and drifting snows; hummocks and broken ice; opening seams and pools of water—such were a few of the dangers and difficulties encountered. Some of

the men succumbed utterly, and had to be sent back to the schooner: it occupied the doctor and his companions a clear month to cross Smith Sound. In Kennedy Channel the ice was becoming rotten and full of water-holes, and through the soft and now melting snow they travelled with the greatest difficulty. The dreariness and desolation of an Arctic landscape are well described by Hayes. "As the eye wandered from peak to peak of the mountains as they rose one above the other, and rested upon the dark and frost-degraded cliffs, and followed along the ice-foot and overlooked the sea, and saw in every object the silent forces of Nature moving on—through the gloom of winter and the sparkle of summer—now, as they had moved for countless ages, unobserved but by the eye of God alone—I felt how puny indeed are all men's works and efforts; and when I sought for some token of living thing, some track of wild beast—a fox, or bear, or reindeer, which had elsewhere always crossed me in my journeyings—and saw nothing but two feeble men and struggling dogs, it seemed indeed as if the Almighty had frowned upon the hills and seas." Still they pushed on, till the old ice came suddenly to an end, and the unerring instinct of the dogs warned them of approaching danger. They were observed for some time to be moving with unusual caution, and at last they scattered right and left, and refused to proceed. Hayes walked on ahead, and soon came to the conclusion that they must retrace their steps, for his staff gave way on the ice. After camping, and enjoying a refreshing sleep, he climbed a steep hill-side to the summit of a rugged cliff, about 800 feet above the sea level, from which he soon understood the cause of their arrested progress. "The ice was everywhere in the same condition as in the mouth of the bay across which I had endeavoured to pass. A broad crack, starting from the middle of the bay, stretched over the sea, and uniting with other cracks as it meandered to the eastward, it expanded as the delta of some mighty river discharging into the ocean, and under a water-sky, which hung upon the northern and

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eastern horizon, it was lost in the open sea.



#### THE SCHOONER "UNITED STATES" AT PORT FOULKE.

“Standing against the dark sky at the north, there was seen in dim outline the white sloping summit of a noble headland, the most northern known land upon the globe. I judged it to be in the latitude of  $82^{\circ} 30'$ , or 450 miles from the North Pole. Nearer, another bold cape stood forth, and nearer still the headland, for which I had been steering my course the day before, rose majestically from the sea, as if pushing up into the very skies, a lofty mountain peak, upon which the winter had dropped its diadem of snows. There was no land visible except the coast upon which I stood.

“The sea beneath me was a mottled sheet of white and dark patches, these latter being either soft decaying ice, or places where the ice had wholly disappeared. These spots were heightened in intensity of shade and multiplied in size as they receded, until the

belt of the water-sky blended them all together into one uniform colour of dark blue. The old and solid floes (some a quarter of a mile, and others miles across) and the massive ridges and wastes of hummocked ice which lay piled between them and around their margins, were the only parts of the sea which retained the whiteness and solidity of winter.” [257]

Hayes returned from this expedition firmly convinced that he had stood upon the shores of the Polar basin. The arguments have been before indicated for and against this theory, but they are certainly not conclusive. The journey had been one of a most arduous nature; and more than 1,300 miles of ice had been traversed before he regained the schooner. On his return to the United States shortly afterwards, at the climax of the great American war, Hayes immediately volunteered in the Northern army, a pretty decided proof of the energy and bravery of the man.

Between the years 1858 and 1872 Sweden sent out five expeditions to the Arctic, the results of which were important in many directions, although no geographical discoveries of great mark were made. The first was provided at the expense of Otto Torell, a gentleman of means, and who has deservedly earned a high scientific reputation. The expenses of the others were defrayed partly by private subscription and partly by Government aid. The whole of them were under the direction of Professor Nordenskjöld, and a very decided addition to our knowledge of Spitzbergen has been the result. The Swedes reached a latitude of  $81^{\circ} 42'$  N. during the 1868 voyage. An attempt to pass northward from the Seven Isles is thus described by the Professor:—

“Northward lay vast ice masses, it is true as yet broken, but still so closely packed that not even a boat could pass forward, and we were therefore obliged to turn to the south-west and seek for another opening in the ice; but we found on the contrary, that the limit of the ice stretched itself more and more to the

south.... On the way we had in several places met with ice black with stones, gravel, and earth, which would seem to indicate the existence of land still farther north.

“The ice itself had, moreover, a very different appearance from that which we had met in these tracts at the end of August. It consisted now, not only of larger ice-fields, but also of huge ice-blocks.... Already, in the beginning of September, the surface of the ocean, after a somewhat heavy fall of snow, had shown itself between the ice masses, covered with a coating of ice, which, however, was then thin, and scarcely hindered the vessel’s progress. Now it was so thick that it was not without difficulty that a way could be forced through it.” On October the 4th, during the prevalence of a gale and heavy sea, their ship, the *Sofia*, was thrown bodily upon an iceberg, and commenced to leak so badly that when they reached Amsterdam Island, and after eleven hours of incessant work at the pumps, the water stood two feet above the cabin floor. The engine-room, thanks to water-tight bulkheads, was with great difficulty kept so free from water that the fires were not extinguished. Had this not been the case, the ship must have become a prey to the raging elements. At Amsterdam Island the vessel was careened, and the leak provisionally stopped, so that they were able a little later to proceed to a more secure harbour, King’s Bay, where they hauled close to the land, and at ebb tide succeeded in making the ship water-tight. Two ribs were broken by the shock which caused the leak, and an immediate return home was their only safe course. The description, however, gives some idea of the dangers of Arctic ice navigation.

## THE SECOND GERMAN EXPEDITION.

The First German Expedition—Preparations for a  
 Second—Building of the *Germania*—The *Hansa*—The  
 Emperor William's Interest in the Voyage—The Scientific  
 Corps—Departure from Bremerhaven—Neptune at the  
 Arctic Circle—The Vessels Separated among the Ice—Sport  
 with Polar Bears—Wedged in by the Grinding  
 Ice—Preparations to Winter on the Floe—The *Hansa* lifted  
 Seventeen Feet out of the Water—A Doomed  
 Vessel—Wreck of the *Hansa*.

On the 24th of October, 1868, a number of gentlemen were assembled round a festive board in Bremen to celebrate the happy return of the first German expedition, under Captain Karl Koldewey. Among the guests was Dr. A. Petermann, the eminent geographer, to whose exertions in great part the inauguration of the expedition had been due. Its object had been to reach as near the North Pole as might be, the route selected being that between Greenland and Spitzbergen. Baffled by an icy barrier off the South Cape of Spitzbergen, at which time a terrific storm was raging, he had steered to the eastward, passing among clusters of icebergs, some of which were taller than his vessel's masts. After passing safely through many perils, he returned to the South Cape, and coasted Spitzbergen to the north-west; later he had endeavoured to make the ice-girt shores of East Greenland, but not succeeding, again returned to Spitzbergen, and after sundry explorations, turned his vessel's head towards home.

It was at the banquet above-mentioned that expression was first given to the idea of a second expedition to the inhospitable regions of the far North. There had been some slight surplus of funds left from the first expedition, and it was determined to make an appeal to German liberality to complete a sum sufficient to build a steamer specially adapted for Arctic waters.

Committees were formed in Berlin, Munich, Bremen, Hamburg, and numerous other cities, and the result in the end was very satisfactory. The *Germania*, a steamer of 143 tons burden, was laid on the stocks at Bremerhaven on March 10th, 1869, and thirty-six days afterwards was launched. She was about the average size of a Brazilian or West Indian fruit or coffee schooner, ninety feet long, twenty-two and a half feet broad, and eleven feet deep. Although, therefore, an extremely small steamer, she had been built in the strongest manner, with extra beams, thick iron sheathing, and every other improvement which might render her comparatively safe in the ice. Her sharp build proved subsequently of great advantage to her when sailing. Including the machinery and ship's fittings, the *Germania* cost £3,150. A second vessel, the purchase-money for which had been guaranteed by some Bremen merchants, although eventually the subscriptions released them, was a Prussian schooner of  $76\frac{3}{4}$  tons burden, which was re-christened the *Hansa*, and was meant to be, in some sense, a tender to the *Germania*, although fate eventually decreed otherwise. Great care was taken with the victualling and equipment of the ships; but little salt or dried meat was taken. Many presents of "the good Rhine wine" and other luxuries, as well as books, instruments, and other kindly remembrances, came in from friends of the expedition.

The officers and scientific members of the expedition counted among their number several men who had previously or have since become famous. The commander of the whole was Captain Koldewey, a Hanoverian, who had long been a sailor, and who, to fit himself for his new duties, temporarily gave up his profession, in the winters of 1867-8 and 1868-9, to study physics and astronomy at the University of Gottingen. With him were associated Dr. Karl N. J. Borgen, and Dr. R. Copeland, an Englishman, who were conjointly to take scientific observations, &c.; also Julius Payer, a lieutenant in the Imperial Austrian army, on leave. The latter, in particular, joined the expedition with

a considerable amount of prestige, derived from an active life spent in the cause of science. Although only twenty-seven years old, he had made and recorded many expeditions in the Alps, and in the mountainous districts of Austria. He had also taken an active part in 1866 in the Italian war. Lastly, to Dr. Adolphus Pansch, surgeon of the *Germania*, were assigned the departments of zoology, botany, and ethnology. Nearly all of the above had earned their laurels in the scientific literature of Germany. The captain of the *Hansa* was Paul Friedrich August Hegemann, an experienced navigator; with him were associated two scientific gentlemen, Dr. Bucholz and Dr. Gustavus Laube.

On May 28th, 1869, Captain Koldewey had an audience of his Majesty King William, at Babelsberg, who expressed his gratification at having secured the services of a leader so energetic. The departure of the expedition took place from Bremerhaven on the 15th of June following, in the presence of the King, his Royal Highness the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg Schwerin, Count (now Prince) Bismarck, General von Moltke, and other distinguished men. The King heartily shook the hands of the commander and his scientific corps, and inspected the vessels with much satisfaction. The parting moment at length arrived, and amid the salutes of artillery and hearty cheers from the crowds ashore, the vessels made for the mouth of the Weser, and put to sea.

The first part of the voyage was not specially eventful. The vessels several times parted company, but rejoined afterwards. The dense fogs which infest those latitudes were the cause of much anxiety on the part of the commanders. On July the 4th Dr. Copeland shot a gull, which fell in the sea, and was nearly the cause of a serious disaster. A sailor, without undressing, jumped overboard after it, and the vessel sailing rapidly was soon a considerable distance from him. He was almost on the point of sinking, when a boat, which had been hastily launched, reached him, and he was drawn out of the water. "Like a

drowned poodle,” says the narrative, “the sinner stood once more amongst us, receiving as a reward a sound lecture from the captain, followed by a good draught of brandy.” On July the 5th they passed the Arctic circle ( $66^{\circ} 33'$ ), the *Hansa* being the first in the race, and the first to unfurl the North German flag. “Conformably to the custom,” says Koldewey, “as on crossing the equator, Neptune came on board to welcome us, and wish us success on our voyage; of course not without all those who had not yet crossed the Arctic circle having to undergo the rather rough shaving and christening customary on such occasions.... Universal grog and good fellowship on board both ships brought the ceremony to a close.”

After a separation of many days the vessels again joined on July 18th. A prize of a bottle of wine had been offered on board the *Germania* to the individual who should first sight the *Hansa*. Soon after breakfast on that day a sail is discovered from the topmast. It is a schooner, and as the whale fishers do not use such craft it must be the *Hansa*! A little later, and by getting up steam on board the larger vessel, they rejoined, and the officers met and compared notes. They parted that evening full of confident hopes for the future. Little did they think that the vessels would never meet again, and that although as comrades they *would* meet, a fourteen months' interval must elapse! By the misunderstanding of a signal the *Hansa* set all sail and parted company when off the east coast of Greenland in lat.  $70^{\circ} 46'$  N., long.  $10^{\circ} 51'$  W., and soon became entangled in the ice, while they looked in vain from the “crow's nest” for an opening. We shall now follow the fortunes of the *Hansa*.

That vessel was soon inextricably wedged in the ice. The coast of East Greenland was often in sight, and several unsuccessful attempts were made to reach it. During this period they had some sport with the polar bears. On September 12th a she bear and cub approached the vessel, the former being speedily shot. The young one was caught, escaped again, and at last was brought

back swimming, and was chained to the ice-anchor. It was very much frightened, but nevertheless devoured its mother's flesh when it was thrown to it. The men built it a snow house, and offered it a couch of shavings, but young Bruin, as a genuine inhabitant of the Arctic seas, despised such luxuries, and made its bed in the snow. Some days later it had disappeared, together with the chain, which must have become loosened from the anchor. From the weight of the iron alone the poor creature must soon have sunk. Other Arctic guests visited the *Hansa*. With a brisk wind came two white foxes from the coast, a certain proof that the ice must extend thither.

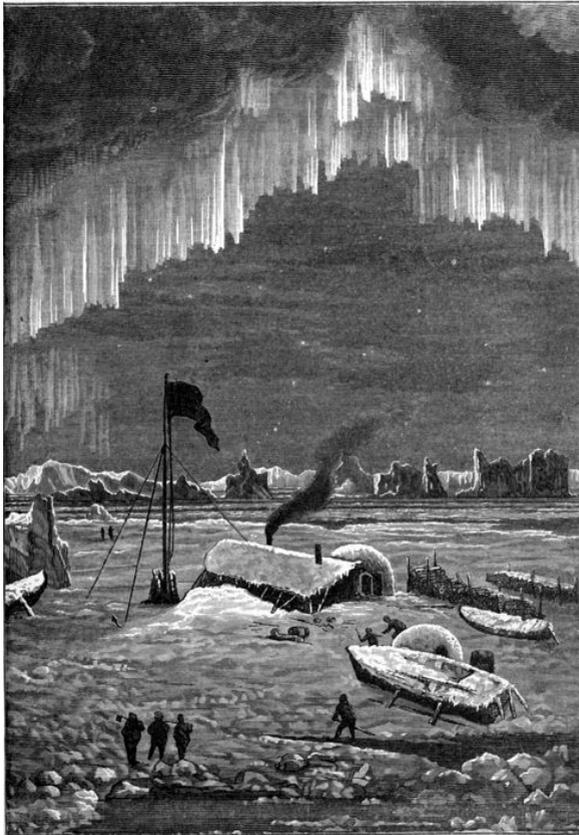


A YOUNG BEAR CHAINED TO AN ANCHOR.

Towards the end of September the necessity of wintering on the floating ice off the coast was decided upon, and they resolved on the erection of a winter house. Bricks were ready in the shape of "coal-tiles," while water or snow was to form the mortar. Before anything else was done, the boats were cleaned out, covered with a roofing, and provisions placed ready for them in case of emergency. Captain Hegemann sketched the plan for

the building, which was to have an area of 20 × 14 feet, with low roof. Wall-building has to be given up in frosty weather on land, not so on the ice. Finely-powdered snow was strewn between the interstices, and water poured upon it, which in ten minutes became solid ice-mortar. The roof was at first composed of sail-cloth and matting. Meantime the ice was grinding and surging around them, and threatening to crush the vessel at any moment. Underneath the ice-field it groaned and cracked, “now sounding like the banging of doors, now like many human voices raised one against the other, and lastly like the drag on the wheel of a railway engine.” The apparent cause was that the drifting ice was pressing in upon the fixed coast ice. Meantime the *Hansa* quivered in every beam, and the masts swayed to and fro. Provisions and stores were moved to the house in case of sudden disaster.

On the morning of the 19th a NNW. gale with snow-storm foreboded mischief. The air was gloomy and thick, and the coast four miles off could not be seen. The ice came pressing upon the vessel, and before noon the position became serious. The piled-up masses of “young ice,” four feet thick, pressed heavily on the outer side, and the vessel became tilted upwards at the bows. The men took their meals on deck, not knowing what might happen next. “Soon,” says the narrator, “some mighty blocks of ice pushed themselves under the bow of the vessel, and although they were crushed by it, they forced it up, slowly at first, then quicker, until it was raised seventeen feet out of its former position upon the ice. This movement we tried to ease as much as possible by shovelling away the ice and snow from the larboard side. The rising of the ship was an extraordinary and awful, yet splendid spectacle, of which the whole crew were witnesses from the ice. In all haste the clothing, nautical instruments, journals and cards [the translator means charts] were taken over the landing-bridge. The after part of the ship, unfortunately, would not rise, and therefore the stern-post had to



THE HOUSE OF THE *HANSA* ON THE ICE.

bear the most frightful pressure, and the conviction that the ship must soon break up forced itself upon our minds.” At the end of the afternoon the ice retreated, and the vessel was once more again in her native element. The pumps were set to work, and it was soon made clear that all their exertions would not save the schooner, for the water steadily gained upon them. The fate of the *Hansa* was sealed, and the coal-house on the ice was destined to be their only refuge, may-be their grave.

The work of removing everything available went on steadily. A snow-storm had raged during the day, but it cleared in the evening; the moon shed her cold light over the dreary ice-fields, and ever and anon the Northern lights flashed over them in many changing colours. The men, whether at the pumps, or engaged in removing the stores, had a hard time of it. The decks were thick with ice, and those at the pumps stood in tubs to keep dry and warm. Night allowed the crew some few hours of welcome rest, and at early dawn all set to work again. “But the catastrophe was near; at 8 A.M. the men who were busy in the fore-peak, getting out firewood, came with anxious faces, with the news that the wood was already floating below. When the captain had ascertained the truth of this intelligence, he ordered the pumping to cease. It was evident that the ship was sinking, and that it must be abandoned.

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“The first thing to be done was to bring all necessary and useful things from the ’tween decks on to the ice—bedding, clothing, more provisions, and coal. Silently were all the heavy chests and barrels pushed over the hatchway. First comes the weighty iron galley, then the two stoves are happily hoisted over; their possession ensures us the enjoyment of warm food, the heating of our coal-house, and other matters indispensable for a wintering on the floe. At three o’clock the water in the cabin had reached the table, and all movable articles were floating. The fear that we should not have enough fuel made us grasp at every loose piece of wood and throw it on to the ice. The sinking of

the vessel was now almost imperceptible; it must have found support on a tongue of ice or some promontory of our field. There was still a small medicine-chest and a few other things which, in our future position, would be great treasures—such as the cabin-lamp, books, cigars, boxes of games, &c. The snow-roof, too, and the sails were brought on to the ice; but still all necessary work was not yet accomplished. Round about the ship lay a chaotic mass of heterogeneous articles, and groups of feeble rats struggling with death, and trembling with the cold! All articles, for greater safety, must be conveyed over a fissure to about thirty paces farther inland. The galley we at once took on a sledge to the house, as we should want it to give us warm coffee in the evening. We then looked after the sailor Max Schmidt, who was suffering from frost-bite, and brought him on planks under the fur covering to the coal-house. By 9 A.M. all were in the new asylum, which was lit by the cabin-lamp, and looked like a dreary tomb. Pleased with the completion of our heavy day's work, though full of trouble for the future, we prepared our couch. A number of planks were laid upon the ground, and sail-cloth spread over them. Upon these we lay down, rolled in our furs. A man remained to watch the stove, as the temperature in the room had risen from 2° Fahr. to 27½° Fahr. It was a hard, cold bed; but sleep soon fell upon our weary, over-worked limbs. On the morning of the 21st we went again to the ship to get more fuel. The coal-hole was, however, under water. We therefore chopped down the masts, and hauled them with the whole of the tackle on to the ice—a work which took us nearly the whole day. At eleven the foremast fell, at three the mainmast followed; and now the *Hansa* really looked a complete, comfortless wreck. For the last time the captain and steersman went on deck, and about six o'clock loosed the ropes, which, by means of the ice-anchor held the ship to the field, as we feared that our floe, which bore all our treasures, might break." The scientific collections and photographs had to be utterly abandoned. On the night of the

21st and 22nd the wreck sank, about six miles from the coast of Greenland. The jolly-boat, which stood loose on deck, floated, and was drawn on the ice.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### ON AN ICE-RAFT.

A Floating Ice-Raft—The Settlement—Christmas in a New Position—Terrible Storms—Commotion under the Ice—The Floe breaks up—House Ruined—Water on the Floe—A Spectre Iceberg—Fresh Dangers and Deliverances—Drifted 1,100 Miles—Resolution to Leave the Ice—Open Water—Ice again—Tedious Progress—Reach Illuidlek Island—Welcome at the Greenland Settlements—Home in Germany—Voyage of the *Germania*—Discovery of Coal—A New Inlet—Home to Bremen.

Slowly but steadily their ice-field drifted to the south, and by November 3rd they had reached Scoresby's Sound, sometimes being near the coasts and sometimes far from them. Since the ship had sunk, fourteen days before, the ice had closed in upon them, and even the blocks which had broken away from their field had frozen to it again. Their floating ice-raft was by degrees investigated in every quarter, roads cleared, and marks set up for short tours. The mass of ice was at this time about seven nautical miles in circumference, and seemed to have a diameter in all directions of over two miles. The ice-raft, on which (as

Dr. Laube aptly remarked) they “were as the Lord’s passengers,” had an average thickness above the water of five feet, and they considered that there was a submergence of forty feet. “Our settlement,” says the narrative, “at the beginning of November, when we were not yet snowed up, might be seen from the most distant points of our field. Near the chief building lay two snow-houses, which served for washing and drying ourselves. Boats, heaps of wood, barrels containing coal and bacon, surrounded this heart of our colony. To prevent the entrance of the snow and wind into our coal-house, we built an entrance-hall with a winding path, and a roof constructed in the same way as that of the house.”

In November, upon a neighbouring floe, separated from them by a small interval of freshly-frozen water, they saw the shapeless body of a large walrus lying motionless as a rock. As soon as the boat could be launched several of them went in pursuit, and with a needle-gun succeeded in killing it, although in its dying struggles it tried furiously to smash the young ice on which the hunters stood, and seize them when once in the water. It took ten men with a powerful pulley several hours before they succeeded in getting the walrus out of the water on to the ice. Late that same evening a white bear, the first of their winter’s campaign, was attracted to the house by the smell of the walrus fat. Three shots greeted him, the effect of which could not be seen until the following morning. “About 100 yards distant lay the bear, hit in the head by the bullet, as if asleep, though quite dead, on the snow. It was a fine handsome beast; its well-developed head lay upon its front paws; the red drops of blood stood sharply out against the clean white snow.” It was a gift from heaven to them in their position. The four hams weighed 200 pounds.

The shortest day was passed, and still they were safe. They determined that, whether or no fated to see another Christmas, they would celebrate the present one. “In the afternoon,” says the narrative, “whilst we went for a walk, the steersman put up the

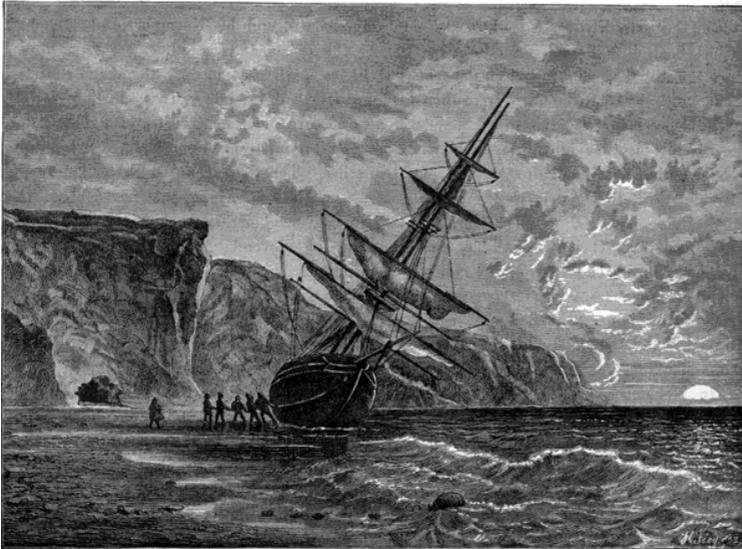
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Christmas-tree, and on our return the lonely coal-hut shone with wonderful brightness. Keeping Christmas on a Greenland floe! Made of pinewood and birch-broom, the tree was artistically put together. For the lights, Dr. Laube had saved some wax candles. Paper chains and home-baked gingerbread were not wanting. The men had made a knapsack and a revolver case for the captain; we opened the leaden box from Professor Hochstetter, and the other from the Geological Reichsanstalt, which caused much merriment. Then we had a glass of port wine, and fell upon the old newspapers in the boxes, and distributed the gifts, which consisted of small musical instruments, such as whistles, jew's-harps, and trumpets, also little puppets and games of roulette, cracker bonbons, &c. In the evening chocolate and gingerbread nuts. 'In quiet devotion' (says Dr. Laube in his day-book) 'the festival passed by; the thoughts which passed through our minds (they were much alike with all), I will not put down. If this should be the last Christmas we were to see it was at least bright enough. If, however, we are destined for a happy return home the next will be a brighter one. May God grant it!' "

Early next morning they were awakened by a shout from the watch. They were apparently drifting to land! An island seemed to be straight ahead of them. Amid great alarm, all turned out. The air was thick, but about three miles off they could distinguish a dark mass, which looked like an island. It proved to be an enormous iceberg. Next day they passed the drifting mass, which moved much slower than their field.

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On January 2nd a frightful storm arose, with driving snow. Alarming noises were heard under the ice. "It was a scraping, blustering, crackling, sawing, grating, and jarring sound, as if some unhappy ghost was wandering under our floe." Perplexed, they all jumped out, but could detect no change. They lay down, and applying their ears to the floor, could hear a rustling like the singing of ice when closely jammed, and as if water were running under the floe. They felt that there was great danger



THE SUN AT MIDNIGHT IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS.

of a break-up, either from being driven over sunken rocks or against the fixed ice of the coast, or, may-be, both at once, and they packed their furs and filled their knapsacks with provisions. Ropes from the house were fastened to the boats, so that in case of a catastrophe they might be able to reach them. But the driving snow was so terrible that they hardly dare move, and they passed a night of misery, expecting each minute to be their last. At nine next morning the longed-for twilight appeared, and an hour later the wind abated a little. Some of them went in the direction of the "quay," for thus had they christened the spot, 500 steps from the house, where the sunken *Hansa* lay. They there found a new wall of ice, and recognised to their horror that this wall was now the boundary of their floe, whilst on all sides of it large pieces had broken off, and rose in dark shapeless masses out of the drifted snow. When, on the morning of the 4th, the storm had worn itself out, they found that their floating ice-raft had considerably diminished in size. The diameter, before over two nautical miles, had now reduced to one; on three sides the house was close to the edges, and on the fourth it was not over 1,000 steps, where it had previously been 3,000. The following days were pretty good, and they got their boats out from the snow, dug out the firewood, and employed themselves in constructing swimming-jackets and snow-shoes out of cork, the latter to prevent themselves sinking up to the hips, as they had often done before.

The days from the 11th to the 15th of January were destined to bring new horrors. On the first-named day a heavy storm with driving snow prevailed, in the midst of which the man on watch burst into the house with the alarm, "All hands turn out!" Hastily gathering their furs and knapsacks, they rushed to the door, to see it almost completely snowed up. To gain the outside quickly they broke through the snow-roof, to find that the tumult of the elements was something beyond anything they had previously experienced. Scarcely able to move from the spot, they huddled together for warmth and mutual protection. Suddenly a new cry

arose: "Water on the floe close by!" The heavy waves washed over the ice: the field began to break on all sides. On the spot between the house and the piled-up wood, a gap opened. All seemed lost. The firewood was drifting into the raging sea; the boats were in danger, and without this last resource, what would they do? The community was divided into two parts. Sadly, though hastily, these brave Germans bade each other good-bye, for none of them expected to see the morrow. Cowering in the shelter of their boats, they stood shivering all day, the fine pricking snow penetrating their very clothes. Their floe, from its last diameter, about a mile, had dwindled to 150 feet. Towards evening, the heavy sea subsided, and the ice began to again pack and freeze together. Shortly after midnight a new terror arose, the sailor on watch rushing in with the information that they were drifting on an iceberg. All rushed to the entrance, where they could, in the midnight gloom, distinguish a huge mass of ice, of giant proportions. "It is past," said the captain. Was it really an iceberg, the mirage of one, or the high coast? They could not decide the question, for owing to the rapidity of the drift, the ghastly object had disappeared the next moment.

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Again on the 14th a frightful storm raged, and the ice was once more in motion. The floe broke in the immediate vicinity of the house, and the boats had to be dragged near it. "All our labour," says the narrative, "was rendered heavier by the storm, which made it almost impossible to breathe. About eleven we experienced a sudden fissure which threatened to tear our house asunder; with a thundering noise an event took place, the consequences of which, in the first moments, deranged all calculations. God only knows how it happened that, in our flight into the open, none came to harm. But there, in the most fearful weather, we all stood roofless on the ice, waiting for daylight, which was still ten hours off. The boat *King William* lay on the edge of the floe, and might have floated away at any moment. Fortunately, the fissure did not get larger. As it was somewhat

quieter at midnight, most of the men crept into the captain's boat, when the thickest sail we had was drawn over them. Some took refuge in the house; but there, as the door had fallen in, they entered by the skylight, and in the hurry broke the panes of glass, so that it was soon full of snow. This night was the most dreadful one of our adventurous voyage on the floe. The cold was  $-9\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  Fahr. ( $41\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  below freezing). Real sleep, at least in the boat, was not to be thought of; it was but a confused, unquiet, half-slumber, which overpowered us from utter weariness, and our limbs quivered convulsively as we lay packed like herrings in our furs. The cook had, in spite of all, found energy enough in the morning to make the coffee in the house, and never had the delicious drink awakened more exhausted creatures to life. The bad weather raged the whole day. We lay in the boat, half in water, half in snow, shivering with the frost, and wet to the skin." Next night was passed in the same comfortless position, but on the morning of the 16th the second officer caught sight of a star, and never was there a more welcome omen. For five nights they slept in the boats, but by the 19th they had partially rebuilt their house, although from this time forth they had to take it in turns to sleep in the boats, their new erection being only one-half the size of the older one. Throughout all the discomfort, want, hardships, danger of all kinds, the frame of mind among the men was good, undaunted, and exalted. The cook kept a right seamanlike humour, even in the most critical moments. As long as he had tobacco nothing troubled him.

And so it went on from day to day: fresh dangers were followed by fresh deliverances, and in spite of all the perils encountered, no lives were lost, nor were there any serious cases of sickness. By May they had spent eight months on their ice-raft, and had drifted 1,100 miles. On the morning of the 7th they were agreeably surprised to see open water in the direction of land. The captain, considering that the moment had arrived when they should leave the floe and try to reach the

coast, called a council. This project received almost unanimous approbation, and in feverish haste and impatience the boats were hauled empty over three floes, the stores and necessaries being carried after them, partly on sledges and partly on the back. At four P.M. they set sail, the officers and crew being divided into three companies. They made seven miles, and then hauled up on a small floe. After finding a low spot, and first emptying the boats, they were lifted, by swinging them in the water, till the third time, when a strong pull and a pull all together brought their bows on the ice, and they were soon bodily on its surface. Next day by noon they were not more than four or five miles from the land, but the ice was densely packed in irregular masses. Bad weather, with much snow, detained them six days on a floe; and then, having proceeded some little distance, they were again condemned to five days' detention. Their provisions were getting low; they had rations left for not over a month. As no change took place in the ice, they resolved to drag their boats over it to the island of Illuidlek, which, after delays and dangers very similar to those encountered by Parry on his memorable Polar sledge and boat journey, was reached on June 4th. A little later they successfully sailed to the Greenland Moravian mission station of Friedrichstal, where their troubles ended, and where they received a hearty welcome. A Danish vessel brought them to Copenhagen on September 1st, and it then became evident that it was time to pay some attention to their outward appearance. In their forlorn condition they could not leave the ship, or they might have been compromised with the police. Some were in seal-skin caps, some in furs, others in sea boots from which the toes protruded, with ragged trousers, threadbare coats, and a general air of Arctic seediness. At length Captain Hegemann fetched them away in the twilight, and took them to a clothing warehouse, where they were soon made to look more like civilised beings. A few days later, and they entered Bremen; not, indeed, in their own good ship, but by

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an express train, by its east gate, from Hamburg. The *Hansa* men may safely await the judgment of their contemporaries, for throughout the narrative, good discipline, a hearty *esprit de corps*, uncomplaining submission to the inevitable—whatever it might be—and a determination to do and dare whatever might appear for their mutual advantage, appear on every page. Germany may well be proud of such sons—Arctic heroes every one of them. The fortunes of the *Germania* were less eventful.

Lieutenant Payer, while out on a sledging expedition, made an important discovery. On Kuhn Island he found a seam of coal, in places eighteen inches in thickness, alternating with sandstone. It would be strange if in some future age our supply of warmth should be furnished from Arctic fuel. Many fine zoological and botanical specimens were collected by the scientific gentlemen connected with this expedition. The leading discovery was that of a large inlet in lat.  $73^{\circ} 15' N.$ , which was named after the Emperor Franz Josef. Surrounding it were mountain peaks ranging as high as 14,000 feet. The *Germania* reached Bremen on September 11th, 1870—but a few days after the arrival of their brethren of the *Hansa*, and at a period when all Germany was *en fête* on account of their recent victories.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

HALL'S EXPEDITION—THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN  
EXPEDITION—NORDENSKJÖLD.

Captain Hall's Expedition—High Latitude Attained—Open Water Seen—Death of Hall—The *Polaris* Beset—An Abandoned Party—Six Months on a Floating Ice-floe—Rescue—Loss of the Steamer—Investigation at Washington—The Austro-Hungarian Expedition—The *Tegethoff* hopelessly Beset in the Ice—Two Long Weary Years—Perils from the Ice Pressure—Ramparts raised round the Ship—The Polar Night—Loss of a Coal-hut—Attempts to Escape—A Grand Discovery—Franz Josef Land—Sledging Parties—Gigantic Glaciers—The Steamer Abandoned—Boat and Sledge Journey to the Bay of Downs—Prof. Nordenskjöld's Voyage—The North-East Passage an accomplished Fact.

But little record has been made, except in transient literature and Government reports, of the expedition concerning which we are about to write. Captain Charles Francis Hall's name is, with the public, more intimately associated with "Life with the Esquimaux," and but little with the fact that he succeeded in taking a vessel to a higher latitude than ever reached in that way before. He returned to America in 1869, having for five years lived with, and to a great extent *as* the natives, the result being that, excepting many errors of taste and style, he succeeded in producing a work which has a very special ethnological value. Before it had issued from the press, he had, encouraged by the then Secretary of the United States Navy, laid a plan before Congress for attempting to reach the North Pole *viâ* Smith Sound. He eventually succeeded in obtaining a grant of fifty thousand dollars for the purpose, while an old U.S. river gun-boat was placed at his disposal. She was re-named the *Polaris*. It was understood that no naval officer should accompany him, and he therefore engaged a whaling captain, one S. O. Buddington, to navigate the vessel. Two scientific gentlemen, Dr. Bessels and Mr. Meyer, accompanied him, as did Morton, Kane's trusty friend, who has been so often mentioned in these pages.

The expedition sailed in the summer of 1871, and after having touched at Disco, Greenland, proceeded up Smith Sound, Kane Basin, and Kennedy Channel, across Polaris Bay (discovered and designated by Hall), eventually reaching 82° 16' N., the highest latitude ever attained by a ship prior to Captain Nares's expedition. Ice impeded their further progress. The strait into which they had entered was named after Mr. Robeson, and from the point which they had so speedily and easily attained, a water horizon was seen to the north-east. The vessel was laid up in a harbour named Thank-God Bay, where Captain Hall, after sundry minor explorations, died on November 8th, having endured severe suffering, the symptoms indicating paralysis and congestion of the brain. During his delirium he had expressed the opinion that they were trying to poison him, and before he would touch medicine, food, or wine, he made his clerk taste it. This being repeated at home, on the return of the expedition, a Government investigation of a careful and detailed nature took place at Washington, but led to nothing being elicited beyond the facts of a want of *esprit de corps* among some of the members, and that there had been some disagreeable dissensions on board. Captain Buddington had no ambition to distinguish himself in the field of science, which he evidently despised, being probably what is called a "practical" man—that is, one who must have immediate gain before his eyes to stir him to exertion—and there does not appear to have been any very earnest feeling on the part of the others. Hall died almost on the spot with which his name must ever be associated, and it is a melancholy fact that he should not have lived to reap the honours and rewards due to so much enterprise. The *Polaris*, a steam vessel of small power, and unadapted for the Arctic seas, had been taken to a point which the finest vessels ever employed in the exploration of the far north had previously failed in reaching.

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The death of Captain Hall threw the command of the *Polaris* on Captain Buddington. In the second week of November, during



THE FUNERAL OF CAPTAIN HALL.

a very heavy gale, the vessel dragged her anchors, but at last brought up safely in the lee of a large iceberg aground in the bay. She was made fast to it, and remained in that position for some time. During the winter and spring she was much damaged by the ice, and when she once more floated, in June, leaked badly. After sending out an expedition to Newman's Bay, during the progress of which one of the boats was crushed like a nutshell by the grinding ice, Captain Buddington determined to sail for the United States. On August 15th the *Polaris* was in a position so dangerous among the ice that it was deemed necessary to place the boats with provisions on a large level floe, in order to prepare for contingencies. A dark night came on, a gale arose, and the steamer drifted away in an utterly unmanageable condition, her steam-pipes, valves, &c., being frozen up. For hours they could not get up steam on board, while they had little coal, and the boats were on the ice.

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The condition of those left in charge of the boats and stores on the ice was apparently desperate. Tyson, the second officer, with the steward, cook, six sailors, and eight Esquimaux, passed a miserable night on the drifting floe. Next morning hope revived in their breasts when they saw the *Polaris* apparently steaming towards them, and all kinds of attempts were made to attract attention: an india-rubber blanket was hoisted on an oar, but all to no purpose. The steamer altered her course, disappearing behind a point of the land, and eighteen deserted beings were destined to a series of experiences similar to those recorded of the *Hansa* men. At the Washington investigation, it was shown that the captain had at the time hopes of saving his vessel, which, after all, had to be run ashore on Lyttelton Island, in a sinking condition. As they had the boats and a supply of provisions, he considered their condition better than his own.

The men on the ice did their best under the circumstances, and their experiences were hardly less eventful than those of the Germans in a similar strait. Their food became scarce as the

winter advanced, but the Esquimaux were of considerable use to them in catching seals. They passed nearly six months on the drifting ice-floe (from October 15th, 1872, to April 1st, 1873), and when at length they left it, and were rescued by the sealing steamer *Tigress*, we can well imagine the revulsion of feeling described in their evidence before the Washington committee. Meantime the *Polaris* herself was ashore on Lyttelton Island, where Buddington, his officers and men, fourteen souls in all, had to pass the winter, fortunately under no great privations, as the stores were saved. They were eventually rescued by the *Ravenscraig*, a steam-whaler, and later, having been transferred to the whaler *Arctic*, reached Dundee, and eventually their own homes, in safety. In spite of the perils encountered by both parties, Captain Hall was the only one of the little band who did not live to reach his native land.

The Americans have, therefore, as we have indicated, stuck bravely to the Smith Sound route to the Pole, and a large proportion of English and foreign authorities still favour the same idea.

We have seen the staunch little *Fox* of M'Clintock's expedition miraculously escape from the grinding surging ice after a detention of 242 days, any one of which might easily have been the last for its brave company; we have witnessed, in mental vision, the philosophical German crew of the ill-fated *Hansa* drifting 1,100 miles on their precarious ice-raft, to be saved, every man of them, at last; and we have just seen half of the *Polaris* men rescued from their peril on the floating ice-field after nearly six months of weary watching. Turn we now to one more example of the dangers of the Arctic seas to find a vessel to all appearance hopelessly encompassed in the ice-drifts, and destined not to make its escape before two long and dreary years had passed away.

When in 1874 the Austro-Hungarian expedition, after a long absence, during which nothing had been heard from it, returned in

safety, many fears which had been felt were sensibly allayed; and when the public learned of the difficulties they had encountered and the grand discoveries made, it was generally voted a complete success. This expedition, under Lieutenant Weyprecht of the Navy and Lieutenant Payer of the Engineers—who had already made himself a name as an Arctic explorer in the second German expedition—had been partly organised at the expense of the public, and greatly aided by Count Wilczek, who accompanied it in his yacht as far as Barents Island. A very small steamer—no more than 220 tons—named the *Tegethoff*, was employed, and among its officers was Captain Carlsen, who it will be remembered, had circumnavigated Spitzbergen some time before, and was the discoverer of the Barents relics; he served in the capacity of ice-master. The crew, all told, only numbered twenty-four men. The expedition sailed from Bremerhaven on June 13th, 1872, provisioned for three years, and was soon among the ice of the north-east. Early in August the vessel became beset in such a manner that progress was next to impossible. “Subsequently,” says Lieutenant Payer, “we regained our liberty, and in latitude 75° N. we reached the open water extending along the coast of Novaya Zemlya. The decrease in temperature and quantity of ice showed, indeed, that the summer of 1872 was the very opposite of that of the year before.” The vessels kept company as far as the low Barents Islands, where the “thick-ribbed ice,” agitated and driven on the coast by winds and gales, stopped their progress for a week. On the 21st of August the *Tegethoff* got clear, and left her consort, the former steaming slowly towards the north. “Our hopes,” says Payer, “were vain. Night found us encompassed on all sides by ice, and (as it eventually proved) for two long and dreary years! Cheerless and barren of all hope the first year lay before us, and we were not any longer discoverers, but doomed to remain as helpless voyagers on a floe of drifting ice.” This is, so far as is known, the longest period for which a

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vessel has been ice-encompassed, and the reader will require no assistance to picture the apparently hopeless condition in which they found themselves, with but little prospect of accomplishing anything approaching exploration. With the autumn of 1872 came unusually severe weather, which caused the ice-blocks to re-freeze as soon as they were sawn asunder, and they were utterly unable to extricate the vessel, although every effort was made. On October 13th the ice broke up, and the collisions of and with enormous masses placed them in great danger. They were quite ignorant of their position and where they were drifting. In the sombre darkness of the long Arctic night they had to keep the boats and stores in readiness, as they might have to abandon the vessel at any moment. The floes were constantly uplifted by other ice underneath, but the little *Tegethoff* proved herself staunch and true. Eventually a rampart of ice was erected about the little vessel, which had to be continually watched and repaired, on account of the damage received from the pressure of surrounding ice. Amidst all these dangers the routine of the ship was admirably kept up. Divine service was observed, and a school established for the crew. The men suffered severely from scurvy and pulmonary complaints during the winter.

In the autumn of 1873 an important discovery was made. "We had," says Payer, "long ago drifted into a portion of the Arctic sea which had not previously been visited; but in spite of a careful look-out we had not been able hitherto to discover land. It was, therefore, an event of no small importance, when, on the 31st of August, we were surprised by the sudden appearance of a mountainous country, about fourteen miles to the north, which the mist had up till that time concealed from our view." They had no opportunity of reaching it until the end of October, when a landing was effected in lat.  $79^{\circ} 54'$  N., on an island, lying off the mainland, to which they affixed the name of Count Wilczek, to whom the expedition had in great measure owed its existence. Their second Polar night of 125 days prevented any

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further exploration, but was passed without a recurrence of the dangers they had met the previous winter. Their winter quarters were comparatively safe, and being near the land they obtained a sufficiency of bear-meat, the animals often approaching the ship closely.

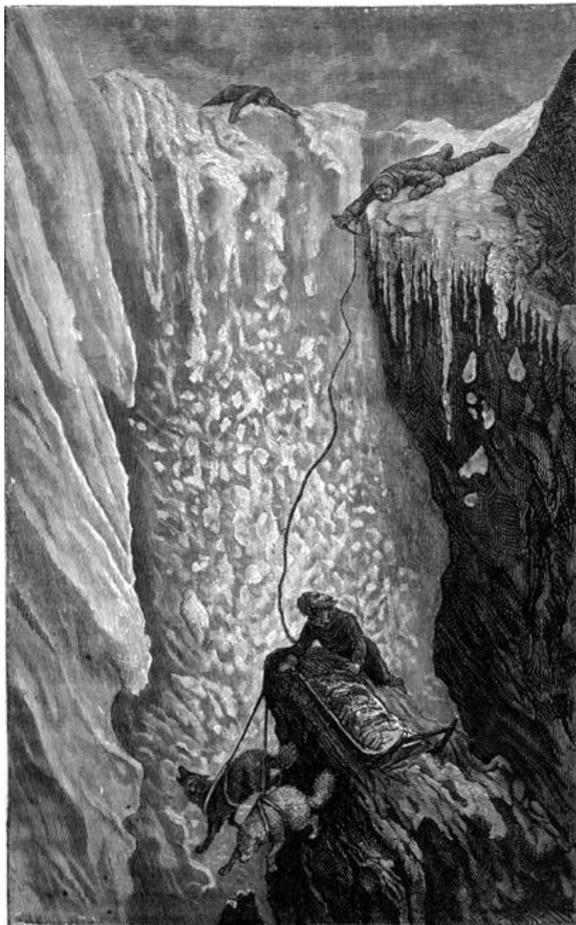


#### START OF LIEUT. PAYER'S SLEDGE EXPEDITION.

In the winter of 1874 several sledging parties were sent out. On the 24th of March, Lieutenant Payer, with six companions, left the vessel, dragging a large sledge freighted with provisions and stores to the extent of three-fourths of a ton. They succeeded in reaching the new land, after many a struggle with the ice-hummocks, snow-drifts, and floods of sea-water which had submerged some parts of the ice. Their difficulties were increased by the fact that a once fine team of dogs was reduced to three capable of being of service. Payer describes the new land as

broken up by numerous inlets and fiords, and surrounded by innumerable islands. The mountains were of fair altitude—from 2,000 to 5,000 feet in height—while the glaciers in the valleys were of gigantic size, and formed a great feature in the wild scenery. Some visited “were characterised by their greenish-blue colour, the paucity of crevasses, and extraordinarily coarse-grained ice.” The vegetation was poor, as might be expected. To this hitherto unknown land the name of the Emperor Franz Josef was affixed. The party reached the high latitude of  $81^{\circ} 37'$  N.

The return journey to the vessel was made successfully, although the scarcity of provisions obliged them to make forced marches, and also necessitated a division of the party remaining behind under a cliff on Hohenlohe Island, while Payer, with two of the crew and a small sledge, pressed forward for aid. Crossing an enormous glacier on Crown Prince Rudolf Land, one of the men, the sledge and dogs, fell into a gigantic crevasse which the snow had concealed. Payer himself might have come to grief had not he had presence of mind enough to cut the harness by which he was attached to the sledge. For a time the case looked very bad, as they were unable to extricate the unfortunate explorer. Payer, however, with that quickness which is one of his distinguishing characteristics, immediately ran back some twelve miles to the other party, and obtained assistance. They had eventually the happiness of rescuing the man, &c., by means of ropes. After many perils in the journey over the rotten ice they succeeded in joining the anxious little band on the vessel. Alas! the *Tegethoff*, which had passed unscathed so many dangers, had to be abandoned in the ice, and a journey by boat and sledge commenced, very similar to that of Barents, made three centuries before. After mournfully nailing the flags to the ship’s mast, on May 20th they started on their doubtful and adventurous trip. It took them over three months (ninety-six days) to reach the Bay of Downs, in lat  $72^{\circ} 4'$ , where they happily met a Russian schooner, and their troubles were over.



FALL OF THE SLEDGE INTO A CREVASSE.

And now to the Arctic expedition which stands out pre-eminently above almost any other whatever. Professor Nordenskjöld may be congratulated on having performed the most intrepid and daring feat of the present century, speaking in a geographical point of view. The North-East Passage has been accomplished. "The splendid success," said a leading journal, "has been splendidly deserved. It was no lucky accident of exploration that found the *Vega* a way round the northernmost point of Asia, or chance good fortune that carried her through new seas to the Behrings Straits. Professor Nordenskjöld has fought it out fairly with Nature. The combat has been a long one, and round after round had to be toughly contested before the Professor closed with his opponent, the Arctic Ocean, and floored the grim old tyrant. Six times he has gone northward to do battle with ice and snow, and each time, though returning, he has brought back such knowledge of the enemy's weakness that assured him of ultimate success." Unfortunately the details as yet at hand are meagre, and only the bare outlines of the story can be presented. Some of the important scientific results of the expedition will be referred to in future pages.

The *Vega*, a tough, teak-built steam whaler, left Gothenburg on July 4th, 1878, sighted Nova Zembla on the 28th, and anchored that day off a village on the Samoyede peninsula at the entrance of the Kara Sea, once known as the Ice Cave, but which of late has lost its terrors for even the hardy Norwegian fisherman. Nordenskjöld knew the right season to attempt its passage, and it was surprised when almost free of ice. On August 1st, after making many scientific observations of importance, the *Vega* proceeded slowly eastward, nothing but rotten ice, which in no way impeded the vessel, being met. In a few days they were safely anchored in Dickson's Haven, Siberia, a spot perhaps destined to become an important exporting point. Bears and reindeer were found to be numerous, and the vegetation extremely rich. On the 10th the *Vega* again proceeded, and threading her way

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through unknown islands, reached a fine harbour situated in the strait that separates Taimyr Island and the mainland, where they dredged for marine specimens with great success. Again resuming the voyage, they, on the evening of the 19th, anchored in a bay round Cape Chelyuskin, the most northerly point of the Asiatic continent. This, the once unconquerable cape, had now been conquered, and that fact alone would have constituted a splendid triumph, although it now only forms an episode in this grand voyage. Low mountains, free from snow, were seen to the southward; geese, ducks, and other birds were seen on the coast, while the ocean was alive with walrus, seals, and whales. On the 21st, though delayed by fogs and rotten ice, the *Vega* coasted south-east; and on the 23rd, aided by a fine breeze and a smooth sea, was able to dispense with steam. At the Chatanga river they shot bears and wild fowl to their heart's desire. On the 26th they passed the entrance to the mouth of the Lena, and on the 27th turned northward for the Siberian Islands, which they were prevented from exploring, owing to the ice. Nordenskjöld ordered the vessel's head to be turned southward, and they passed the mouth of the great Kolyma river. Soon they were among the ice, and, as they had anticipated, were to be imprisoned in it. But the health of the party was excellent, and no scurvy whatever appeared; their own provisions were of the best; and after passing Cook's Cape, Vankarema, the *Vega* crossed to Kolintchin, where the furnaces were put out, the sails stowed, and winter life fairly commenced. At a mile distance ashore there was a Tchuktchi village of 4,000 souls, all living easily, for fish and seals, bear, wolf, and fox, were abundant, while in spring the geese, swans, and ducks, returned from the south. For nearly nine months they were ice-bound; but at last the ice floes broke up and scattered, and the little *Vega* soon passed East Cape, the extremity of Asia, and steamed gaily into Behring Straits, where a salute was fired, announcing a success unprecedented in the annals of Arctic history. The Professor believes that voyages

may be regularly performed in the future which will open up a considerable trade with northern Siberia.

Surrounded by almost every conceivable difficulty and danger, Arctic research has witnessed and developed more genuinely heroic skill and enterprise than has been needed or found in the exploration of any other portion of our globe. With all its dangers the North Polar world possesses a rare fascination for the adventurous, and has something to offer in palliation of its monotonous desolation. The yet unknown must always have charms for the greatest minds, even though it should prove practically unknowable; the undiscovered may not always be so, for the unfathomed of the past may be fathomed to-day. The Polar regions offer much to the scientist, and, in some phases, much to the artist. The beautiful Aurora flashes over the scene and banishes the darkness of the Arctic night. The vastness of Nature's operations are shown in the huge icebergs clad in dazzling whiteness or glittering in the moon's silvery rays in the interminable fields of fixed or floating ice, in glacial rivers of grandest size. As the bergs melting in the warmer waves assume endless fantastic forms—as of pointed spires, jagged steeples, or castellated remains, and as, losing the centre of gravity, they roll over to assume new forms, or meeting together crash like thunder or the roar of artillery, throwing up great volumes of foam, disturbing the surface of the sea for miles, the puniness of man is felt, and the mind inevitably lifted from Nature up “to Nature's God.”

Much has been done; still, there is yet work which remains to be accomplished in the Arctic seas. But brave men will never be wanting when new attempts are made. As the old sea-captain, looking at the chart in Millais' picture, says, concerning the North-West Passage, “It might be done—and England ought to do it!”

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE ANTARCTIC REGIONS.

Has the South Pole been Neglected?—The Antarctic even more Inhospitable than the Arctic—The Antarctic Summer—Search for the *Terra Australis*—Early Explorers—Captain Cook’s Discoveries—Watering at Icebergs—The Southern Thule—Smith’s Report—Weddell’s Voyage—Dead Whale Mistaken for an Island—D’Urville’s Adélie Land—Wilkes Land—Voyages of James Ross—High Land Discovered—Deep Beds of Guano—Antarctic Volcanoes—Mounts Erebus and Terror—Victoria Land.

One might well inquire, without a previous knowledge of the reasons, why the South Pole has not received the attention which has been lavished on the North. The fact is that while the Arctic regions do not present many attractions for travel, and certainly even less for residence or settlement, the Antarctic regions are still more unpromising in both particulars. The extreme intensity of Antarctic cold is found to commence at a much higher latitude than in the northern hemisphere. In the Arctic seas large icebergs are rarely found till the 70th parallel of latitude is reached, while stationary fields are met in a still higher latitude. In the South Pacific both occur at from 50° to 60° of southern latitude. The mountains of Cape Horn, of Terra del Fuego, and outlying islands, are covered with perpetual snow quite to their sea-coasts. “This contrast,” say Professor Tomlinson, in one of the few general works we possess on the subject,<sup>42</sup> “has been ascribed to the shorter stay which the sun makes in the southern hemisphere than

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<sup>42</sup> “Summer in the Antarctic Regions.”

in the northern. But this difference, amounting to scarcely eight days, has been proved to be exactly compensated by the greater nearness of the earth to the sun during the southern than during the northern summer. Another cause must therefore be sought, and as it is a fact that water becomes less heated by the same amount of sunshine than any solid substance, this cause will be found in the vast extent of the Antarctic seas, the total absence of any great surface of land, and the form of the continents which terminate towards the south almost in points, thus opening a free and unencumbered field to the currents from the Polar seas, and allowing them to push forward the icy masses in every direction from the south pole towards the southern and temperate zone.”

The word *Antarctic* explains itself as that part of the earth opposite to the Arctic.<sup>43</sup> Winter in the one corresponds to summer in the other, and *vice versâ*. When the Arctic circle is delighting in one long summer day, the Antarctic regions are oppressed by the darkest gloom. When we in England are, or should be, enjoying the bright days of midsummer, the southern Polar regions are pitchy dark, while at our Christmas-tide that part of the earth is bathed in floods of sunshine.

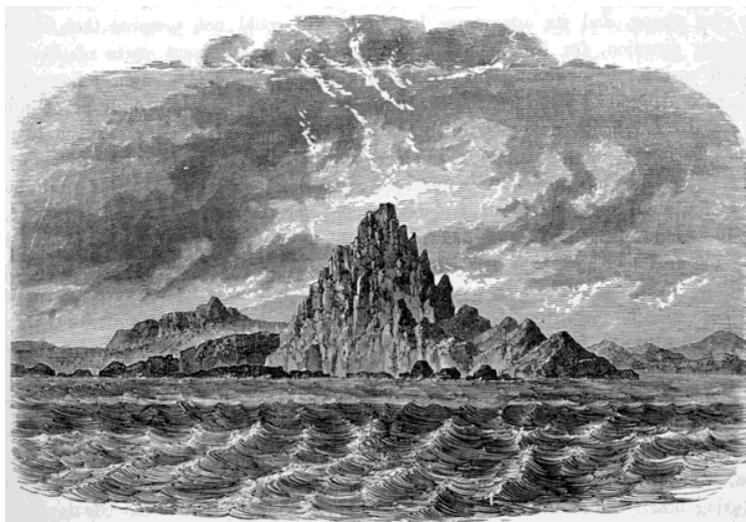
It has been seen that our knowledge of the North Polar seas has been largely the result of explorations in search of a north-western or north-eastern passage or strait to the Pacific. The exploration of the Antarctic regions is mainly due to quests after a continent in the southern seas—the *Terra Australis incognita* of many old geographers. The belief in the existence of such a land can be traced back as far as 1576, when Juan Fernandez is reported to have sailed southward from Chile, and to have arrived after a month’s voyage at a *tierra ferme*, a charming fertile land inhabited by friendly and almost civilised natives. [277] If the story be not altogether apocryphal, it may possibly have been some part of New Zealand. At the same period there were

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<sup>43</sup> The word *Arctic* is derived from the Greek, and signifies *of, or belonging to the bear*.

wild reports in circulation concerning the discovery by Alvaro Mendana de Neyra of some southern islands abounding in silver. That navigator, however, could not find them at all in a later voyage, and perished miserably, with many of his companions, at Egmont, or Santa Cruz Island. His pilot, Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, in 1605-6 made a professed voyage in search of the southern continent, his voyage resulting in the discovery of Pitcairn's Island, the New Hebrides, and other lands, while one of his captains, Luis Vaes de Torres, passed through the strait between Australia and New Guinea now named after him. The first actual approach to the then unknown southern polar lands appears to have been made by one Dirk Gerritz, a Dutchman, in January, 1600. This vessel was in the East India service, and was driven by a gale from the immediate latitude of the Straits of Magellan far to the south, where he discovered a barren, craggy, snow-covered coast, similar to that of Norway. His accounts were discredited, but have since proved to have been accurate enough, and the land is now known as New South Shetland, and has been proved to cross the Antarctic circle. The expeditions of Kerguelen, sent out for the purpose of exploring the southern regions, resulted only in the discovery of the group of islands now known by his name. It is to the celebrated Captain Cook that we owe the earliest careful explorations of the south polar regions.

Late in November, 1772, H.M. ships *Resolution* and *Adventure* left the Cape of Good Hope in search of the unknown continent, and early in December of the same year were driven by several gales among and in dangerous proximity to icebergs, one of which is described as flat at its top, about fifty feet in height, and half a mile in circuit. A large number of penguins and other birds were on these bergs, and this was deemed a reason for thinking land near. The ice islands yielded excellent fresh water, large detached lumps being taken on board and the sea water allowed to drain off on deck, when there was hardly a trace of



VIEW OF CAPE HORN.

salt perceptible to the taste. Part of it was kept as ice, while a quantity was melted in coppers. Cook said that it was the most expeditious way of watering he had seen. In the middle of February they had fair weather, with clear serene nights, when the beautiful Aurora Australis, or Southern Lights, were seen. "The officer of the watch observed that it sometimes broke out in spiral rays, and in a circular form; then its light was very strong, and its appearance beautiful. He could not perceive that it had any particular direction, for it appeared at various times in different parts of the heavens, and diffused its light throughout the whole atmosphere." Bad weather followed, making navigation dangerous among the bergs, while it was bitterly cold. A litter of nine pigs was killed a few hours after their birth by the cold, in spite of all the care taken to preserve them. This was in the Antarctic summer, which, however, improved considerably afterwards. Captain Cook was then tempted to advance a few degrees to the south, but soon altered his mind when the weather again changed for the worse.

It was not till the 31st of January, 1775, on the same voyage, that Cook, who had become "tired of these high southern latitudes, where nothing was to be found but ice and thick fogs," made a discovery of land. They had been sailing over a sea strewn with ice, when the fog lifting, three rocky islets of considerable elevation disclosed themselves at a distance of three or four miles, one terminating in a lofty peak like a sugar-loaf. It was named *Freezeland Peak*. To the east of this a high coast, with lofty snow-clad summits, appeared, and soon another broken coast-line came in sight, to which the name of *Southern Thule* was given, as it was the most southerly land yet discovered. Other coasts, promontories, and mountains, soon came in view, which Cook tells us had land apparently between them, leading him to the conclusion that the whole was connected. Prudence forbade him venturing nearer the coast. The reader must remember that his were not the days of steam.

New land appeared next morning, with outlying islands, named the *Candlemas Isles* in honour of the day on which they were discovered. The whole of the new land was named *Sandwich Land*, and was supposed to be either a group of islands, or the point of a continent. Cook firmly believed in a tract of land near the Pole as the source of most of the icebergs in those seas, but did not attempt a further exploration.

It was not till the year 1819 that the commander of the brig *William*, Mr. William Smith, sailing south-east from the latitude of Cape Horn, noted in latitude  $62^{\circ} 30'$  S. and longitude  $60^{\circ}$  W., an extensive snow-covered land, on the coasts of which seals were abundant. As he was bound with a cargo to Valparaiso, he could not follow up his discovery; but on arrival at that port informed H.B.M. Consul, Captain Sheriff, of the fact he had ascertained, and that gentleman dispatched Mr. Edward Barnsfield, master of the frigate *Andromache*, to explore the new-found land. It was found to consist of a group of islands, numbering twelve, with innumerable rocky islets between them. There was little doubt that it was a part of the same land sighted by Gerritz more than two centuries before, and now known as the South Shetlands. They were further explored in 1820 by Mr. Weddell, whose crews obtained an immense number of sea-elephants and fur seals. These islands are nearly inaccessible, being ice-bound, while almost any part of them, other than perpendicular cliffs, is perpetually snow-covered. There are a few small patches of straggling grass where there is any soil, and a moss similar to that found in Iceland. In 1821 other additions were made to our knowledge of islands adjacent to the South Shetlands by Captains Powell and Palmer, the latter an American, and by the Russian navigator, Bellinghausen, who reached a very southern point. They are respectively known as *Trinity*, *Palmer's*, and *Alexander's Lands*. A voyage in 1822 has importance, as it led to valuable results, in a commercial point of view. The brig *Jane*, of Leith, Captain Weddell, with a crew of twenty-two officers and

men, accompanied by a cutter, set sail in September of that year on a voyage to the South Seas for the purpose of procuring fur seals. At the beginning of January, 1823, the vessels first came in sight of the land of the high southern latitude, and the next day reached the South Orkneys. The tops of the islands mostly terminated in craggy peaks, and looked almost like the mountain tops of a sunken land. Proceeding southward, they one evening passed very close to an object which appeared like a rock. The lead was immediately thrown out, but no bottom could be found. It turned out to be a dead whale, very much swollen, floating on the surface. Weddell obtained at South Georgia a valuable cargo. From the sea-elephant no less than 20,000 tons of oil were obtained in a few seasons, the cargoes always including a large number of fur sealskins. American sealers also took large cargoes of these skins to China, where they sold for five or six dollars a skin. The Island of Desolation, described by Cook, was also a source of great profit. "This is a striking, but by no means uncommon example of the commercial advantage to be derived from voyages of discovery." In 1830, Captain Biscoe, commanding the sealing brig *Eliza Scott*, made the discovery of another range of islands, since named after him. In 1839, Captain Balley, in a ship belonging to Messrs. Enderby, the owners of the last-named vessel, discovered land in latitude 66° 44' S., which was in all probability a portion of the same territory sighted by Wilkes and D'Urville a year afterwards. Thus, while America and France claim the honour of having discovered an "Antarctic continent," Balley seems to have forestalled them. It is extremely doubtful whether the patches of land seen by these explorers can be considered to form a great southern continent.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Captain Dumont D'Urville commanded an expedition dispatched by France in 1837 for the express purpose of exploring the Antarctic, and Lieutenant Wilkes, U.S.N. had a similar commission the same year. Wilkes and D'Urville sighted each other's vessels on one occasion, but through a mistake did not communicate.

D'Urville, after describing the "lanes" of tall icebergs by which his ship was enclosed and impeded, states that they sighted land, some few miles off, with prominent peaks 3,000 feet and upwards in height, and surrounded with coast ice. Some boats were sent off to make magnetic observations, and one of the officers succeeded in landing on a small rocky islet, on which the tricolour flag was unfurled. Not the smallest trace of vegetable life could be discovered. Numerous fragments of the rock itself were carried off as trophies. Close at hand were eight or ten other islets. The land thus discovered was named Adélie Land (after Admiral D'Urville's wife). A projecting cape, which had been seen early in the day, was called Cape Discovery, and the islet on which the landing was effected was named Point Geology. [280]

Wilkes describes his discoveries in similar terms to those of previous explorers already mentioned. Stones, gravel, sand, mud, &c., were noted on a low iceberg, proving the existence of land somewhere about, but it must be borne in mind that a landing on anything but ice was not effected.

An attempt on the part of Captain (afterwards Sir James) Ross to establish magnetic observations in the southern hemisphere was unsuccessful, but resulted in a discovery of importance. On January 11th, 1841, land was sighted, rising in lofty snow-covered peaks, the elevation of some of which was stated to be from 12,000 feet to 14,000 feet. Various peaks were named after Sabine and other distinguished philosophers who had advocated the cause of the expedition. With some difficulty they landed on an island, on which they planted our flag, and drank a toast to the health of the Queen and Prince Albert. It was named Possession Island. There was no vegetation, but "inconceivable myriads of penguins completely and densely covered the whole surface of the island, along the ledges of the precipices, and even to the summits of the hills, attacking us," says Ross, "vigorously as we waded through their ranks, and pecking at us with their sharp beaks, disputing possession; which, together with their

loud coarse notes, and the insupportable stench from the deep bed of guano, which had been forming for ages, and which may at some period be valuable to the agriculturists of our Australasian colonies, made us glad to get away again, after having loaded our boats with geological specimens and penguins.” Whales were very numerous; thirty were counted at one time in various directions.

Further south the interesting discovery was made of an active volcano, a mountain 12,400 feet altitude, emitting flame and smoke at the time. It was named after the *Erebus*, one of the vessels employed, while a second volcano, scarcely inferior in height to the first-named, was called Mount Terror, after our staunch old friend the vessel which so well withstood the ice in Sir George Back’s expedition. “On the afternoon of the 28th,” says Ross, “Mount Erebus was observed to emit smoke and flame in unusual quantities, producing a most grand spectacle; a volume of dense smoke was projected at each successive jet with great force, in a vertical column, to the height of between 1,500 and 2,000 feet above the mouth of the crater, when, condensing first at its upper part, it descended in mist or snow, and gradually dispersed, to be succeeded by another splendid exhibition of the same kind in about half an hour afterwards, although the intervals between the eruptions were by no means regular. The diameter of the columns of smoke was between two and three hundred feet, as near as we could measure it; whenever the smoke cleared away, the bright red flame that filled the mouth of the crater was clearly perceptible; and some of the officers believed they could see streams of lava pouring down its sides until lost beneath the snow, which descended from a few hundred feet below the crater, and projected its perpendicular icy cliff several miles into the ocean.”

The whole of the land traced to the seventy-ninth degree of latitude was named Victoria Land. Ross “restored to England the honour of the discovery of the southernmost known land,” which

had previously belonged to Russia, as won twenty years before by the intrepid Bellinghausen. A second and a third visit was made by Ross, on the latter of which he made some discoveries of minor importance.

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LISBON IN THE 16TH CENTURY. (*After an Engraving of the period.*)

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

DECISIVE VOYAGES IN HISTORY.—DIAZ—COLUMBUS.

An Important Epoch in the History of Discovery—King John II. of Portugal and his Enterprises—Diaz the

Bold—Ventures out to Sea—Rounds the Cape—Ignorant of the Fact—The Cape of Storms—King John re-christens it—Columbus and the Narrative of his Son—His Visit to Portugal—Marriage—An un-royal Trick—Sends his Brother to England—His Misfortune—Columbus in Spain—A prejudiced and ignorant Report—The One Sensible Ecclesiastic—Again Repulsed—A Friend at Court—Queen Isabella Won to the Cause—Departure of the Expedition—Out in the Broad Atlantic—Murmurs of the Crews—Signs of Land—Disappointment—Latent Mutiny—Land at Last—Discovery of St. Salvador—Cuba—Natives Smoking the Weed—Utopia in Hispaniola—Columbus Wrecked—Gold Obtained—First Spanish Settlement—Homeward Voyage—Storms and Vows—Arrival in Europe—Triumphant Reception at Barcelona.

The Arctic and Antarctic voyages, purposely kept together and followed to their latest developments, having been described, we now go back to the most interesting and important period in the world's history, geographically considered. In little less than a dozen years three of the grandest discoveries in geography were made. First, the discovery of a passage round the Cape of Good Hope, the sea-portal to the Indian Ocean, the Orient generally, Australasia (not, indeed, then discovered, or even dreamt of), and the innumerable islands of the various Eastern Archipelagos. Next, the passage of the Atlantic ocean to the far west, the discovery of the West Indies and the New World. Last, and not least, in its ultimate bearings on the prosperity of Great Britain, the passage by sea direct to India—its conquest and settlement by the Portuguese. What other epoch can boast so much accomplished in a time so brief?

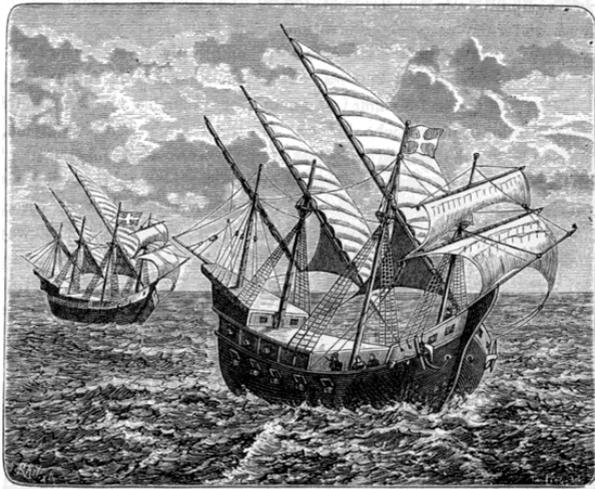
To King John of Portugal are we indebted for the first of these great discoveries. He fitted out a small squadron under Bartholomew Diaz, a knight of the royal household, to attempt

the passage by sea to India, after endeavouring to learn all that was then known about that country. For this important enterprise Diaz was supplied with two small caravels of fifty tons each, accompanied by a still smaller vessel, or tender, to carry provisions. The preparations being completed, he sailed in the end of August, 1486, steering directly to the southward. [282]

“We have,” says Clarke, “no relation of the particulars of this voyage, and only know that the first spot on which Diaz placed a stone pillar, in token of discovery and possession, was at *Sierra Parda*, in about  $24^{\circ}, 40'$  S., which is said to have been 120 leagues further to the south than any preceding navigator. According to the Portuguese historians, Diaz sailed boldly from this place to the southward, in the open sea, and never saw the land again until he was forty leagues to the east of the Cape of Good Hope, which he had passed, without being in sight of land.” Here he came in sight of a bay on the coast, which he called *Angra de los Vaqueros*, or Bay of Herdsmen, from observing a number of cows grazing on the land. From this place Diaz continued his voyage eastwards, to a small island or rock in the bay, which is now called Algoa, on which he placed a stone cross, or pillar, as a memorial of his progress, and named it on that account *Santa Cruz*, or *El Pennol de la Cruz*.

It would appear that Diaz was still unconscious that he had long reached and overpassed the extreme southern point of Africa, and was anxious to continue his voyage still farther. But the provisions on board his two caravels were nearly exhausted, and the victualling tender under the command of his brother was missing. The crews of the caravels became exceedingly urgent to return, lest they should perish with famine. With some difficulty he prevailed on the people to continue their course about twenty-five leagues further on, as he felt exceedingly mortified at the idea of returning to his sovereign without accomplishing the discovery on which he was bent. They accordingly reached the mouth of a stream now known by the name of Great Fish River.

From this river, the extreme boundary of the present voyage, Diaz commenced his return homewards, and discovered, with great joy and astonishment, on their passage back, the long-sought-for and tremendous promontory, which had been the grand object of the hopes and wishes of Portuguese navigation during *seventy-four* years, ever since the year 1412, when the illustrious Don Henry first began to direct and incite his countrymen to the prosecution of discoveries along the western shores of Africa. At this place Diaz erected a stone cross in memory of his discovery; and owing to heavy tempests, which he experienced off the high table-land of the Cape, he named it *Cabo dos Tormentos*, or Cape of Storms; but the satisfaction which King John derived from this memorable discovery, on the return of Diaz to Portugal, in 1487, induced that sovereign to change this inauspicious appellation for one of more happy omen, and he accordingly ordered that it should in future be called *Cabo de bon Esperança*, or Cape of Good Hope, the title which it has ever since retained.



BARTHOLOMEW DIAZ ON HIS VOYAGE TO THE CAPE

Soon after the discovery of *The Cape*—by which shorter name it is now pre-eminently distinguished—Diaz fell in with the victualler, from whom he had separated nine months before. Of nine persons who had composed the crew of that vessel, six had been murdered by the natives of the West Coast of Africa, and Fernand Coloizzo, one of the three survivors, died of joy on again beholding his countrymen. Diaz and his companions were, of course, honourably received by their sovereign, after a voyage of such unprecedented length and unusual success. And now to the second of the great discoveries of this epoch, which, chronologically considered, follows that of Diaz.

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In the long list of honoured names who have made geographical discovery their aim, none shines with a greater effulgence than that of Columbus, and although in his old age he was disgracefully ignored and even maltreated, succeeding times have done full justice to his memory. The present writer has gone to the fountain source for his information; the whole of the narrative to follow is taken from the history written by his son, Don Ferdinand Columbus. It would be easy, from the many popular biographies written by well-known authors, to compile a more fanciful and readable story, but some, at least, of these writers have not strictly adhered to facts, but have wandered somewhat into the region of the imagination. The account given to the world by the son of the great navigator was compiled from the original letters and documents, from actual information obtained direct, and from personal observation.

The narrative of Don Ferdinand commences amusingly. He avers that many would have him prove a highly honourable descent for the admiral his father, and because on his arrival in Portugal he had assumed the name of Colon,<sup>45</sup> prove that he had come in direct line from Junius Colonus, who brought

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<sup>45</sup> Don Cristoval Colon. The port now generally termed Aspinwall, on the Atlantic side of the Isthmus of Panama, was long, and is sometimes nowadays known as Colon.

Mithridates a prisoner to Rome, or from the two illustrious Coloni, who gained a great victory over the Venetians. The son is, however, candid, and says, “that however considerable they (his progenitors) may once have been, it is certain that they were reduced to poverty and want through the long wars and factions in Lombardy. I have not been able to discover in what way they lived; though in one of his letters the admiral asserted that his ancestors and himself had always traded by sea.”<sup>46</sup> Don Ferdinand glories in his father as one of the people, who had risen to his high estate by reason of honourable merit. But however poor, he found means to leave his native city, Genoa, and study astronomy, geometry, and cosmography, at the University of Pavia. He is believed to have gone to sea at as early an age as fourteen. The date of his birth is uncertain, but is believed to have been in 1447. Besides voyaging constantly in the Mediterranean, he, as elsewhere recorded, made a northern voyage of some importance. He distinctly states that “In February, 1467, I sailed an hundred leagues beyond Thule, or Iceland.”



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

*(After a Portrait in the Gallery of Vicenza.)*

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<sup>46</sup> Translation of the history by Don Ferdinand Columbus in Churchill's Collection of Voyages and Travels.

In his person Columbus was “above the middle stature, and well shaped, having rather a long visage, with somewhat full cheeks, yet neither fat nor lean. His complexion was very fair with delicately red cheeks, having fair hair in his youth, which became entirely grey at thirty years of age. He had a hawk nose, with fair eyes. In his eating and drinking, and in his dress, he was always temperate and modest. In his demeanour he was affable to strangers, and kind and condescending to his domestics and dependents, yet with a becoming modesty and dignified gravity of manner, tempered with easy politeness.” His regard for religion was strict and sincere, and he had a great abhorrence of profane language. In a word, Columbus was one of nature’s truest gentlemen.

His son states that the reason for his visit to Portugal “arose from his attachment to a famous man of his name and family, named Columbus, long renowned on the sea as commander of a fleet against the infidels.” He must have commanded a goodly fleet, for while Christopher Columbus was with him he took four large Venetian galleys, after a desperate fight. The vessel in which Columbus was, took fire, and he had to leap into the water and make for the land, two leagues distant. He was an excellent swimmer, and, by the aid of a floating oar, he succeeded in landing on the coast near Lisbon. This was his first introduction to that city. Here he married a lady of good family, Donna Felipa Moniz. Her mother was the widow of Perestrello, one of the captains who had re-discovered Madeira, and she put at the disposal of Columbus all the charts and journals left by her husband, from which he learned much of the discoveries made by the Portuguese. It was at this time that he began to think seriously of attempting a passage to the Indies by the westward. [284]

Columbus first laid his plans before Prince John of Portugal, who lent a favourable ear, but on account of the large expenses connected with his expedition to the Guinea Coast, which had not hitherto been crowned with any great success, could not

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promise immediate action. Later, by the advice of one Doctor Calzadilla, in whom he reposed great confidence, the King of Portugal resolved to attempt secretly the discovery which Columbus had proposed. Accordingly, a caravel was fitted out under pretence of carrying supplies to the Cape Verd Islands, with private instructions to sail to the west. Those sent on the expedition had little knowledge or enterprise, and after vaguely wandering about the Atlantic some time, returned to the Cape Verde Islands, laughing at the undertaking as ridiculous and impracticable. "When," says the son, "this scandalous underhand dealing came to my father's ears, he took a great aversion to Lisbon and the Portuguese nation." Little wonder, one would think! His wife was now dead, and he resolved to repair to Castile with his little son. Lest, however, the Spanish sovereign might not consent to his proposals, he determined to send his brother, Bartholomew Columbus, from Lisbon, to make similar proposals to the King of England. Bartholomew was experienced in seamanship, and understood the construction of charts, globes, and nautical instruments. On the voyage he had the misfortune to be taken by pirates, who stripped him and the rest of the ship's company of everything of value. Poor Bartholomew arrived in England in poverty and sickness. Undaunted by his misfortunes, he commenced making and selling charts, in order to recruit his finances. After much loss of time, he, in February, 1480, presented a map of his own construction, and the proposals of his brother, to the king, who became very favourably inclined towards the project; and ordered an invitation to be sent to Columbus, desiring him to come to England forthwith. But, alas! England was fated not to have the services of this great navigator. "Providence," says Ferdinand, "had determined that the advantage of this great discovery should belong to Castile; and by this time my father had gone upon his first voyage."

About the end of the year 1484 the admiral stole away privately from Lisbon, as he was afraid of detention. The king had by

this time come somewhat to his senses, and it is asserted that he was desirous of renewing the conferences with Columbus. But he did not use much diligence, and thereby missed his last grand opportunity. Columbus next addressed himself to their Catholic Majesties of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella, then at Cordova. His affable manners and evident knowledge soon gained him a hearing; but as their Majesties considered that a matter of such importance required to be learnedly investigated, it was referred to the prior of Prado, afterwards Archbishop of Granada, who was to obtain the assistance of some cosmographers, and report on its practicability. The report they presented was unfavourable to the enterprise. Some thought Columbus presumptuous in expecting to accomplish that which skilful sailors of all nations had not done, although several thousand years had elapsed since the creation of the world. Others said that the world was of such prodigious size, that they questioned whether he would reach the Indies that way in three years. Others used the powerful argument that if they sailed round the world *down* from Spain, they would never get *up* again! No ship could climb up-hill! The ecclesiastics quoted St. Augustine, to the effect that the antipodes were an impossibility, and that no one could go from one hemisphere to another. Ignorance and credulity triumphed for the time, but not for long.

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Columbus was not to be beaten. He followed the court to Seville, and was again repulsed. He resolved to write to the King of France, and, if unsuccessful there, follow his brother to England. But at this juncture he acquired the friendship of the father guardian of the monastery of Rabida, who, believing in his schemes, earnestly entreated him to postpone his departure, saying that, as he was confessor to the Queen, he was resolved to try his influence. All honour to Father Perez, the one sensible ecclesiastic of his nation! A fresh conference was held, but the demands of Columbus were deemed too high, and again the matter fell to the ground. The admiral settled his affairs, and

prepared to leave for France.

He had actually started on his journey, when an officer was despatched after him to induce him to return. The queen had at last listened to the good counsels of Santangel (comptroller of the royal disbursements), who had before shown himself a friend to Columbus. He had pointed out to her majesty that the sum of money required was small, and that she was missing an opportunity that might redound greatly to the honour of her reign, and the credit of which now some foreign monarch would reap. From comparative apathy Isabella rose to enthusiasm, and the treasury being pretty well exhausted by the war with Granada, she offered to pawn her jewels in order to raise the necessary funds. Santangel immediately replied that there was no occasion for this, and that he himself would readily advance his own money in such a service.

All the conditions which the admiral required having been conceded, he set out from Granada on May 21st, 1492, for Palos, that seaport having been bound by the Crown to furnish two caravels. Columbus fitted these and a third vessel with all speed. His own ship was the *St. Mary*; the second, named the *Pinta*, was commanded by Martin Alonso Pinzon; and the third, the *Nina*, by the latter's brother, Vincent Yanez Pinzon. The united crews comprised a force of ninety men. Columbus set sail on this, his first voyage in the service of Portugal, on the 3rd of August, 1492, making direct for the Canaries.

The day after leaving, the rudder of the *Pinta* broke loose, and, after being repaired as well as they were able at sea, the fastenings gave way a second time. Alonzo Pinzon was more than suspected of having caused this damage purposely, as he had endeavoured to avoid proceeding on this voyage before the expedition left Spain. Having again repaired the rudder, they continued the voyage, and successfully came to an anchor at the Canaries on August 12th. The admiral tried in vain to obtain another vessel for Pinzon. At length the *Pinta* having been patched up, the little



### CARAVELS OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

*(After an Engraving published in 1583.)*

squadron set sail. “Now,” says Ferdinand, “losing sight of land, and stretching out into utterly unknown seas, many of the people expressed their anxiety and fear that it might be long before they should see land again; but the admiral used every endeavour to comfort them, with the assurance of soon finding the land he was in search of, and raised their hopes of acquiring wealth and honour by the discovery.” He purposely under-stated the distance made each day, in order to make his people believe that they were not so far from Spain after all; but he carefully recorded the true reckoning in private. On September 12th they discovered in the water the trunk of a large tree; and the people in the *Nina*, a few days later, observed a heron flying over them, and also a smaller bird. Next, a quantity of yellowish-green sea-weed was observed floating in the water; a small lobster and a number of tunny fish were also noted. These signs of approaching land raised hopes which were not immediately fulfilled; and the crews, being utterly unacquainted with the seas they now traversed, seeing nothing but water and sky, began to mutter among themselves.

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Later, a number of seagulls and small land birds were seen, the latter settling sometimes in the rigging. Again, a vast floating field of sea-weed was encountered. These appearances gave some assurances of comfort to the men at times; but when the weeds became thick enough to partially impede the progress of the vessels, they became terrified, lest the fabled fate of St. Amaro in the frozen seas, whose vessel could neither move forward nor backward, might be theirs. "Wherefore they steered away from those shoals of weeds as much as they could."

On the 23rd a brisk WNW. gale, favourable for their course, arose, and on the same day a turtle-dove, a land fowl, and other birds, were seen. The more these tokens were observed, and found not to be followed by the anxiously-looked-for land, the more the crews rebelled; cabals were formed, of which the admiral was only partially aware. "They represented that they had already sufficiently performed their duty in adventuring further from land and all possibility of succour than had ever been done before, and that they ought not to proceed on the voyage to their manifest destruction." They growlingly remarked that Columbus was a foreigner, who desired to become a great lord at their expense, that he had no favour at court, and that the most learned men had scorned his ideas as visionary and absurd. Some even went so far as to propose cutting the Gordian knot by throwing him overboard. Poor Columbus! He had enough to do, sometimes expostulating and sometimes threatening, and always in danger of a mutiny upsetting all his grand projects. Nor were matters improved on September 25th, when Pinzon, whose vessel was near, shouted out to the admiral, "Land! land, sir! let not my good news miscarry!" Next morning the supposed land resolved itself into sea-clouds.

During the following days the men caught some fish "with gilt backs" with the aid of a line, and numerous birds were observed. Still Columbus persisted in a westerly course, although many on board, thinking that the birds were flying from one unseen island

to another, wished him to deviate. About sunrise on Sunday, October 7th, some signs of land appeared to the westward, “but being imperfect, no person would mention the circumstance. This was owing to fear of losing the reward of thirty crowns yearly for life which had been promised by their Catholic majesties to whoever should first discover land; and to prevent them calling out ‘land! land!’ at every turn without just cause, it was made a condition that whoever said he saw land should lose the reward if it were not made out in three days, even if he should afterwards actually prove the first discoverer.” Those on the *Nina*, however, forgot this provision, and fancying they saw land, fired a gun and hoisted their colours. This time also they were disappointed, but derived some comfort by observing great flights of large fowl and other birds going from the west towards the south-west.

It would have been impossible for the admiral to have much longer withstood the spirit of mutiny which was fast gaining ground, “but,” says the narrative of Ferdinand, “it pleased God that, in the afternoon of Thursday the 11th of October, such manifest tokens of being near the land appeared that the men took courage and rejoiced at their good fortune as much as they had been before distressed.” From the *St. Mary* a rush was seen to float past, and one of those green fish which are never found far from rocks. Some of the other men noted in the water a branch of a thorn, with red berries, a curiously-carved stick, and other plain indications of being close to land. After the evening prayer, Columbus made a speech to the men, in which “he reminded them of the mercy of God in having brought them so long a voyage with such favourable weather, and in comforting them with so many tokens of a successful issue to their enterprise.” As the admiral was in his cabin that night about ten o’clock he believed that he saw a light on shore; he called two of the men, one only of whom could perceive it. It was again seen by the admiral and the sailor, but only for a very brief space of time. “Being now very much on their guard,” says the narrative, [288]

“they still held on their course until about two in the morning of Friday the 12th of October, when the *Pinta*, which was always far ahead, owing to her superior sailing, made the signal of seeing land, which was first discovered by Roderick de Triana at about two leagues from the ship. But the thirty crowns a year were afterwards granted to the admiral, who had seen the light in the midst of darkness, a type of the spiritual light he was the happy means of spreading in these dark regions of error. Being now so near land, all the ships lay to; every one thinking it long till daylight, that they might enjoy the sight they had so long and anxiously desired.”<sup>47</sup>

When daylight arrived, the newly-discovered land was perceived to consist of a flat island, without hills, but well timbered. It was evidently well populated, for the beach was covered with people, who showed every sign of wonder at the sight of the ships, which, says Ferdinand, “they conceived to be some unknown animals.” The admiral and his commanders, each in their own boat, with their colours flying, went ashore, where, on arrival, they fell on their knees, and thanked God for his merciful kindness and for their happy discovery of the new land. Columbus then took formal possession of the island in the name of their Catholic majesties.

And now, these ceremonies concluded, the admiral went off to his fleet, the natives following in canoes, and many indeed swimming off to the vessels. Columbus named the island San Salvador, the title it still bears. As he supposed himself to have landed on an island at the extremity of India, he applied the term Indians to the aborigines he met, and the same has in consequence become general to all the original inhabitants of the New World. The islanders met by Columbus were friendly and gentle, and usually quite nude. They were painted; this they might regard in the light of costume, some, indeed, being coloured from head to

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<sup>47</sup> They had been seventy days on the passage from Spain.



COLUMBUS'S FIRST SIGHT OF LAND.

[289] foot. They had little or no knowledge of metal weapons, for when  
shown a naked sword they ignorantly grasped the whole blade,  
and were severely cut. Their javelins were wood, armed with  
[290] a piece of fish-bone. Their canoes ranged in size from such as  
were only capable of holding one person to those built for forty  
or more men, and were always hollowed in *one* piece, as among  
the northern Indians of British Columbia to-day, where canoes  
are to be seen which will carry fifty to sixty persons and two or  
three masts with sails. They had very little to offer in exchange  
for the toys and trinkets which had been provided for use on the  
expedition, but the avarice of the discoverers was soon excited  
by the sight of small ornaments of gold among them, with which  
they parted as readily as with anything else. Gold, in enterprises  
of discovery, being a royal monopoly, Columbus forbade any  
traffic in it, except by express permission. Parrots were a prime  
article of exchange among them, and cotton yarn. If they saw  
any trifle on board that struck their fancy they were as likely  
to jump into the sea with it as to offer anything for it, and, on  
the other hand, the Spaniards, after the manner of explorers, did  
not hesitate to accept their valuables in exchange for the merest  
trifles. The Indians would give twenty-five or so pounds of cotton  
for three Portuguese brass coins not worth a farthing. Enough; the  
story of their dealings is that of all times. It is scarcely more than  
twelve years since the writer saw the same kind of thing going  
on in Northern Alaska among unsophisticated natives. And, after  
all, "value" is a somewhat indefinite term. The luxuries of some  
climes are the drugs of others. The poor people met by Columbus  
highly valued a piece of broken glass or earthenware, because  
unknown to them, and because the possession of a fragment  
bestowed a proud distinction. Cannot we see the same kind of  
thing among the most civilised? The rare and scarce must of  
necessity be always the most valuable.

Columbus, continuing his voyage, discovered several minor  
islands. Everywhere he inquired for gold, and everywhere he

was informed that it came from the south. He began to hear of an island in that direction named Cuba, which, from the mistaken ideas of geography current at the time, he took for Marco Polo's famed gold island of Cipango. He determined to proceed there, and eventually seek the mainland of India, which must be within a few days' sail, and then he would deliver the letters of their Castilian Majesties to the Great Khan, and return triumphantly to Spain. Filled with this magnificent scheme, he set sail. We need not say that he reached neither Cipango, India, nor the Khan; but he did discover Cuba, that beautiful island of the Caribbean Sea long dear to the heart of every consumer of the fragrant weed. Every smoker of a good havana should think of Columbus with deepest gratitude. The Spaniards were struck with astonishment at seeing the natives roll up certain dried herbs, light up one end, and putting the other in their mouth, exhale smoke. Cigars as fresh as these are often smoked in Cuba to this day. Columbus extols the beauty of the verdure and scenery of the island, and states, as a proof of the gigantic nature of some of their trees, that he saw a canoe formed from one trunk capable of carrying 150 people.

While Columbus, on leaving the eastern end of Cuba, was somewhat undetermined which course to take, he descried land to the south-east, gradually increasing to the view, and giving promise of an island of large extent. The Indians on beholding it called out "Bohio" with obvious signs of terror, and implored him not to go near it, as the inhabitants were one-eyed cannibals, fierce and cruel. He, however, sailed closer and closer, till the signs of cultivation and prosperous villages became frequent. At first the natives fled. Even when only three sailors rambled on shore, and encountered a large number, they could not be induced to parley. The sailors at length succeeded in capturing a young female, in a perfectly nude condition, having hanging from her nose only an ornament of gold. Columbus soon soothed her terror, had her clothed, and gave her presents of beads, brass

rings, and other trinkets. She was sent on shore accompanied by three Indian interpreters and some of the crew. By this means, and after one of the interpreters had succeeded in overtaking some of the natives, and had assured them that the strangers had descended from the skies mainly for the purpose of making them presents, they were induced to meet the Spaniards, whom they treated with the greatest hospitality, setting before them fruit, fish, and cassava bread. The description of these people given by Columbus to old Peter Martyr represented them as holding a community of goods, “that ‘mine and thine,’ the seeds of all mischief, have no place with them.... They seem to live in the golden world, without toil, living in open gardens, not entrenched with dykes, divided with hedges, or defended with walls. They deal truly one with another, without laws, without books, and without judges. They take him for an evil and mischievous man who taketh pleasure in doing hurt to another.” This must have been Utopia indeed! Alas, as we shall see, the advent of so-called civilisation proved a veritable curse. Columbus named the island *Espannola*, or Little Spain (*Anglicé*, *Hispaniola*). The island is now known as Hayti, or San Domingo.

The people of Hispaniola appeared handsomer to Columbus than any he had yet met. He was at length visited by a young cacique or chief, and the interview was graphically described by Columbus himself in his oration before Ferdinand and Isabella and the court on his return to Spain.

Having put to sea on the morning of December 24th, at eleven in the evening, Columbus, being very fatigued, retired to his cabin. The sea was calm and the wind light at the time. No sooner had he left than the steersman gave the helm to a *grummet*,<sup>48</sup> and the result was that the current carried the vessel upon a treacherous sandbank. Scarcely had the shock occurred than Columbus and his crew were on deck, but in spite of aid

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<sup>48</sup> “Land-lubber” about expresses this term.



FACSIMILE OF AN ENGRAVING, REPUTED TO BE BY COLUMBUS, PUBLISHED IN 1493, REPRESENTING THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF SPAIN (ST. DOMINGO).

from the other vessel, she speedily became a wreck, and had to be deserted. The admiral immediately sent ashore to the village of the cacique, at some little distance, and that chief with all his people with canoes assisted to unload the unfortunate vessel. "From time to time," said Columbus, "he sent some of his people to me weeping, to beg me not to be dejected, as he would give me everything he possessed. I assure your highnesses that better order could not have been taken in any port in Castile to preserve our things, for we did not lose the value of a pin." The Indians about this time brought in some few specimens of gold, worked and in the rough state, and the cacique perceiving that the admiral was much pleased at the sight, said he would order a quantity to be brought from a place called Cibao, where it was abundant. After offering him to eat, he presented him with gold ornaments and masks, in which latter the precious metal formed part of the features.

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The chief complained greatly of a nation named the Caribs, who carried off and made slaves of his people, and Columbus, who was impressed with the beauty and productiveness of the island, readily promised to leave some of his people to protect him and form a colony. Cannons had not been very long familiar to Europeans, and we hardly wonder, therefore, that the natives "fell down as if dead" on hearing the reports of those fired by order of the admiral. Finding so much kindness among these people, and as the narrative of his son *naïvely* remarks, "*such strong indications of gold,*" he almost forgot his grief at the loss of his vessel. A fort or block-house was immediately erected, and leaving three officers and thirty-six men as garrison, he set sail for Spain.

On February 4th (1493) the vessels were overtaken by a fearful storm. The whole company betook themselves to prayer, and cast lots which of them should go on pilgrimage for the whole crew to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which fell to Columbus. After other pilgrimages had been vowed, and the



RECEPTION OF COLUMBUS BY FERDINAND AND  
ISABELLA.

storm still increasing, “they all made a vow to go barefooted and in their shirts to some church of Our Lady at the first land they might come to.” The admiral, fearing the loss to the world of his discoveries, retired to his cabin to write two brief accounts of them. These were wrapped in wax and enclosed in casks, one of which was thrown into the sea, while the other was placed on the poop of his vessel, in case she should founder. Happily, the storm subsided, and they reached the island of St. Mary, where they were detained by some formalities of the naval etiquette of the day. Leaving St. Mary’s, they encountered a second gale of terrific force, during the continuance of which more vows were made, and the lot again fell to Columbus, “showing,” says his son, “that his offerings were more acceptable than others.” They were driven off the rock of Cintra, and perforce had to anchor in the Tagus. When it was known at Lisbon that the ship was freighted with the people and productions of a new world the excitement was intense, and from morn to night the vessel was thronged with visitors. In an interview with the king, Columbus recited his adventures and discoveries. King John listened with the deepest interest, and for the moment concealed his mortification. Columbus himself was loaded with attentions and allowed to depart for Spain. Great was the agitation and excitement in the little town of Palos, when the well-known vessel of the admiral re-entered their harbour. Most of those who thronged to the shore had relatives or friends on board, and the previous winter had been one of the most severe and stormy within the recollection of the oldest mariners. They awaited the landing of Columbus and his crew, and then accompanied him to the principal church, where solemn thanksgivings were offered, and soon every bell in the village sent forth a joyous peal. His journey to Barcelona was one continued triumph. He was accompanied by several of the native islanders, arrayed in their simple barbaric costume, and decorated with rude collars, bracelets, and ornaments of gold. He exhibited in the principal towns quantities of gold dust,

many quadrupeds, and gaily-coloured birds, then unknown in Europe, with numerous specimens of natural productions in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. It was the middle of April when Columbus reached the Court at Barcelona. The nobility, courtiers, and city authorities, came to the gates to meet him, and escorted him to the royal presence. Ferdinand and Isabella, seated under a superb canopy of state, rose as he approached, and begged him to be seated—unprecedented marks of honour in that proud court. Columbus had triumphed; he had for the time silenced the sneers and cavils and specious arguments of courtiers and ecclesiastics. Prescott<sup>49</sup> has well described the interview. In reciting his adventures, “his manner was sedate and dignified, but warmed with the glow of natural enthusiasm. He enumerated the several islands which he had visited, expatiated on the temperate character of the climate, and the capacity of the soil for every variety of agricultural productions.... He dwelt more at large on the precious metals to be found in these islands.... Lastly, he pointed out the wide scope afforded to Christian zeal, in the illumination of a race of men, whose minds, far from being wedded to any system of idolatry, were prepared by their extreme simplicity for the reception of pure and uncorrupted doctrine. This last consideration touched Isabella’s heart most sensibly; and the whole audience, kindled with various emotions by the speaker’s eloquence, filled up the perspective with the gorgeous colouring of their own fancies, as ambition, or avarice, or devotional feeling, predominated in their bosoms. When Columbus ceased, the king and queen, together with all present, prostrated themselves on their knees in grateful thanksgivings, while the solemn strains of the *Te Deum* were poured forth by the choir of the royal chapel, as in commemoration of some glorious victory.” All kinds of attentions were showered upon him: he was permitted to quarter the royal arms with his own, which

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<sup>49</sup> “History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella.”

consisted of a group of golden islands amid azure billows; and received the substantial gratuity of 1,000 doblas of gold from the royal treasury, besides the premium promised to the person who first descried land. But that which pleased Columbus most were the preparations of the court for further discoveries, on a scale befitting their importance. The complement of the new fleet was originally fixed at 1,200 persons, but was eventually swollen to 1,500, and many who joined were persons of rank and distinction among the royal household. The squadron counted no less than seventeen vessels.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### DECISIVE VOYAGES IN HISTORY.—COLUMBUS. VASCO DA GAMA.

Columbus and his Enemies—Unsuitable Settlers—Outrageous Conduct of the Colonists—The Second Expedition of Columbus—Discovery of Jamaica—Dangerous Illness of Columbus—Return to Spain—The Excitement over—Difficulty of starting a New Expedition—Third Voyage—Columbus reaches the Mainland of America—Insurrection in Hispaniola—Machinations at Home—Columbus brought to Spain in Chains—Indignation in Spain—His Fourth Voyage—Ferdinand's Ingratitude—Death of the Great Navigator—Estimate of his Character—Vasco da Gama—First Voyage—The Cape reached—First Sight of India—At Calicut—Friendship of the King of

Cananore—Great Profits of the Expedition—Second  
 Voyage—Vengeance on the Ruler of Calicut—His  
 Brutality—Subsequent History of Da Gama.

The first accounts transmitted to Spain from this grand expedition were of the most sanguine description. But in less than two years from the commencement of this second voyage very different stories reached the home country. It was true that on the voyage Columbus had made further discoveries of a grand nature—the islands of Jamaica, Guadaloupe, and the Caribbee Islands. But rumours, and more than rumours, had reached the Court of the most alarming discontent and disaffection in the colony of Hispaniola, while the actual returns of a practical and commercial nature were as yet exceedingly small. The real secret was, however, that mutiny, jealousy, and distrust of Columbus as a foreigner, had sprung up among the Spanish adventurers, most, or at least many, of whom were little fitted for rough life in a new country. They were like the miscellaneous crowds who in our own day have gravitated towards the gold and diamond fields, a large number of whom expect to make gigantic fortunes without special effort, and in a very short space of time. The hidalgos and cavaliers, of whom there was a too large proportion on the expedition, could not bend themselves to obey Columbus, whom they deemed an upstart. Prescott, who has collated more carefully than any other writer the many authorities on the subject, shows that the Spaniards indulged in the most wanton licence in regard to the unoffending natives, who in the simplicity of their hearts had received the white men as messengers from heaven. A general resistance had, however, soon followed, which led to a war of extermination. In less than four years after the Spaniards had set foot on San Domingo, one-third of its native population, amounting, according to several authorities, to many hundred thousands, were sacrificed by war, famine, and disease. These figures are undoubtedly exaggerations, but the number was very

large. It is due to Columbus, always a just and humane man, to state that he did all in his power to prevent this sad state of affairs, and was forced by his own people to war on the Indians; and equally due to Isabella at home, to record that she was in no way a party to it, but expressed the utmost horror.<sup>50</sup> These excesses, and a total neglect of agriculture—for none would condescend to dig unless for gold—nearly brought about a famine, and Columbus had to put them on very short rations, and compel all to work, whether high or low bred. These regulations led to further mutiny and discontent.



ANCIENT GOLD-WASHING AT ST. DOMINGO. (*After an Old Engraving.*)

On the return of Columbus to Spain, he brought home, as before, some gold and other samples of Nature's productions in the islands. But other voyagers returned, who loudly abused the new colony, and whose often wan and sallow features provoked the satirical remarks of the people, that they had come back

<sup>50</sup> It must be remembered that it was the received opinion of the good Roman Catholics of the period, that heathen nations were outside the pale of spiritual and civil rights, and that their bodies were the property of their conquerors. Even Columbus recommended an exchange of native slaves for the commodities required in the colony; representing, moreover, that their conversion would be the more surely effected in slavery! *Vide* Prescott's "History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella."

with more gold in their features than in their pockets! In short, the novelty of the excitement had passed, and like many really valuable colonies of our own day which have been at first over-lauded and over-estimated, Hispaniola fell utterly in public estimation. The Spanish sovereigns, more especially Isabella, appear to have lent an unwilling ear to the accusations of mal-administration by Columbus. Meantime the treasury was drained by the expenses of an Italian war, and large expenses had been incurred for the actual maintenance of the colony. But Isabella, who really believed in Columbus, whose serious and yet enthusiastic character resembled her own, at length found some means for a new expedition, by sacrificing funds intended for another purpose. But now it was found as difficult to induce men to join the new expedition as it had been easy in the previous one. Even convicts were employed as sailors, and this proved a ruinous expedient. All being at length ready, Columbus once again embarked on May 30th, 1498, his little squadron consisting of six vessels. On this voyage he discovered Trinidad, the mouth of the Orinoco—which river he imagined to proceed from the tree of life in the midst of Paradise—and the coasts of Paria, South America. This was really, then his first visit to the *mainland* of America. On August 14th he sailed for Hispaniola once more, where he found that an insurrection had been raised against his brother, Bartolomeo, whom he had left as his deputy. At this juncture all the real interests of the colony were neglected, and even the gold-mines, which were beginning to prove remunerative, were unwrought. The convicts on the vessels helped to swell the mass of general mutiny, and it took Columbus nearly a year before it was in part quelled. Meantime discontented and worthless men kept returning to Spain, where, encouraged by idle courtiers, they worried the king daily with accounts of the unproductiveness of the colony. They even surrounded him, as he rode out on horseback, clamouring loudly for the arrears of which they said Columbus had defrauded them.

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It is very difficult to exactly understand the course pursued at this juncture by the king. The popular view, as adopted by most writers, is that he regarded Columbus as having served his day: the ladder had fulfilled its use, and might now be kicked down. It is, perhaps, more reasonable to believe that Ferdinand hardly knew how to act, with his queen still firmly believing in the great discoverer, and so much pressure in other directions being brought to bear from the court and outside. It was determined to send out a commissioner to investigate the affairs of the colony, and the person chosen seems to have been a most unfit agent. He was one Francisco de Bobadilla, a poor knight of Calatrava, who, puffed up with arrogance at his sudden elevation, seems from the first to have regarded Columbus in the light of a convicted criminal. On his arrival in San Domingo he immediately commanded the admiral to appear before him, and without even pretence of legal inquiry, put him in chains, and thrust him into prison. His two brothers, Bartolomeo and Diego, suffered the same indignities. Bobadilla gave orders that he should be kept strictly in irons during the passage; "afraid," says his son Ferdinand, satirically, "that he might by any chance swim back again to the island." It is recorded that the officers who had him in charge would have removed them, but Columbus proudly and bitterly told them, "I will wear them till the king orders otherwise, and will preserve them as memorials of his gratitude." On arrival at Cadiz, it is not to be wondered that the popular indignation burst forth like a torrent, and was re-echoed through Spain; all seemed to feel it as a national dishonour that such indignities should be heaped on the greatest discoverer of his day. Ferdinand understood the weight of obloquy which, rightly or wrongly, would rest upon him, and sent to Cadiz immediately to release him. The king disclaimed all share in the shameful act; while the queen, who was at least honest in the matter, shed tears when the old man came into her presence, and endeavoured to cheer his wounded spirit. But Ferdinand had no

intention of reinstating him in his former power, and Columbus wasted nine months in vain solicitations for redress. At the end of this time, another governor of Hispaniola was appointed in his place. During this time Columbus was reduced to poverty, and we have his own statement to the effect that “he had no place to repair to except an inn, and very frequently had not wherewithal to pay his reckoning.”



COLUMBUS UNDER ARREST.

Later he was indeed employed on a fourth voyage, but with greatly curtailed powers. He imagined that there might be a passage through the Isthmus of Darien, which would shorten the passage to the East Indies. It need not be stated that he did not find it, although a ship canal through that neck of land has been and is now being mooted, and may some day become an accomplished fact. He, however, discovered parts of the coasts of Honduras, the Mosquito coast, and Costa Rica. Again we

find him making his way to Hispaniola, on this occasion with only two over-crowded vessels, almost wrecks in fact, out of the four with which he had sailed from Cadiz. Here he exhausted his funds in procuring necessaries and comforts for his men, even for those who had on the voyage been the ringleaders of vexatious and outrageous mutinies. At length he returned to Spain, where he learned of the death of Queen Isabella, his warm patron. Wearied with illness and disappointment, it was some months before he could proceed on his journey to the court, then at Segovia. Columbus at this period of his life—he was not far from seventy years of age—suffered severely from gout. When he did meet Ferdinand, that monarch gave him fair words, but those alone. Prescott has probably indicated the secret, although he admits that “it was the grossest injustice to withhold from him the revenues secured by the original contract with the crown.” Poor Columbus was obliged to borrow money at this time for necessary expenses. The truth was that the king, as the resources of the new countries began to develop themselves, saw that he had promised a larger proportion of the profits than he ever would have done to a subject and a foreigner could he have foreseen the importance of the discoveries. He was so unjust as to at last propose a compromise—that the admiral should relinquish his claims, in consideration of other estates and dignities to be assigned him in Castile. He regarded him in the unwelcome light of a creditor, whose claims were too just to be disavowed, and too large to be satisfied. It is very doubtful whether Columbus received any assistance from the crown at this time, and wearied in spirit, with health broken by a life of great hardship, he did not long survive. He expired on May 20th, 1506, and his remains, first deposited at Valladolid, were, six years later, removed to Seville, where a costly monument was raised over them by King Ferdinand, with the following inscription:—

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“A Castilla y á Leon  
Nuevo mundo dió Colon”;

“Columbus has given a new world to Castile and Leon”—a very limited estimate of what he had done. From Seville his remains were taken, in 1536, to San Domingo; and at length, on the cession of that island to the French in 1795, were removed to Cuba, where they were finally allowed to repose in peace in the cathedral church of Havana. [298]

While the Spaniards were prosecuting enterprises of great importance in and about the New World, the Portuguese were well employed in pushing their way towards the Orient by a sea route. The aims of both were practically the same. Each wished to find a shorter route to that fabled Cathay, the land of gold, and pearls, and spice, and silk. The celebrated voyages of Vasco da Gama deserve a full share of notice.



VASCO DA GAMA.

The first expedition of Da Gama consisted of three moderate-sized vessels. On the Sunday selected for offering prayers for the success of the expedition, Dom John, with his nobles and court, assembled in the beautiful cathedral, which is still so great an ornament to the banks of the Tagus, and at the conclusion of mass the king stood before the curtain where Vasco and Paulo da Gama placed themselves with the captains of their expedition,

on bended knees, and devoutly prayed that they might have strength of mind and body to carry out the wishes of the king to increase the power and greatness of his dominion, and be the means of spreading the Christian religion. With these excellent professions, and amid very general demonstrations of popular interest, Da Gama set sail on July 5th, 1497. Proceeding for the Cape of Good Hope, Da Gama ventured boldly from the gulf of Guinea, and made a direct course to the Cape, and sailed for three months—August, September, and October—without sighting land. At last, on November 4th, they got sight of land in the forenoon, and were so rejoiced, that the ships were decorated with flags, and the captains and crews put on their best array, no doubt anxious to come to anchor somewhere, and land. It was some days, however, before they could do so, at a point believed to have been near the present St. Elena Bay. Da Gama with the other captains went ashore to endeavour to learn from the natives the distance to the Cape of Good Hope.

Leaving St. Elena they encountered heavy gales, during which Da Gama proved the possession of great courage and resolution. The waves ran mountains high, and the little vessels seemed in peril of being engulfed every minute. The wind was piercingly cold, and so boisterous that the commands of the pilot could seldom be heard amid the din of the elements. The sailors exhausted by fatigue and abandoned to despair, surrounded Da Gama, entreating him not to devote himself and them to inevitable destruction. But he resolved to proceed; and, at length, on Wednesday, the 20th November, all the squadron safely passed round the Cape, and on the 25th had sighted land beyond the furthest point reached by Diaz.

At Mozambique, Vasco da Gama sent a Moor ashore with presents to the Sheikh, who tried to act treacherously towards him, by stealing his merchandise. Nor did he fare much better at Quiloa, where the king endeavoured, by means of false pilots, to run Da Gama's ships on the shoals at the entrance of the

port. But at Melinde they were received with full honours, and large supplies of provisions were sent on board. The king visited the ships, and was received with royal hospitality. The expedition sailed on August 6th, the long delay being caused by the monsoons. After a passage of about twenty days they first sighted the high land of India off the coast of Cananore. The news of the arrival spread with great rapidity, and the natives were alarmed, for had they not the legend “that the whole of India would be taken and ruled over by a distant king, who had white people, who would do great harm to those who were not their friends?” The soothsayers, however, told them that the time had not yet come for the fulfilment of this prophecy. [299]

On the arrival of the expedition at Calicut<sup>51</sup> the Portuguese were well received, for the king had discovered that the strangers had plenty of merchandise with them. He immediately sent them presents, “of many pigs, fowls, and cocoa-nuts fresh and dry,” and professed to a desire to enter into friendly relations with the king of so great a people. When Da Gama landed, he took with him twelve men of “good appearance,” and a large number of presents and a display of cloths, crimson velvet and yellow satin, gilt and chased basins, and ewers, knives of Flanders with ivory handles and glittering blades, and so forth. But the Moorish traders, fearing to lose their business, interfered, and the king eventually turned round upon Gama, and endeavoured to capture his ships. Finding it unsafe to remain, the half-laden vessels left Calicut, Da Gama threatening revenge. In the King of Cananore they found a monarch well-disposed to trade, and the Portuguese ships sailed thence very richly laden for the homeward voyage.

Their arrival at Lisbon after two years and eight months’ absence was a time of great rejoicing. The direct results of the expedition, pecuniarily, were immense. In spite of the cost of the expedition and presents made, the profit was “fully sixty-

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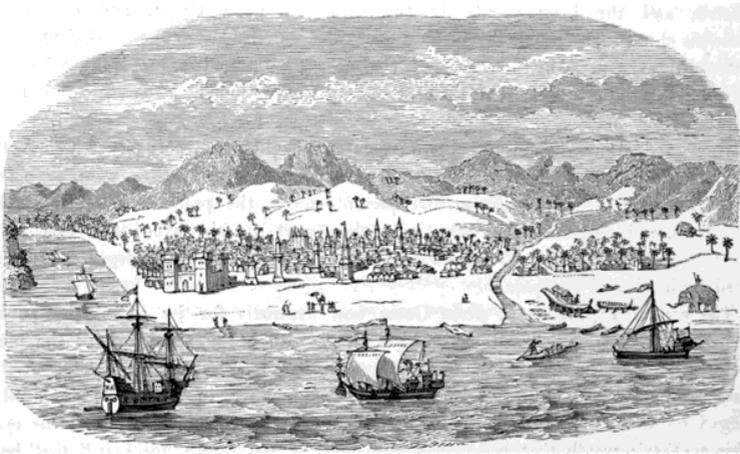
<sup>51</sup> Calicut, in the district of Malabar, must not be confounded with Calcutta. Calico derives its name from Calicut, once a famous manufacturing city.

fold.” Rewards were bestowed on all who had taken part in the expedition, and Da Gama himself received the title of “Dom” with many grants and privileges. He was also created high admiral of Spain.

The second expedition of Dom Gama had avowedly for its object the punishment of the King of Calicut. Ten large ships, fitted with heavy guns and all the munitions of war then known, with five lateen-rigged caravels, formed the fleet. Arrived at Cananore, he related to the friendly king the manner in which he intended to be revenged on the King of Calicut. The former “swore upon his head, and his eyes, and by his mother’s womb that had borne him, and by the prince, his heir,” that he would assist Da Gama to his utmost, and they soon matured a system of trade. Gama then sailed for Calicut, which he found deserted of its shipping, the news of his previous doings having reached that port.

The King made one effort at conciliation by sending on board one of the chief Brahmins of the place with a flag of truce, but Da Gama rejected every overture, ordered the Indian boat back, and kept the ambassador on board, while he bombarded the city. While this was going on there came in from the offing two large ships and twenty-two sambachs and Malabar vessels, which he plundered, with the exception of six of the smaller vessels that belonged to Cananore, and barbarously put to death a large number of the captives. The King of Calicut, surrounded with the wives and relations of those who had been so shamefully massacred, bewailing in the most heart-rending manner their loss, and beseeching protection, called a council, and it was resolved to construct armed proas, large rowing barges and sambachs, and as many vessels of war as could be mustered. Long before they were ready, Dom Gama had sailed with his fleet for Cochym (Cochin China) having on his way wreaked vengeance on as many of the Calicut vessels as crossed his path. The king of Cochym had resolved from the first to be friendly

with the Portuguese, and Gama soon established an important factory, from which the power of Portugal spread over India. In 1503 he returned to his own country, to be welcomed with fresh honours and titles, but was not immediately reappointed to command in India. In 1524, however, he was appointed viceroy of Portuguese India, and a year later died in Cochin China. Thus ended the life of one of the most courageous adventurers the world has seen, but a life stained by crimes of the most brutal nature.



VIEW OF CALICUT IN THE 15TH CENTURY.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

THE COMPANIONS AND FOLLOWERS OF COLUMBUS.

The Era of Spanish Discovery—Reasons for its Rapid Development—Ojeda’s First Voyage—Fighting the Caribs—Indians and Cannon—Pinzon’s Discovery of Brazil—A Rough Reception—Bastides the Humane—A New Calamity—Ships leaking like Sieves—Economical Generosity of King Ferdinand—Ojeda’s Second Voyage—The disputed Strong-Box—Ojeda Entrapped—Swimming in Irons—Condemned Abroad—Acquitted at Home—A Triumphant Client, but a Ruined Man—A Third Voyage—Worthy La Cosa—Rival Commanders—A Foolish Challenge.

In the following pages the enterprises of certain Spanish and Portuguese voyagers less known to fame than those recently under notice, but still great names in the history of maritime discovery, will be recorded. Not merely had the examples of such men as Columbus and Vasco da Gama stirred up a spirit of adventure unparalleled before or perhaps since, but, as Washington Irving shows us,<sup>52</sup> the conquest of Granada and the end of the Peninsular war with the Moorish usurpers, had deprived the Spanish of a sphere of action which had occupied them almost incessantly during the eight centuries preceding. The youth of the nation, bred up to daring adventure and heroic achievement, could not brook the tranquil and regular pursuits of common life, but panted for some new field of romantic enterprise. The treaty of Columbus with Ferdinand and Isabella was, in a sense, signed with the same pen that had subscribed to the capitulation of the Moorish capital; while not a few of the cavaliers who had fought in that memorable war now crowded the ships of the discoverers, firmly believing that a grand new field of arms had opened to them.

Alonzo de Ojeda, a native of New Castile, was one of this numerous class. He had fought against the Moors when a youth,

<sup>52</sup> “The Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus.”

and had accompanied Columbus on his second voyage when only twenty-one years of age. One of his relatives, a Dominican friar, was one of the first inquisitors of Spain, and was an intimate of the Bishop Fonseca, who had the chief management of the affairs of the Indies, which then included all the countries as yet known in the New World. Ojeda, therefore, was naturally and easily introduced to the Bishop's notice, who took him under his special protection. When he had accompanied Columbus he had taken with him a small Flemish painting of the Holy Virgin, presented to him by Fonseca, and this he had always carried with him as a protecting charm, invoking it at all times of peril; while to its possession he attributed his hitherto wonderful immunity from harm. When Columbus returned from his third voyage, with the news of rich discoveries, especially of the pearl-fisheries of Paria, Ojeda had no difficulty in obtaining from the Bishop, who was one of the worst enemies of poor Columbus, a commission authorising him to fit out an armament and proceed on a voyage of discovery. It does not appear that the sanction of the King and Queen was asked on this occasion. The means were readily supplied by merchants of Seville. Among his associates were several men who had just returned with Columbus, principal among whom was a bold Biscayan, Juan de la Cosa by name. Amerigo Vespucci, the man from whose first name the title of America is derived, a broken-down Florentine merchant, accompanied the expedition. It does not appear that he had any interest in the voyage, or even position on board ship. Ojeda sailed from Spain on the 20th May, 1499.

After touching at the Canaries, he made, for those days, a rapid voyage to America. In twenty-four days from leaving the islands he reached the New World, at a part of the coast considerably south of that discovered by Columbus, and after a little passed the mouths of several large rivers, including those of the Orinoco and Esquivo, rivers which freshen the sea-water for many miles outside. They afterwards touched at the island of Trinidad, of the

inhabitants of which Vespucci gives a number of details. He tells us that they believed in no religious creed, and therefore neither prayed nor offered sacrifice. Their habitations were practically caravanserais, built in the shape of bells (meaning, doubtless, with bell-shaped roofs), each holding from six hundred to over a thousand inhabitants. He adds that every seven or eight years the inhabitants were obliged to change their residences, from the maladies engendered by such close packing. They ornamented themselves with beads and ornaments made from the bones of fishes, with white and green stones strung together as necklaces, and with the feathers of tropical birds. They buried their dead in caverns or sepulchres, always leaving a jar of water and something to eat by the head of the corpse, as do some tribes to-day.

At Maracapaná, on the mainland, the natives were friendly, and brought quantities of fish, venison, and cassava bread. They anxiously besought the Spaniards to aid them in punishing their enemies, the cannibals of a distant isle, and Ojeda seems to have rather liked the proposition. Taking seven of the natives on board his vessels to act as guides, he set sail in quest of these cannibal islands, which are believed to have been the Caribbees. After seven days he ran his vessels in near the shore of one which the guides indicated to be the habitation of their cruel foes, and a number of painted and befeathered warriors were seen on the shore, well armed with bows and arrows, darts, lances, and bucklers. "This show of war," says Irving, "was calculated to rouse the martial spirit of Ojeda. He brought his ships to anchor, ordered out his boats, and provided each with a paterero or small cannon. Besides the oarsmen, each boat contained a number of soldiers, who were told to crouch out of sight in the bottom. The boats then pulled in steadily for the shore. As they approached, the Indians let fly a cloud of arrows, but without much effect. Seeing the boats continue to advance, the savages threw themselves into the sea, and brandished their lances to

prevent their landing. Upon this the soldiers sprang up in the boats and discharged the patereroes. At the sound and smoke of these unknown weapons the savages abandoned the water in affright, while Ojeda and his men leaped on shore and pursued them. The Carib warriors rallied on the banks, and fought for a long time with that courage peculiar to their race, but were at length driven to the woods at the edge of the sword, leaving many killed and wounded on the field of battle.” Next day a larger number of the savages gathered on the beach, but, after a desperate fight, were routed, their houses burned, and many taken prisoners, which was probably Ojeda’s principal object in attacking them. Many similar experiences followed, but in all cases, as might be expected, the Spaniards came out conquerors, scarcely any of their men being even seriously wounded. At one place over a thousand Indians came off in canoes or swam from shore, so that in a little while the vessel’s decks were crowded. While they were gazing in wonder at all they saw on board, Ojeda ordered the cannon to be discharged, at the unaccustomed sound of which they “plunged into the water like so many frogs from a bank.”

Ojeda returned to Cadiz in June, 1500, his ships packed with slaves. But the commercial results of the voyage, after allowing for expenses, were so small that only about 500 ducats remained to be divided between fifty-five adventurers. Nino, another adventurer, who had once served as pilot with Columbus, made a voyage at the same period in a bark of only fifty tons, returning two months before Ojeda, with a large number of the finest pearls and some gold. The amount of pearls paid into the royal treasury was so large that it drew suspicion instead of favour upon Nino and one of his associates, and the first was actually thrown into prison on the accusation of having kept the larger part of the spoil. But nothing could be proved against him, and he was eventually set free.

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The year 1499 was also marked by a most important discovery,

that of the great kingdom of Brazil. It was reserved for Vicente Yanez Pinzon, in an otherwise disastrous voyage, to first cross the equinoctial line, and on the 28th of January, 1500, to sight the Cape, now known as that of St. Augustine, which he, however, first named *Santa Maria de la Consolacion*, because its appearance relieved him from much doubt and anxiety. Soon after he had taken formal possession of the territory in the name of Spain, an affray with the Indians occurred. In a general assault the latter killed eight or ten Spaniards, and the crews retreated to their boats, disputing every inch of ground. The Indians pursued them into the water, surrounded the boats, and seized the oars. In spite of a desperate defence they succeeded in overpowering the crew of one of the boats, and carried it off. "With this," says Irving, "they retired from the combat, and the Spaniards returned defeated and disheartened to their ships, having met with the roughest reception that the Europeans had yet experienced in the New World." Pinzon revenged himself, not on these savages, but on a quiet and hospitable tribe found on some beautiful islands off the mouth of the great Amazon River. Thirty-six of the poor natives were carried off, to be sold afterwards as slaves.

Off the Bahamas Pinzon's little squadron of four vessels encountered a terrific hurricane, and two of them went down with all hands in sight of the remaining two, the crews of which were powerless to help. The third was driven out to sea, and the fourth was so battered by the furious waves that her crew abandoned her in their boats. A few inoffensive Indians were found ashore, and fearing that they might spread the tidings that a mere handful of shipwrecked Spaniards were on the island, it was seriously proposed to put them to death, when fortunately the vessel which had been driven away returned, and it was later found that the other had ridden out the storm uninjured. They speedily made sail for Spain, and arrived at Palos in safety. Pinzon had as much as he could do to prevent the merchants who had supplied goods for the voyage—at an advance of a hundred

per cent. or so—from seizing and selling the vessels and cargoes. But a royal edict prevented this, and he was able to satisfy them in the end, after incurring much loss to himself.

The Pinzon family were subsequently ennobled by the Emperor Charles V. When Washington Irving visited Palos he found numerous branches of the descendants enjoying excellent circumstances, and living in an almost patriarchal manner.

In the year 1500, Rodrigo de Bastides, a wealthy Sevillian notary, inflamed with the hopes of rapid wealth, fitted out two caravels, and associated with him the veteran pilot, Juan de la Cosa, already mentioned. The first honourably distinguished himself by his constant humanity to the natives, and the voyage was successful, commercially speaking, for on the South American coasts and islands they collected a very large amount of gold and pearls, but an unforeseen misfortune arrived. They found their vessels leaking most seriously, for their hulls had been pierced in innumerable places by marine worms. It was with difficulty that they could keep afloat until they reached an inlet on the coast of Hispaniola, where they plugged and patched up their ships, and again put to sea for Cadiz. Storm succeeded storm; the worms were again at work, and the leaks broke out afresh. They were obliged to return to the inlet, where they landed the most profitable and valuable parts of their cargoes, and the vessels foundered with the remainder. Distributing his men into three bands, they started for San Domingo by different routes, each party being provided with trinkets and Indian trading goods. Francisco de Bobadilla, the enemy and successor of Columbus, was then Governor of San Domingo. He believing, or pretending to believe, that the adventurers were carrying on an illicit trade with the natives, arrested Bastides and threw him into prison, afterwards sending him for trial to Spain. He sailed in the same fleet in which Bobadilla embarked for Spain, and which was for the most part wrecked. The ship of Bastides was one of the few to outlive the storm; it arrived at Cadiz in September, 1502. [304]

Bastides was, of course, acquitted of the charges brought against him, and the voyage had been so lucrative that, notwithstanding all losses, he was enabled to pay a handsome tribute to the crown and retain a large amount for himself. Ferdinand and Isabella granted Bastides and La Cosa an annual revenue for life, to be derived from the proceeds of the province of Uraba, which he had discovered. "Such," says Irving, "was the economical generosity of King Ferdinand, who rewarded the past toils of his adventurous discoverers out of the expected produce of their future labours." It is doubtful whether either at any time derived benefit from these grants.

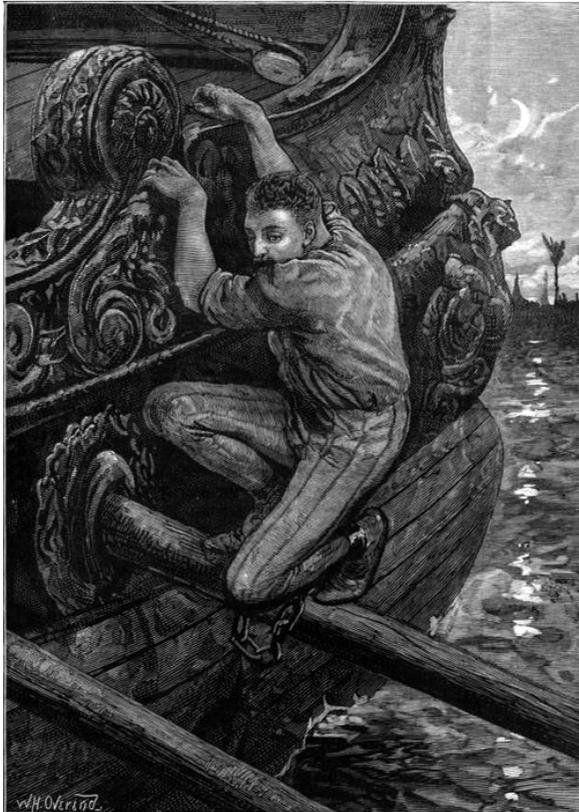
Alonzo de Ojeda had gained nothing by his first voyage, but had earned an honourable reputation as an explorer. His patron the Bishop recommended him in 1502 once more to the royal favour, and a grant was made to him of a considerable tract of land in Hispaniola, and the government of the province of Coquebacao, which territory he had discovered. Four vessels were fitted out, and, to pass over minor details, reached a part of the South American coast called by the natives Cumana, where the idea struck Ojeda that he should want furniture and utensils for his new colony, "and that it would be better to pillage them from a country where he was a mere transient visitor, than to wrest them from his neighbours in the territory where he was to set up his government." This scheme was carried into immediate execution, Ojeda ordering his men not to destroy the habitations of the Indians, nor to commit bloodshed. His followers, however, did not implicitly obey his instructions, and seven or eight natives were killed and many more wounded in the skirmish which took place. Many of their dwellings were fired. A large number of hammocks, quantities of cotton, and utensils of various kinds, fell into the victors' hands, and they captured several females, some of whom were afterwards ransomed for gold, and others carried off. The place was found destitute of provisions, and Ojeda was forced to send one of his vessels to Jamaica for supplies.

Ojeda at length arrived at Coquibacao, landing at a bay supposed to be that now known as Bahia Honda, where he found a Spaniard who had been living among the natives some thirteen months, and had acquired their language. Ojeda determined to form his settlement there, but the natives seemed disposed to defend their country, for “the moment a party landed to procure water they were assailed by a galling shower of arrows, and driven back to the ships. Upon this Ojeda landed with all his force, and struck such terror into the Indians that they came forward with signs of amity, and brought a considerable quantity of gold as a peace-offering, which was graciously accepted.” [306] The construction of the fortress was at once commenced, and although interrupted by the attack of a neighbouring cacique, who was, however, easily defeated, Ojeda’s men completed it speedily. It contained a magazine of provisions, dealt out twice a day, and was defended by cannon. The treasure gained in trade, or by robbery, was deposited in a strong box with double locks.

Meantime provisions were becoming scarce, while the vessel which had been despatched to Jamaica for supplies did not appear. “The people, worn-out with labours and privations of various kinds, and disgusted with the situation of the settlement, which was in a poor and unhealthy country, grew discontented and factious. They began to fear that they should lose the means of departing, as their vessels were in danger of being destroyed by the marine worms. Ojeda led them forth repeatedly upon foraging parties about the adjacent country, and collected some provisions and booty in the Indian villages. The provisions he deposited in the magazine, part of the spoil he divided among his followers, and the gold he locked up in the strong box, the keys of which he took possession of, to the great displeasure of the supervisor and his associate Ocampo. The murmurs of the people grew loud as their sufferings increased. They insinuated that Ojeda had no authority over this part of the coast, having passed the boundaries of his government, and formed his

settlement in the country discovered by Bastides. By the time Vergara arrived from Jamaica the factions of this petty colony had risen to an alarming height. Ocampo had a personal enmity to the governor, arising probably from some feud about the strong box; and being a particular friend of Vergara, he held a private conference with him, and laid a plan to entrap the doughty Ojeda. In pursuance of this the latter was invited on board the caravel of Vergara, to see the provisions he had brought from Jamaica; but no sooner was he on board than they charged him with having transgressed the limits of his government, with having provoked the hostility of the Indians, and needlessly sacrificed the lives of his followers, and above all, with having taken possession of the strong box, in contempt of the authority of the royal supervisor, and with the intention of appropriating to himself all the gains of the enterprise. They informed him, therefore, of their intention to convey him a prisoner to Hispaniola, to answer to the governor for his offences." Ojeda was entrapped, and scarcely knew what to do. He proposed to Vergara and Ocampo that they should return to Spain with such of the men as were tired of the enterprise, and they at first agreed with this, and promised to leave him the smallest of the vessels, and a third of the provisions and spoils. They even engaged to build him a row boat before leaving, and commenced the work; but the ship carpenters were invalids, and there were no caulkers, and the two conspirators soon changed their minds, and resolved to take him prisoner to Hispaniola. He was put in irons, and the vessels set sail, having on board the whole of the little community, as well as that strong box of gold and treasure, the disputed possession of which was at the bottom of most of this trouble.

Arrived off the desired coast, Ojeda made a bold struggle for liberty. He was a strong man and a good swimmer, so one night he let himself down quietly into the sea, and made an attempt to reach the land. But, while his arms were free, his feet were shackled with heavy iron, sufficient in itself almost to sink him.



OJEDA'S ATTEMPTED ESCAPE.

He had not got far when he was obliged to shout for help, and the unfortunate governor was brought back half drowned to his unrelenting partners. They delivered him a prisoner into the hands of the authorities, but held fast to the strong box, taking from it, Ojeda afterwards stated, whatever they thought proper, without regard to the royal supervisor or the royal rights. Ojeda was tried in the city of San Domingo, where the chief judge gave a verdict against him, depriving him of all his effects, and brought him in debt to the crown. He afterwards appealed to the crown, and after some time was honourably acquitted by the Royal Council, and his property ordered to be restored. "Like too many other litigants," says Irving, "he finally emerged from the labyrinths of the law a triumphant client, but a ruined man." Costs had swallowed his all, and for years we know little of his life.

In 1508 he was in Hispaniola, "as poor in purse, though as proud in spirit, as ever." About this period there was a great excitement in Spain concerning the gold mines of Veragua, first discovered by Columbus, and described in glowing terms by subsequent voyagers. King Ferdinand should in honour have given Bartholomew, the brother of Christopher Columbus, the command of any expedition sent out to that country, but he appears to have thought that the family had received reward enough, and more than enough, already, so the claims of Ojeda were advanced by his friend the Bishop Fonseca, and the king lent a favouring ear. There was, however, a rival candidate in the field, one Diego de Nicuesa, an accomplished courtier of noble birth and considerable means, and the king compromised matters by granting both equal "patents and dignities which cost nothing, and might bring rich returns." He divided the territory they were to explore equally; and this is all, for they were to furnish their own ships and supplies. Poor Ojeda had no means whatever, but at this juncture he fortunately met the veteran Juan de la Cosa in Hispaniola, and that hardy old navigator had managed to fill his

purse in the course of his cruising. La Cosa had, as we know, sailed with Ojeda long before, and had a great admiration of his courage and talents, so in the spirit of a true sailor he now offered assistance to his old comrade, and it was arranged that he should go to Spain, and if necessary should fit out the required vessels at his own expense.

Juan de la Cosa, soon after reaching Spain, was appointed lieutenant, under Ojeda, and he thereupon freighted a ship and two brigantines, in which he embarked with about two hundred men. "It was," says Irving, "a slender armament, but the purse of the honest voyager was not very deep, and that of Ojeda was empty." Nicuesa was able to start in much more gallant style, with four large vessels and two brigantines.

The rival armaments arrived at San Domingo at about the same time, Nicuesa having done a stroke of business on the way by capturing a hundred natives from one of the Caribbee Islands. "This was deemed justifiable in those days even by the most scrupulous divines, from the belief that the Caribs were anthropophagi, or man-eaters; fortunately the opinion of mankind in this more enlightened age makes but little difference in atrocity between the cannibal and the kidnapper." It need hardly be said that Ojeda was overjoyed at the sight of his old comrade, although he was mortified to note the superiority of Nicuesa's armament to his own. He, however, looking about him for the means of increasing his strength, was so far fortunate that he succeeded in inducing a lawyer, the Bachelor Martin Fernandez de Enciso, who had saved two thousand castillanos (somewhat over the same number of pounds sterling), to invest his money in the enterprise. Ojeda promised to make him Alcalde Mayor, or Chief Judge, and the prospect of such dignity dazzled the notary. It was arranged that the latter should remain in Hispaniola to beat up recruits and supplies, and with them he was to follow in a ship purchased by himself.

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"Two rival governors," says Irving, "so well matched as Ojeda

and Nicuesa, and both possessed of swelling spirits, pent up in small but active bodies, could not remain long in a little place like San Domingo without some collision. The island of Jamaica, which had been assigned to them in common, furnished the first ground of contention; the province of Darien furnished another, each pretending to include it within the limits of his jurisdiction. Their disputes on these points ran so high that the whole place resounded with them." Nicuesa was the better talker, having been brought up at court, while Ojeda was no great casuist. He was, however, an excellent swordsman, and always ready to fight his way through any question of right or dignity, and he challenged Nicuesa to single combat. Nicuesa was no coward, but as a man of the world, saw the folly of such a proceeding, so he slyly proposed that they should each deposit five thousand castillanos—just to make the fight interesting—and to constitute a prize for the winner. This rather checked poor Ojeda, who had not a dollar he could call his own; but his cool and discreet friend Cosa had a considerable amount of trouble with him afterwards, before he could bring him to reason. The character of Cosa, as we shall see hereafter, was a very noble one. He was Ojeda's best counsellor and truest friend.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE COMPANIONS AND FOLLOWERS OF COLUMBUS  
(*concluded*).

Nicuesa and the Duns of San Domingo—Indian Contempt  
for a Royal Manifesto—La Cosa's Advice

Disregarded—Ojeda's Impetuosity—A Desperate  
 Fight—Seventy Spaniards Killed—La Cosa's Untimely  
 End—Ojeda found Exhausted in the Woods—A Rival's  
 Noble Conduct—Avenged on the Indians—A New  
 Settlement—Ojeda's Charm fails—A Desperate  
 Remedy—In Search of Provisions—Wrecked on Cuba—A  
 Toilsome March—Kindly Natives—Ojeda's Vow  
 Redeemed—Dies in Abject Poverty—The Bachelor Enciso  
 and Balboa—Smuggled on Board in a Tub—Leon and his  
 Search for the Fountain of Youth—Discovery of  
 Florida—Magellan—Snubbed at Home—Warmly seconded  
 by the Spanish Emperor—His resolute  
 Character—Discovery of the Straits—His Death—The First  
 Voyage round the World—Captain Cook's  
 Discoveries—His Tragical Death—Vancouver's Island.

Nicuesa remained some time in San Domingo after the sailing of his rival's fleet, obtaining so many volunteers that he had to purchase another ship to convey them. That commander was much more the courtier than the man of business, and expended his money so freely that in the end he found himself seriously involved. Some of his creditors, knowing that his expedition was not favourably regarded by the governor, Admiral Don Diego Columbus, threw every obstacle in the way of his departure, and never was an unfortunate debtor more harassed by duns, most of whom he managed, however, to satisfy or mollify. His forces, which now numbered seven hundred men, were safely embarked, but just as he was stepping into his boat he was arrested for a debt of five hundred ducats, and carried before the Alcalde Mayor. [309] "This was a thunderstroke to the unfortunate cavalier. In vain he represented his utter incapacity to furnish such a sum at the moment; in vain he represented the ruin that would accrue to himself, and the vast injury to the public service, should he be prevented from joining his expedition. The Alcalde Mayor was inflexible, and Nicuesa was reduced to despair. At

this critical moment relief came from a most unexpected quarter. The heart of a public notary was melted by his distress! He stepped forward in court, and declared that rather than see so gallant a gentleman reduced to extremity, he himself would pay down the money. Nicuesa gazed at him with astonishment, and could scarce believe his senses; but when he saw him actually pay off the debt, and found himself suddenly released from this dreadful embarrassment, he embraced his deliverer with tears of gratitude, and hastened with all speed to embark, lest some other legal spell should be laid upon his person.”

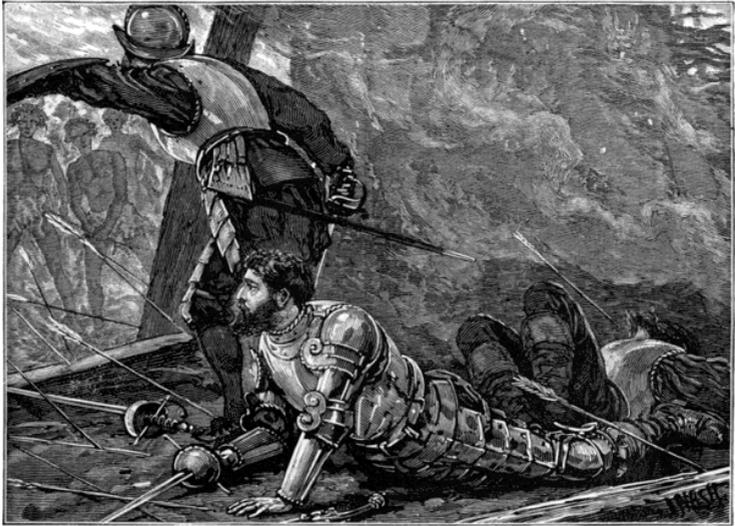
Ojeda set sail from San Domingo on the 10th of November, 1509, with three hundred men, among the adventurers being Francisco Pizarro, afterwards the renowned conqueror of Peru. They arrived speedily at Carthagen, which harbour Cosa advised Ojeda to abandon, and commence a settlement in the Gulf of Uraba, where the natives were much less ferocious, and did not use poisoned weapons, as did those of the former place. Ojeda, however, was too high-spirited to alter his plans on account of any number of naked savages, and he landed with a considerable force, and several friars, who had been sent out to convert the natives, were ordered to read aloud a manifesto, which had been specially written by eminent divines and jurists in Spain. It was utterly thrown away on the savages, who immediately made demonstrations of the most warlike kind.

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Cosa once more begged Ojeda to leave these unfriendly shores, but in vain, and the latter, offering up a short prayer to the Virgin, led on a furious charge. Juan de Cosa followed in the bravest manner, although the assault was contrary to his advice. The Indians were soon driven off, and a number killed or taken prisoners, on whose persons plates of gold were found. Flushed by this easy victory, he pursued them into the interior, followed as usual by his faithful, though unwilling lieutenant. Having penetrated deep into the forest, they came to a stronghold of the enemy, where they were warmly received. Ojeda led his men on

with the old Castilian war-cry, "Santiago!" and in a few minutes the Indians took to flight. "Eight of their bravest warriors threw themselves into a cabin, and plied their bows and arrows so vigorously that the Spaniards were kept at bay. Ojeda cried shame upon his followers to be daunted by eight naked men. Stung by this reproach, an old Castilian soldier rushed through a shower of arrows and forced the door of the cabin, but received a shaft through the heart and fell dead on the threshold. Ojeda, furious at the sight, ordered fire to be set to the combustible edifice; in a moment it was in a blaze, and the eight warriors perished in the flames." Seventy prisoners were sent on board the ships. Ojeda, still against the strongly-expressed advice of Cosa, continued his pursuit, and he and his followers arrived at what appeared to be a deserted village. They had scattered in search of booty, when troops of savages, who had been concealed in the forest, surrounded them. The desperate valour and iron armour of the Spaniards availed little, for they were overwhelmed by numbers, and scattered into detached parties. Ojeda collected a few of his followers, and made a desperate resistance from the interior of a palisaded enclosure. "Here he was closely besieged and galled by flights of arrows. He threw himself on his knees, covered himself with his buckler, and being small and active, managed to protect himself from the deadly shower, but all his companions were slain by his side, some of them perishing in frightful agonies. At this fearful moment the veteran La Cosa, having heard of the peril of his commander, arrived with a few followers to his assistance. Stationing himself at the gate of the palisades, the brave Biscayan kept the savages at bay until most of his men were slain, and he himself was severely wounded. Just then Ojeda sprang forth like a tiger into the midst of the enemy, dealing his blows on every side. La Cosa would have seconded him, but was crippled by his wounds. He took refuge with the remnant of his men in an Indian cabin, the straw roof of which he aided them to throw off, lest the enemy should set

it on fire. Here he defended himself until all his comrades but one were destroyed. The subtle poison of his wounds at length overpowered him, and he sank to the ground. Feeling death at hand, he called to his only surviving companion. ‘Brother,’ said he, ‘since God hath protected thee from harm, sally forth and fly, and if thou shouldst see Alonzo de Ojeda, tell him of my fate!’ ” Thus perished one of the ablest of the Spanish explorers, and one of the most loyal of friends, a true counsellor, and a warm-hearted partisan.



THE DEATH OF LA COSA.

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Meanwhile there was great alarm on the ships at the non-arrival of the seventy men who had adventured into the forests on this mad expedition. Parties were sent ashore and round the coasts, where they fired signal guns and sounded trumpets, but in vain. At length some of them arrived at a great thicket of mangrove trees, amid the entanglements of which they caught

a glimpse of a man in Spanish attire. Approaching, they found that it was their commander, buckler on shoulder and sword in hand, but so weak with hunger and fatigue that he could not utter a word. When he was a little revived by the fire they made on the shore, and the food and wine they gave him, he told the story of how he had escaped from the savage bands, how he had hidden every day, and struggled forward at night among rocks and thickets and matted forests till he reached the coast. As another proof of the special protection of the Virgin he showed them his buckler bearing the marks of 300 arrows, while he had received no wound whatever.

Just as this transpired, the fleet of Nicuesa arrived, and Ojeda was much troubled in mind, remembering his late rash challenge. He ordered his men to return to the ships, and leave him on the shore till his rival should depart. Some of the men went to Nicuesa and intreated him not to take advantage of Ojeda's misfortunes. But there was no need for this, and Nicuesa blushed with indignation that they should think him a gentleman so unworthy the name. He told them to bring their commander to him, and when they met he received his late foe with every show of friendship. "It is not," said he, "for hidalgos, like men of vulgar souls, to remember past differences when they behold one another in distress. Henceforth, let all that has occurred between us be forgotten. Command me as a brother. Myself and my men are at your orders, to follow you wherever you please, until the deaths of Juan de la Cosa and his comrades are revenged." This noble offer was not one of words only, and the two commanders became fast friends. Four hundred men, with several horses, were landed, and they approached the village, which had cost them seventy lives, in the dead of the night, their near approach being heralded by the numerous parrots in the woods, which made a great outcry. The Indians paid no attention, however, believing that the Spaniards had been exterminated, and they found their village in flames before they took the alarm. The Spaniards either

killed them at their doors or drove them back into the flames. The horses, which they supposed to be savage monsters, caused great alarm. The carnage was something fearful, for no quarter was given. While ranging about in search of booty they found the body of La Cosa tied to a tree, swollen and discoloured in a hideous manner by the poison of the Indian arrows. "This dismal spectacle had such an effect upon the common men that not one would remain in that place during the night." The spoil in gold and other valuables was so great that the share of Nicuesa and his men amounted to 37,281 dollars.



ARRIVAL OF OJEDA AND HIS FOLLOWERS AT THE  
INDIAN VILLAGE.

Ojeda now, somewhat late in the day, took the advice of his late faithful lieutenant, and steered for the Gulf of Uraba, where he formed a settlement which he named St. Sebastian. The Indians of the surrounding country proved unfriendly and hostile, and at length their provisions began to fail. "In one of their expeditions they were surprised by an ambuscade of savages in a gorge of the mountains, and attacked with such fury and effect that they were completely routed, and pursued with yells and howlings to the very gates of St. Sebastian. Many died in excruciating agony of their wounds, and others recovered with extreme difficulty. Those who were well no longer dared to venture forth in search of food, for the whole forest teemed with lurking foes. They devoured such herbs and roots as they could find without regard to their quality. Their bodies became corrupted, and various diseases, combined with the ravages of famine, daily thinned their numbers. The sentinel who feebly mounted guard at night was often found dead at his post in the morning. Some stretched themselves on the ground, and expired of mere famine and debility; nor was death any longer regarded as an evil, but rather as a welcome relief from a life of horror and despair." Such is the chronicler's mournful account. [312]

We have seen that Ojeda felt unbounded confidence in his charm—the picture of the Holy Virgin—and he had so long escaped unscathed that the Indians also believed him to bear a charmed life. They determined one day to test the question, and placed four of their most expert archers in ambush, with directions to single him out, while a number more advanced to the fort sounding their conches and drums, and yelling with hideous noises. Ojeda sallied forth to meet them, and the Indians fled to the ambuscade. The archers waited till he was full in front, and then discharged their poisoned arrows. Three he warded off by his buckler, but the fourth pierced his thigh. Ojeda was carried back to the fort, more despondent than he had ever yet been, for his talisman seemed to have failed him, and thrilling pains shot

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through his body. But he was not to be thus defeated. He caused two plates of iron to be made red hot, and ordered a surgeon to apply them to each orifice of his wound. The surgeon, fearful that should he die the death would be laid to his door, shudderingly refused, whereupon Ojeda threatened to hang him if he did not obey, and he was obliged to comply. Ojeda refused to be held or tied down, and endured the agony without moving a muscle. This violent remedy so inflamed his system that he had to be wrapped in sheets steeped in vinegar to allay the fever, and it is said that a barrel of vinegar was consumed in this way. But he lived, and his wounds healed; “the cold poison,” says Las Casas, “was consumed by the vivid fire.”

At this time their provisions were again becoming scarce, and the arrival of a strange ship, commanded by one Bernardino de Talavera, a desperate pirate, was welcomed, as it brought some relief, although supplies were only furnished for large prices in gold. Some dissatisfaction was expressed at the division of the food, and shortly afterwards serious factions arose. At last Ojeda volunteered to go himself to San Domingo in quest of necessary supplies, to which his followers agreed, and he embarked on board Talavera’s ship. They had scarcely put to sea when a serious quarrel arose between the freebooter and Ojeda; the latter, apparently, having acted on board as though he were commander instead of passenger. He was actually put in irons, where “he reviled Talavera and his gang as recreants, traitors, pirates, and offered to fight the whole of them successively, provided they would give him a clear deck and come on two at a time.” They left him fuming and raging in his chains until a violent gale arose, and they bethought themselves that Ojeda was a skilful navigator. They then parleyed, offering him his liberty if he would pilot the ship, and he consented, but all his skill was unavailing, and he was obliged to run her on the southern coast of Cuba—then as yet uncolonised, except by runaway slaves from Hayti. Here they made a toilsome march through forests

and morasses, crossing mountains and rivers, in a nearly starved condition. One morass, entangled by roots and creeping vines, and cut up by sloughs and creeks, occupied them thirty days to cross, at the end of which time only thirty-five men survived out of seventy that had left the ship. At last they reached an Indian village. “The Indians gathered round and gazed at them with wonder, but when they learnt their story, they exhibited a humanity that would have done honour to the most professing Christians. They bore them to their dwellings, set meat and drink before them, and vied with each other in discharging the offices of the kindest humanity. Finding that a number of their companions were still in the morass, the cacique sent a large party of Indians with provisions for their relief, with orders to bring on their shoulders such as were too feeble to walk.... The Spaniards were brought to the village, succoured, cherished, consoled, and almost worshipped as if they had been angels.” And now Ojeda prepared to carry out a vow he had made on his journey, that if saved, he would erect a little hermitage or oratory, with an altar, above which he would place the picture to which he attributed his wonderful escape. The cacique listened with attention to his explanations regarding the beneficence of the Virgin, whom he represented as the mother of the Deity who reigned above, and acquired a profound veneration for the picture. Long after, when the Bishop Las Casas, who has recorded these facts, arrived at the same village, he found the chapel preserved with religious care. But when he offered—wishing to obtain possession of the relic—to exchange it for an image of the Virgin, the chief made an evasive reply, and next morning was missing, having fled with the picture in his possession. It was all in vain that Las Casas sent messages after him, “assuring him that he should not be deprived of the relic, but, on the contrary, that the image should likewise be presented to him.” The cacique would not return to the village till he knew that the Spaniards had departed.

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We find Ojeda next in Jamaica, and afterwards in San

Domingo, where he inquired earnestly after the Bachelor Enciso, who had, it will be remembered, promised to aid him with reinforcements and supplies. He was assured that that ambitious lawyer had sailed for the settlement, which was a fact. Next we find the sanguine Ojeda endeavouring to set on foot another armament, but the failure of his colony was too well understood, and there were no more volunteers, either as regards personal service or pecuniary aid. The poor adventurer was destined never again to see his settlement, the subsequent history of which is a series of intrigues and disasters. He died in abject poverty in San Domingo, and “so broken in spirit that, with his last breath, he intreated his body might be buried in the monastery of St. Francisco, just at the portal, in humble expiation of his past pride, *that every one who entered might tread upon his grave.*” Nicuesa, after many vicissitudes, was lost at sea. The Bachelor Enciso was rather snubbed when he arrived at Ojeda’s colony, but made some fortunate ventures, and plundered a village on the banks of a river named Darien, collecting great quantities of gold ornaments, bracelets, anklets, plates, and what not, with food and cotton to the value of ten thousand castillanos, or about ten thousand seven hundred pounds sterling. Among the men who for a time served with Enciso was Vasco Nuñez de Balbao, afterwards the discoverer of the Pacific from the Isthmus of Darien, of whom these pages have already furnished some account. He joined the expedition of Enciso in a very curious manner. He had been a man of very loose and prodigal habits, but had settled down on a farm in Hispaniola, where he soon became hopelessly involved in debt. The proposed armament gave him the opportunity he sought of running away from his creditors. He concealed himself in a cask, which was taken on board the vessel as though containing provisions. When the vessel was fairly out at sea “Nuñez emerged like an apparition from his cask, to the great surprise of Enciso, who had been totally ignorant of the stratagem. The Bachelor was indignant

at being thus outwitted, even though he gained a recruit by the deception, and, in the first ebullition of his wrath, gave the fugitive debtor a very rough reception, threatening to put him on shore on the first uninhabited island they should encounter. Vasco Nuñez, however, succeeded in pacifying him, ‘for God,’ says the venerable Las Casas, ‘reserved him for greater things.’” It was Nuñez who afterwards directed Enciso to the village where he obtained so much plunder.

Another remarkable man of that age was Juan Ponce de Leon, the conqueror of Porto Rico, and the discoverer of Florida. He had amassed a considerable amount of wealth in the former place, and, like many of the active discoverers of that energetic age, was ambitious for new triumphs. By accident he met with some Indians who assured him “that far to the north, there existed a land abounding in gold and in all manner of delights; but, above all, possessing a river of such wonderful virtue, that whoever bathed in it would be restored to youth! They added that in times past, before the arrival of the Spaniards, a large party of the natives of Cuba had departed northward in search of this happy land and this river of life, and, having never returned, it was concluded that they were flourishing in renewed youth, detained by the pleasures of that enchanting country.” Others told him that in a certain island of the Bahamas, called Bimini, there was a fountain possessing the same marvellous and inestimable qualities, and that whoever drank from it would secure perennial youth. Juan Ponce listened to these fables with credulity, and actually fitted out three vessels at his own expense to prosecute the discovery, and obtained numerous volunteers to assist him. [315] “It may seem incredible,” says Irving, “at the present day, that a man of years and experience could yield any faith to a story which resembles the wild fiction of an Arabian tale; but the wonders and novelties breaking upon the world in that age of discovery almost realised the illusions of fable, and the imaginations of the Spanish voyagers had become so heated that they were capable

of any stretch of credulity.” A similar statement was made by an eminent man of learning, Peter Martyr, to Leo X., then Bishop of Rome. Juan Ponce left Porto Rico on the 3rd March, 1512, for the Bahama Islands, on his search for the Fountain of Youth, but all his inquiries and explorations failed in its discovery. Still he persevered, and was rewarded in discovering on the mainland a country in the fresh bloom of spring, the trees gay with blossoms and abounding with flowers. He took possession of it in the name of the Castilian sovereigns, and gave it the name of Florida, which it still retains. He subsequently discovered a group of islands, where his sailors, in the course of one night, caught one hundred and seventy turtles. He appropriately named them the Tortugas, or Turtles, the title they also still bear. Disheartened by the failure of his special mission, he gave up the command to a trusty captain, and returned to Porto Rico, “where he arrived infinitely poorer in purse and wrinkled in brow, by this cruise after inexhaustible riches and perpetual youth.” His captain arrived soon after with the news that he had discovered the island of Bimini, and that it abounded in crystal springs and limpid streams, which kept the island ever fresh and verdant; “but none that could restore to an old man the vernal greenness of his youth.” As late as 1521 we find old Juan Ponce engaged in a new expedition to Florida, where, in an encounter with the Indians, he was fatally wounded by an arrow. He retired to Cuba, where he died shortly afterwards. The Spaniards said of him that he was a lion by name, and still more by nature.

The name of Magellan, or Magalhaens, is more familiar to the general reader than some of those which have preceded it in this chapter. He was a Portuguese of noble birth, and had served honourably in India. When he made the offer of his services to his own sovereign, there is no doubt that the undertaking he proposed—viz., to determine the question whether the shores of South America were washed by an open sea—had been mooted before. To him however, belongs the credit of having brought

that question to an issue. His own king would have nought to do with his project, and dismissed him with a frown. Magellan, accompanied by Ruy Falero, an astrologer (the astrologers were in part the astronomers of those days), who was associated with him in the enterprise, next made his proposals to the Spanish Emperor, Charles V., by whom he was received with attention and respect. Articles of agreement were drawn up, to this effect: the navigator agreed to reach the Moluccas *by sailing to the west*; they were to enjoy for ten years the exclusive right to the track (!), and to receive the twentieth part of all profits accruing from their discoveries, with some special privileges in regard to the merchandise of the first voyage. Moreover, the Emperor agreed to furnish five vessels, and victual them for two years—an unusual act of liberality in those days, when the monarchs usually contented themselves with conferring patents, privileges, and titles merely, which cost them nothing, and yet were often the means of subsequently enriching them. The sailing of the expedition was retarded by the machinations of the Portuguese king, who now professed a willingness to employ Magellan, and, failing in this, is said to have spread reports that “the King of Spain would lose his expenses, for Fernando Magellan was a chattering fellow, and little reliance could be placed in him, and that he would never execute that which he promised.” But at last, on the 20th September, 1519, the squadron got under weigh. [316]

In the month of December following Magellan anchored in a port on the coast of Brazil, which he named Santa Lucia. The natives appeared a confiding and credulous race, and readily bartered provisions for the merest trifles; “half a dozen fowls were exchanged for a king of spades” (card). Putting again to sea, Magellan sailed southward, touching at various points till he came to anchor in a harbour which he named San Julian, and where he made a stay of five months. Here discontent, and at length open mutiny, broke out, the ringleaders being certain

Spanish officers who felt mortified at serving under a Portuguese commander. Magellan was not a man to stand any nonsense, and was utterly unscrupulous. He despatched a person with a letter to one of the captains, with orders to stab him whilst he was engaged in reading it. This commission being rigorously executed, and followed up by other stringent measures, his authority was re-established through the mutineers' knowledge and fear of his determined character.

In October of the next year, after various minor discoveries, he arrived at the entrance of the great strait which now bears his name. After careful examination of the opening, a council was held, at which the pilot, Estevan Gomez, voted for returning to refit, while the more enterprising wished to complete their discovery. Magellan listened patiently and silently, and then firmly declared that were he reduced to eat the hides on the yards—which were, in fact, the sails—he would keep his faith with the Emperor. It was forbidden to speak of home or scarcity of provisions on pain of death!

Two vessels were sent to reconnoitre in advance, and these were driven violently by a gale into the straits, where the two coasts more than once seemed to join, and the mariners thought all was lost, when a narrow channel would disclose itself, into which they would gladly enter. They returned, and made their report to Magellan, who ordered the whole squadron to advance. On reaching the open expanse of water into which the second gut opens, an inlet to the south-east was observed, and Estevan Gomez was sent in charge of one of two vessels to explore it. He took the opportunity to incite a mutiny, threw the captain into chains, and steered back for Spain. When the western or Pacific end of the straits was reached,<sup>53</sup> and they saw a grand

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<sup>53</sup> The Straits of Magellan are nearly 300 miles in length, and vary in breadth from one and a half to thirty-three miles. The rocky cliffs and mountains which bound it are in some places 3,000 to 4,000 feet in height. The passage has only been used extensively since the steamship era. Now it is a common highway

open ocean beyond, they named the headland at the entrance, Il Capo Descado—the “Longed-for Cape”—and spent some days in erecting standards in conspicuous places, and in rejoicing over their discovery. On the 28th November, 1520, the small squadron reached the open sea, and took a northerly course towards the equator, in order to reach a milder climate, the sailors having suffered much in and about the straits. [317]



FERDINAND DE MAGELLAN.

Magellan, besides minor discoveries, is fairly credited with that of the Philippine Islands, where he was treated in a most friendly manner. At Zebu he acted after the manner of his time; for, finding the people submissive and respectful, he exacted a tribute, which seems to have been willingly paid. One king, or chief, alone refused, which so incensed Magellan that he resolved to punish him. He accordingly landed with forty-nine

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for steamships and some sailing vessels, the latter being often towed through by steam tugs.

of his followers, clothed in mail, and began an attack on 1,500 Indians. The battle raged some hours, but at last numbers prevailed, and only some seven or eight Spaniards remained with Magellan, the rest being either already killed or utterly routed. He himself was wounded in the limbs by a poisoned arrow, and his sword-arm being disabled he could no longer defend himself, and so fell a martyr to overweening ambition and greed. The voyage home was completed, and those of his men who remained had achieved the proud distinction of having been the first circumnavigators of the globe.

Before leaving the subject of remarkable voyages, a few supplementary remarks are necessary. The great epoch just mentioned was followed by great commercial activity, owing to the important discoveries of new lands made, and, of course, the map of the world was by degrees filled in with details which earlier explorers had overlooked. In some previous chapters, notably those referring to the history of shipping and shipping interests, many of the more important voyages following those just described have been sufficiently noticed. In effect, the many subjects treated in connection with THE SEA naturally intertwine, and the same voyages are in the course of this work occasionally mentioned more than once, though in different ways, and for different reasons.

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No explorer's name, after those recently considered, shines with more effulgency than that of the celebrated Captain Cook, already mentioned in two separate connections. Born in 1728, the son of an agricultural labourer and farm bailiff, he early showed an irresistible inclination for the sea, and could not be chained down to the haberdasher's counter, for which his father had destined him. He commenced his seafaring life as an apprentice on a collier, but soon rose to be mate. He next entered the royal navy, where, from able seaman, his promotion was rapid. Some charts and observations drawn up by him while

marine surveyor of the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador brought him much notice from scientific quarters, and the Royal Society offered him the command of an expedition to the Pacific, to make an observation of the transit of Venus. This was the first of his three great voyages, during which he re-discovered New Zealand,<sup>54</sup> practically took possession of Australia, proved that New Guinea was a separate island, made discoveries in the Antarctic, discovered the Sandwich Islands, and made the northern explorations also mentioned previously. He met his death on the island of Hawaii (Sandwich Islands), in the tragical manner known almost to every schoolboy.

It would appear that, previous to the fatal day, there had been some little trouble with the natives. One day, the officer who had commanded a watering-party returned to the ship, stating that some chief had driven away the natives employed in rolling the casks to the beach, work which had been gladly performed before for trifling payments. A marine, with side-arms only, was sent back with him, when it was noticed that the islanders were arming with stones, and two others with loaded muskets were sent off to the watering party's assistance, which for the moment quieted the matter. Captain Cook gave orders that, if the natives should venture to attack his men, they should in the future fire on them with balls, instead of small shot, as hitherto. And not long after a volley proceeding from the *Discovery*, fired after a retreating canoe, announced that his orders were being carried into execution. Ignorant that some stolen goods were thereupon returned, Cook himself, with an officer and a marine, chased these natives on shore, but fruitlessly. Meantime, the officer who had recovered the stolen goods, thinking that he might retaliate, took possession of a canoe on the beach, which act the owner naturally resented, and a scuffle ensued, during which he was knocked down by a blow from an oar. The natives returned

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<sup>54</sup> First discovered by Tasman in 1642.

the attack with a shower of stones, and would have destroyed the pinnace but for the interference of the very man who had just been knocked on the head, who was, however, still friendly inclined towards the English.

Captain Cook was naturally annoyed at and perplexed by these occurrences. In the course of the next night a boat was stolen from the *Discovery*, and Cook at once ordered a body of marines ashore, going with them himself, and taking a double-barrelled gun, one barrel loaded with small shot, and the other with a bullet. The other boats were ordered out to prevent any canoe from leaving the bay until the matter was settled. Arrived ashore, he marched up to the old king, who to every appearance had had no hand in the theft, nor had connived at it, for he promised to go on board with the captain, the latter intending to keep him as a hostage. The chief's two sons were already in the pinnace, when his wife entreated him with tears not to go off to the ship. Two chiefs also, at this juncture, forcibly laid hold of the old man, and made him sit down on the beach. Cook saw from the general aspect of affairs, and the gathering thousands on the beach, that he must give up his idea, and proceeded slowly to the place of embarkation.

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It appears that, while this was going on, some of the men on the boats stationed around the bay had fired on some escaping canoes, and worse, had killed a chief. The news arrived ashore just as Cook was leaving, and the natives immediately began to put on their war-mats, and arm themselves. One of them, carrying an iron dagger, which he brandished wildly, threatened Cook with a large stone, and the captain at last could stand his insolence no longer, and gave him a volley of small shot. This against the native's thick war-mat was about as effective as shooting peas against a rhinoceros. Next came a volley of stones in return, while an attempt was made to stab a marine officer, who returned a heavy blow from the butt-end of his musket. A native crawled behind a canoe, and then aimed a spear

at Cook, who soon gave them the contents of his other barrel, killing one of the assailants. In quick succession, volleys of stones were answered by a volley of musketry; four marines fell, and were speedily despatched. Cook now stood by the water's edge, signalling the men to stop firing and get on board; but in the scuffle and confusion his orders were not understood. A lieutenant commanding one of the boats blundered, or worse, to the extent of taking his boat further off, so that the picking up of the wounded marines was thrown entirely on the pinnace, which had been brought in as near the shore as the master was able to come. Poor Cook was left alone on a rock, where he was seen trying to shield his head from the shower of stones with the one hand, while he still grasped his musket in the other. So soon as his back was turned, the natives attacked him, one clubbing him down, and another stabbing him in the neck. Again he dropped in the water knee-deep, looking earnestly out for help from the pinnace, not more than a few yards off. But the end was near. The savages got him under in deeper water. In his death-struggle he broke from them, and clung to the rock. In a second there was another blow, and the end had come. His body was dragged ashore and mutilated. After the fall of their commander, the survivors of the men escaped under cover of a fire kept up from the boats. But for Cook himself, one of the most humane of commanders, nothing seems to have been attempted in the hurry and excitement of the scuffle.

Cook's body—or as much as remained of it—was subsequently recovered, and committed to the deep, the guns booming solemnly over the watery grave of one of England's greatest explorers. While the rites were being performed, absolute unbroken silence was enjoined upon the natives ashore and afloat, nor was the water disturbed by the dip of a single paddle. Thus perished, at the early age of fifty-one, in a miserable scuffle with semi-savages, Captain James Cook, a navigator whose fame was and still remains world-wide.

Our space will only permit us to refer, briefly, to one other notable voyage, namely, that of Vancouver, whose first experiences were gained with Cook. The fame of this explorer rests very much upon his circumnavigation, towards the end of the eighteenth century, of the island which now bears his name. The actual discovery of the entrance to the straits between the island and mainland dates from the time of De Fuca; while Vancouver himself, in the following passage, admits a prior claim to its partial investigation. He says—"At four o'clock a sail was discovered to the westward standing in shore. This was a very great novelty, not having seen any vessel but our consort during the last eight months. She soon hoisted American colours, and fired a gun to leeward. At six we spoke her. She proved to be the ship *Columbia*, commanded by Mr. Robert Gray, belonging to Boston, from which port she had been absent nineteen months. Having little doubt of his being the same person who had formerly commanded the sloop *Washington*, I desired he would bring to, and sent Mr. Puget and Mr. Menzies on board to acquire such information as might be serviceable in our future operations."

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On the return of the boat, Vancouver found that his conjectures had not been ungrounded, and that Mr. Gray was the same gentleman who had commanded the sloop *Washington* at the time she had made a voyage behind the island. It was a little remarkable that on his approach to the entrance of this inland sea or strait, he should fall in with the identical person who, it had been stated, had sailed through it. Mr. Gray assured the officers, however, that he had penetrated only fifty miles into the straits in question in an ESE. direction; that he found the passage five leagues wide; and that he understood from the natives that the opening extended a considerable distance to the northward. He then returned to the ocean the same way he had entered it. This inlet he supposed to be the same De Fuca had discovered. The fact, however, remains that Vancouver most thoroughly explored

the coasts of the island, and the inlets and shores of Puget Sound, Washington Territory, and British Columbia—countries which are slowly but surely taking their proper place in the world's estimation.

END OF VOLUME III.



# Transcriber's Note

The illustrations have been moved so that they do not break up paragraphs and are near the text they illustrate, thus the page number of the illustration might not match the page number in the List of Illustrations.

Pages which contain only an image have been left out in the pagination on the margin.

Several illustrations which were missing from the List of Illustrations have been added to it. They can be identified by the missing page numbers in the list.

The following changes have been made to the text:

- page iv, "Portugese" changed to "Portuguese" (three times)
- page 7, "sudddenly" changed to "suddenly"
- page 21, comma changed to period after "fleet"
- page 27, "armanent" changed to "armament"
- page 41, double quote changed to single quote after "them."
- page 60, "were" changed to "where"
- page 134, "Vere" changed to "Veer"
- page 201, period added after "northward"
- page 212, quote mark added after "putrid."
- page 229, prime added after "43", prime changed to double prime after "15"
- page 246, quote mark added before "It"
- page 249, quote mark added after "superb."
- page 251, quote mark added after "land."
- page 271, quote mark added after "ice."
- page 275, comma changed to period after "whales"
- page 299, quote mark removed before "On"
- page 310, quote mark added after "fate!"

page 319, double “to” removed

Differences between the table of contents and the chapter summaries have not been corrected. Neither have variations in hyphenation been normalized.

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