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OR A VIEW OF THE
HISTORY,
POLITICS,
AND
LITERATURE,
For the YEAR 1817.



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with the race of beings, but in the dreadful situation to which this one is reduced. Why, therefore, not attempt to improve and to benefit the individuals of which it is composed?

The slaves of Brazil are regularly married according to the forms of the Catholic church; the bans are published in the same manner as those of free persons; and I have seen many happy couples (as happy at least as slaves can be) with large families of children rising around them. The masters encourage marriages among their slaves, for it is from these lawful connections that they can expect to increase the number of their creoles. A slave cannot marry without the consent of his master, for the vicar will not publish the bans of marriage without this sanction. It is likewise permitted that slaves should marry free persons; if the woman is in bondage, the children remain in the same state; but if the man is a slave, and she is free, their offspring is also free. A slave cannot be married until the requisite prayers have been learnt, the nature of confession be understood, and the sacrament can be received. Upon the estates the master or manager is soon made acquainted with the predilections of the slaves for each other, and these being discovered, marriage is forthwith determined upon, and the irregular proceedings are made lawful. In towns there is more licentiousness among the negroes, as there is among all other classes of men. The passion of love is supposed only to exist in a certain state of civilization, and this may be granted without at the same time declaring that negroes

are incapable of lasting attachment, without supposing that the regard of each sex is mere animal desire, unconnected with predilection. That species of affection which is heightened until personal possession is almost forgotten; doubtless is not felt by human beings who are in a state of barbarism; but still a negro may be attached; he may fix upon one object in preference to all others. That this is the case, I can vouch; I have known and have heard of many instances in which punishments and other dangers have been braved to visit a chosen one; in which journies by night have been made after a day of fatigue; in which great constancy has been shown, and a determination that the feelings of the heart shall not be controlled.

NARRATIVE OF A VOYAGE

Of his Majesty's late Ship Alceste, to the Yellow Sea, &c. &c. to the Island of Lewchew: By John M'Leod, Surgeon of the Alceste.

The island of Lewchew is about fifty miles long and from twelve to fifteen broad; Napa-kiang, our position, (and within five miles of Kint-ching, the capital,) lying in lat. $26^{\circ} 14' N.$, long. $127^{\circ} 52' 1'' E.$ This is its south-west point, the main body of the island extending from hence north a little eastwardly. It is washed on the one side by the Northern Pacific Ocean, and on the other by the Tung Hai, or Eastern Sea.

The rocks about it are all of the coral kind, and immense masses, some assuming very odd shapes,
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temple, offered up to their gods a solemn sacrifice, invoking them to protect the Engelees, to avert every danger, and restore them in safety to their native land! In the manner of this adieu there was an air of sublimity and benevolence combined, by far more touching to the heart than the most refined compliment of a more civilized people. It was the genuine benignity of artless nature, and of primitive innocence. Immediately following this solemnity, our particular friends crowded on board to shake hands, and say "Farewell!" whilst the tears which many of them shed, evinced the sincerity of their attachment.

NARRATIVE OF THE SHIPWRECK.

A course was now shaped to avoid the numerous rocks and shoals, not well defined, which lie in that part of the Chinese sea more immediately to the westward of the Philippines, and to the north-westward of Borneo; and having by the 14th passed the whole, and got into the usual track for the passage of either the Straits of Banca or Gaspar, it was resolved to proceed through the latter, as being more direct and less subject to calms than the former, and considering them equally safe, from the latest surveys and directions being on board, some of them by those who had personally examined them. At day-light in the morning of the 18th we made Gaspar Island, exactly at the time expected, and, passing it, stood on for the straits. As is customary in approaching any coast or passage whatever, but more especially one that all are not familiarly ac-

quainted with, the utmost precaution was taken by keeping the leads going in both chains, men looking out at the mast-heads, yard-arms, and bowsprit end; the captain, master, and officer of the watch, on whom the charge of the ship at such a time more particularly devolves, having been vigilantly on deck during the whole of the previous night and this morning. Steering under all these guarded circumstances, the soundings exactly corresponding with the charts, and following the express line prescribed by all concurring directions to clear every danger (and the last danger of this sort between us and England), the ship about half-past seven in the morning struck with a horrid crash, on a reef of sunken rocks, and remained immoveable!

It was very soon indeed but too evident that any attempt to move her would be attended with the most fatal consequences; for, on each side of the rocks on which she hung, the water deepened from ten to seventeen fathoms immediately around her; and, from the injury received, she must have gone down in a few minutes, had she forced her way over this narrow reef. The best bower anchor was therefore let go, to keep her fast; and the pumps were soon abandoned, being clearly of no avail.

The boats were hoisted out, and Lieutenant Hoppner, with the barge and cutter, ordered to proceed with the ambassador and suite; and all those not essentially required, to the nearest part of the island, which seemed about three miles and a half distant. Meanwhile every exertion was used by the

the captain and officers, who remained by the ship, to secure what provisions and stores could be obtained; a task of considerable labour and difficulty, for all was under water, which now rose above the orlop-deck.

When she struck, the tide must have been rising, for towards the afternoon it fell outside, and consequently inside the ship several feet; thereby enabling us to save ourselves from absolute starvation by laying hold of some articles of provender which floated up, assisted by divers, and which the boats were employed in conveying to the shore. A raft was also constructed, on which were placed the heavier stores, with some baggage, and towed towards the island. By the return of those boats which carried his Excellency on shore we learnt the very great difficulty of effecting a landing, the mangrove trees growing out to a considerable distance in the water; and it was not until after ranging alongshore for nearly three miles from the place they at first attempted, that a small opening appeared, through which, by scrambling from rock to rock, they at last obtained a footing on *terra firma*. Here, by cutting away a quantity of the smaller jungle at the foot of a hill (for the island was completely overgrown with wood), a space was cleared away, where, under the shade of the loftier trees, they bivouacued for that day and night.

On board the ship the work went on with activity, endeavouring to save whatever might be most useful on such an occasion; but, as the tide rose, the swell of

the sea lifting her from the rocks, she dashed on them again with such violence, as to render it necessary about midnight to cut away the topmasts. At day-light, on Wednesday the 19th, Mr. M'Leod landed with two men who had been severely wounded by the fall of the masts, and with a report from the captain to Lord Amherst. The spot in which our party were situated was sufficiently romantic, but seemed at the same time the abode of ruin and of havoc. Few of its inhabitants (and among the rest the ambassador) had more than a shirt or pair of trowsers on. The wreck of books, or, as it was not unaptly termed, "a literary manure," was spread about in all directions; whilst parliamentary robes, court-dresses, and mandarin habits, intermixed with check shirts and tarry jackets, were hung around in wild confusion on every tree.

On his lordship being informed that no fresh water had as yet been obtained from the ship, and that it was barely probable some might be got by scuttling the lower deck, he desired every body might be called around him, and ordered that a gill of that which had been sent on shore the day before (what happened to be on deck in the dripstones and water-jugs), with half that quantity of rum, should be equally served out to every man without distinction, and, taking his own share with perfect good humour, afforded to others an example of calm fortitude; and a cheerful readiness to share in every privation, which never fails on such occasions to have a powerful and beneficial effect, more especially

especially when that example is found, where it ought to be, in the first rank.

Parties were now returning, who had been searching for water in vain, every attempt to dig for it having proved fruitless; or, being too near the sea, salt water alone had oozed into the pits. At one spot they found the skeleton of a man, and the horrid idea of his having died from thirst rushed on every mind. Those who went into the wood, on these excursions, were obliged to notch the trees, and leave marks as they advanced, in order to find their way back. In the forenoon Captain Maxwell came on shore, to confer with Lord Amherst on the best mode to be adopted in the perilous situation in which they were then placed. The boats were utterly incapable of conveying half our number any where; and, as some must necessarily go to the nearest friendly port for assistance, Captain Maxwell judged it best that his excellency and suite should proceed with a proper guard for Batavia, or whatever part of Java they could fetch, from whence vessels could be despatched to bring off those who remained behind.

This being what is termed the north-west monsoon, there was every likelihood of the boats reaching Java (the current being also in their favour) in three days; and by this arrangement, which very happily was settled without loss of time, two grand purposes were answered, the nearest to the captain's heart and his first duty; viz. the immediate conveyance of the ambassador and suite to a place

of safety; and, by their safety, ensuring more effectually than by any other means that of the officers and men who remained with himself upon this desert isle. It was thought probable that row-boats might be despatched from Batavia after the arrival of his excellency, so as to reach the island (even against wind and current) in twelve or fifteen days; and, as Mr. Ellis volunteered to return with the first boat or vessel that shoved off to our assistance, an additional assurance was thus given, that, combined with the influence of the ambassador with the Dutch government, no delay would occur in forwarding relief. After a short, and very slender *fête champêtre* in this wilderness (in which salt was viewed with the same horror as arsenic), his lordship, about five in the evening, accompanied by the gentlemen of his suite, by Lieutenant Hoppner, in command of the boats, Mr. Mayne to navigate, Lieutenant Cooke, R. M. (with a party, as officer of the guard, in the event of falling in with any of the Malay pirates who infest these seas), Mr. Blair, midshipman, and Mr. Somerset (who had come to see the world a little), waded out to the edge of the reef, and embarked in the barge and cutter. They were in all forty-seven persons, and had with them a small stock of provisions, consisting of a side of mutton, a ham, a tongue, about twenty pounds of coarse biscuit, and some few more of fine; seven gallons of water, the same of beer, as many of spruce, and about thirty bottles of wine. This was all that could be spared; and, being

being deemed equal to sustain nature for four or five days, in which period they must either make the land, or be so disposed of as to require no provisions, it was considered sufficient by the party themselves, and they looked for no more. After pulling outwards a little way to clear all the rocks, they made sail to the southward, attended by the best wishes of every man on the island, and were soon out of sight. The number left behind was two hundred men and boys, and one woman.

The first measure of Captain Maxwell, after fixing a party to dig a well in a spot which was judged, from a combination of circumstances, the most likely to find water, was to remove our bivouac to the top of the hill, where we could breathe a cooler and purer air; a place in all respects not only better adapted to the preservation of our health, but to our defence in case of attack. A path was cut upwards, and a party employed in clearing away and setting fire to the underwood on the summit. This last operation tended much to free us from myriads of ants, and of snakes, scorpions, centipedes, and other reptiles; which in such a place and climate generally abound. Others were employed in removing upwards our small stock of provisions, which were deposited (under a strict guard), in a sort of natural magazine, formed by the tumbling together of some huge masses of rock on the highest part of this eminence. On board the wreck a party was stationed, endeavouring to gain any accession they could to our stock of provisions

and arms, and to save any public stores that could be found. There was a communication for this purpose between the shore and the ship whenever the tide permitted. For the last two days every one had experienced much misery from thirst: a small cask of water (the only one which could be obtained from the ship) was scarcely equal to a pint each in the course of that period; and perhaps no question was ever so anxiously repeated, as "What hope from the well?" About eleven at night the diggers had got, by rather a tortuous direction (on account of large stones), as far down as twenty feet, when they came to a clayey or marly soil, that above it being a red earth, which seemed rather moist, and had nothing saline in the taste. At a little past midnight a bottle of muddy water was brought the captain as a specimen, and, the moment it was understood to be fresh, the rush to the well was such as to impede the workmen; therefore it became necessary to plant sentries to enable them to complete their task, and permit the water to settle a little. Fortunately about this time a heavy shower of rain fell, and, by spreading sheets, tablecloths, &c. and wringing them, some relief was afforded. There are few situations in which men exposed without shelter to a torrent of rain would, as in the present instance, hail that circumstance as a blessing: bathing in the sea was also resorted to by many in order to drink by absorption, and they fancied it afforded relief.

Thursday, 20th. This morning
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the captain, ordering all hands together, stated to them in few words, that every man, by the regulations of the navy, was as liable to answer for his conduct on the present as on any other occasion; that, as long as he lived, the same discipline should be exerted, and, if necessary, with greater rigour than aboard; a discipline for the general welfare, which he trusted every sensible man of the party must see the necessity of maintaining;—assuring them, at the same time, he would have much pleasure in recommending those who distinguished themselves by the regularity and propriety of their conduct;—that the provisions we had been able to save should be served out, although necessarily with a very sparing hand, yet with the most rigid equality to all ranks, until we obtained that relief which he trusted would soon follow the arrival of Lord Amherst at Java.

During this day the well sorded a pint of water for each man; it had a sweetish milk-and-water taste, something like the juice of the cocoa-nut, but nobody found fault with it; on the contrary, it diffused that sort of happiness which only they can feel who have felt the horrible sensation of thirst under a vertical sun, subject at the same time to a harassing and fatiguing duty. This day was employed in getting up every thing from the foot of the hill; boats passing to the ship, but unfortunately almost every thing of real value to us in our present case was under water. We were in hopes, however, that, as no bad weather was likely to happen, we

might be enabled by scuttling at low water, or by burning her upper-works, to acquire many useful articles.

On Friday, 21st, the party stationed at the ship found themselves, soon after day-light, surrounded by a number of Malay proas, apparently well armed, and full of men. Without a single sword or musquet for defence, they had just time to throw themselves into the boat alongside, and push for the shore, chased by the pirates, who, finding two of our other boats push out to their assistance, returned to the ship, and took possession of her. Soon afterwards it was reported, from the look-out rock, that the savages, armed with spears, were landing at a point about two miles off. Under all the depressing circumstances attending shipwreck—of hunger, thirst, and fatigue; and menaced by a ruthless foe; it was glorious to see the British spirit staunch and unsubdued. The order was given for every man to arm himself in the best way he could, and it was obeyed with the utmost promptitude and alacrity. Rude pike-staves were formed, by cutting down young trees; small swords, dirks, knives, chisels, and even large spike-nails sharpened, were firmly affixed to the ends of these poles; and those who could find nothing better hardened the end of the wood in the fire, and, bringing it to a sharp point, formed a tolerable weapon. There were, perhaps, a dozen cutlasses; the marines had about thirty muskets and bayonets, but could muster no more than seventy-five ball-cartridges among the whole party.

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We had fortunately preserved some loose powder drawn from the upper-deck guns after the ship had struck, (for the magazine was under water in five minutes) and the marines, by hammering their buttons round, and by rolling up pieces of broken bottles in cartridges, did their best to supply themselves with a sort of 'langrage' which would have some effect at close quarters, and strict orders were given not to throw away a single shot until sure of their aim. Mr. Chaffy, the carpenter, and his crew, under the direction of the captain, were busied in forming a sort of abattis, by felling trees, and enclosing in a circular shape the ground we occupied; and, by interweaving loose branches with the stakes driven in among these, a breast-work was constructed, which afforded us some cover, and must naturally impede the progress of any enemy un supplied with artillery. That part of the island we had landed on was a narrow ridge, not above musket-shot across, bounded on one side by the sea, and on the other by a creek, extending upwards of a mile inland, and nearly communicating with the sea at its head. Our hill was the outer point of this tongue, and its shape might be very well represented by an inverted punch-bowl: the circle on which the bowl stands would then shew the fortification; and the space within it our citadel.

It appeared by the report of scouts, a short time after the first account, that the Malays had not actually landed, but had taken possession of some rocks near this point, on which they deposited a quantity of plunder brought from

the ship; and during the day they continued making these predatory trips.

In the evening all hands were mustered under arms, and a motley group they presented; it was gratifying, however, to observe, that, rude as were their implements of defence, there seemed to be no want of spirit to use them if occasion offered. The officers and men were now marshalled regularly into the different divisions and companies, their various posts assigned, and other arrangements made. An officer and party were ordered to take charge of the boats for the night, and they were hauled closer into the landing-place. An alarm which occurred during the night shewed the benefit of these regulations, for, on a sentry challenging a noise among the bushes, every one was at his post in an instant, and without the least confusion.

On Saturday morning 22d, some of the Malay boats approached the place where ours were moored; and, with the view of ascertaining whether they had any inclination to communicate on friendly terms, the gig with an officer and four hands, pulled gently towards them, waving the bough of a tree (a general symbol of peace every where), shewing the usual demonstrations of friendship, and of a desire to speak to them; but all was vain, for they were merely reconnoitring our position, and immediately pulled back to their rock.

The second lieutenant (Mr. Hay) was now ordered with the barge, cutter, and gig, armed in the best way we could, to proceed to the ship, and regain possession of her, either

either by fair means or by force; the pirates not appearing, at this time, to have more than eighty men. Those on the rocks, seeing our boats approach, threw all their plunder into their vessels, and made off.

Two of their largest proas were now at work on the ship; but, on observing their comrades abandon the rock, and the advance of the boats, they also made sail away, having previously set fire to the ship, which they did so effectually; that in a few minutes the flames burst from every port, and she was soon enveloped in a cloud of smoke. The boats were unable to board her, and therefore returned.

Here was a period to every hope of accommodation with these people, if, indeed, any reasonable hope could ever have been entertained on that head. The Malays, more especially those wandering and piratical tribes, who roam about the coasts of Borneo, Billiton, and the wilder parts of Sumatra, are a race of savages, perhaps the most merciless and inhuman to be found in any part of the world. The Battas are literally cannibals. In setting fire to the ship, they gave a decided proof of their disposition to us; but, although certainly with no good intention, they did merely what we intended to do; for, by burning her upper works and decks, every thing buoyant could float up from below, and be more easily laid hold of.

The ship continued burning during the whole of the night; and the flames, which could be seen through the openings of the trees, shed a melancholy glare

around, and excited the most mournful ideas. This night also all hands were suddenly under arms again, from a marine firing his musket at what he very properly considered a suspicious character near his post, who appeared advancing upon him, and refused to answer after being repeatedly hailed. It turned out afterwards that the branch of a tree, half-cut through the day before, had given way, under one of a race of large baboons, which we found about this time disputed the possession of the island with us. At the well, where there generally was kept a good fire at night, on account of the mosquitoes, the sentries had more than once been alarmed by these gentlemen shewing their black faces from behind the trees. They became so extremely troublesome to some ducks we had saved from the wreck, (seizing and carrying them up the trees, and letting them fall down again when alarmed,) that on several occasions they left their little yard, and came up among the people, when the monkeys got among them, thus instinctively preferring the society of man for protection.

On Sunday morning, (23d,) the boats were sent to the still-smoking wreck, and some flour, a few cases of wine, and a cask of beer, had floated up. This last Godsend was announced just at the conclusion of divine service, which was this morning held in the mess-tent, and a pint was ordered to be immediately served out to each man, which called forth three cheers. This seems to be the only style in which a British seaman can give vent to the warmer feelings of his heart. It is his mode
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of thanksgiving for benefits received; and it equally serves him to honour his friend, to defy his enemy, or to proclaim victory. This day we continued improving our fence, and clearing away a *glacis* immediately around it, that we might see and have fair play with these barbarians, should they approach. They had retired behind a little islet, (called Pulo Challa, or Misfortune's Isle,) about two miles from us, and seemed waiting there for reinforcements; for some of their party had made sail towards Billiton.

Monday morning, (24th,) the boats, as yesterday, went to the wreck, and returned with some casks of flour, only partially damaged; a few cases of wine, and about forty boarding-pikes, with eighteen muskets, were also laid hold of. With the loose powder secured out of the great guns in the first instance, Mr. Holman, the gunner, had been actively employed, forming musket-cartidges; and by melting down some pewter basins and jugs, with a small quantity of lead, lately obtained from the wreck, balls were cast in clay moulds, increasing not a little our confidence and security. A quart of water each had been our daily allowance from the well hitherto, and on this day a second was completed near the foot of the hill, in another direction, which not only supplied clearer water, but in greater plenty; and we could now, without restriction, indulge in the luxury of a long drink, not caring even to excite thirst, in order to enjoy that luxury in higher perfection.

On Tuesday, (25th,) the boats made their usual trip; some more

cases of wine, and a few boarding-pikes were obtained, both excellent articles in their way, in the hands of men who are inclined to entertain either "their friends or their foes." On shore we were employed completing the paths to the wells, and felling trees which intercepted our view of the sea.

Wednesday, (26th,) at day-light, two of the pirate proas, with each a canoe astern, were discovered close in with the cove where our boats were moored. Lieutenant Hay, (a straight-forward sort of fellow,) who had the guard that night at the boats, and of course slept in them, immediately dashed at them with the barge, cutter, and gig. On perceiving this they cut adrift their canoes, and made all sail chased by our boats; they rather distanced the cutter and gig, but the barge gained upon them. On closing, the Malays evinced every sign of defiance, placing themselves in the most threatening attitudes, and firing their swivels at the barge. This was returned by Mr. Hay with the only musket he had in the boat, and, as they closed nearer, the Malays commenced throwing their javelins and darts, several falling into the barge, but without wounding any of the men. Soon after they were grappled by our fellows, when three of them having been shot, and a fourth knocked down with the butt end of the musket, five more jumped overboard and drowned themselves, (evidently disdaining quarter,) and two were taken prisoners, one of whom was severely wounded. This close style of fighting is termed by seamen man-handling an enemy.

The Malays had taken some
measure

measure to sink their proa, for she went down almost immediately. Nothing could exceed the desperate ferocity of these people. One who had been shot through the body, but who was not quite dead, on being removed into the barge, with a view of saving him, (as his own vessel was sinking,) furiously grasped a cutlass which came within his reach, and it was not without a struggle wrenched from his hand: he died in a few minutes. The consort of this proa, firing a parting shot, bore up round the north end of the island, and escaped. Their canoes (which we found very useful to us) were also brought on shore, containing several articles of plunder from the ship. They appeared to be the two identical proas which set fire to her. The prisoners (the one rather elderly, the other young) when brought on shore, seemed to have no hope of being permitted to live, and sullenly awaited their fate; but, on the wounds of the younger being dressed, the hands of the other untied, and food offered to them, with other marks of kindness, they became more cheerful, and appeared especially gratified at seeing one of their dead companions, who had been brought on shore, decently buried.

The Malays are a people of very unprepossessing aspect; their bodies of a deep bronze colour; their black teeth and reddened lips, (from chewing the betel-nut and siri,) their gaping nostrils, and lank clotted hair hanging about their shoulders and over their scowling countenances, give them altogether a fiend-like and murderous look. They are like-

wise an unjoyous race, and seldom smile.

The state of one of the wounds received by the Malay (his knee-joint being penetrated, and the bones much injured) would have justified, more particularly in this kind of field practice, amputation; but, on consideration that it would be impossible to convince him of this being done with the intention of benefitting him, and might have the appearance of torture, which it was not improbable might suggest the idea of amputation and other operations to them, in the event of any, or all of us, falling into their hands, it was determined, therefore, to try the effect of a good constitution, and careful attention. A little wigwam was built, and a blanket and other comforts given to him, his comrade being appointed his cook and attendant. They refused at first the provisions we offered them; but, on giving them some rice to prepare in their own way, they seemed satisfied. Never expecting quarter, when over-powered in their piratical attempts, and having been generally tortured when taken alive, may account for the others drowning themselves.

In the forenoon, immediately after this rencontre, fourteen proas and smaller boats appeared standing across from the Banca side, and soon after they anchored behind Pulo Chalacca. Several of their people landed, and carrying up some bundles on their shoulders, left them in the wood, and returned for more. We had some hope, from the direction in which they first appeared, as well as their anchoring at that spot (the rendezvous agreed upon at the departure

parture of Lord Amherst,) that they might have been from Batavia to our relief.

The small flag (belonging to the embassy) was brought down and displayed on the look-out rock; the strangers, each, immediately hoisted some flag at their mast-heads. Anxious to know still more about them, Mr. Sykes was allowed to advance with the union-jack, accompanied by some more of the young gentlemen, along the strand, to a considerable distance; and soon after some of their party, with a flag, set off to meet them. As they mutually approached, the Malays dropped a little in the rear of their flag-bearer, and laid down their arms; ours also fell astern, and the two ancients (or colour men), wading into a creek which separated them, cautiously met each other. The Malay salamed a good deal: many fine Yorkshire bows were made on the other side: shaking hands was the next ceremony, and then, joining flags, they walked up arm and arm to the place where the captain and several others were stationed. Satisfied now they must be friends sent to our assistance, they were welcomed with cheers, and every countenance was gladdened. But our joy was of short duration; for, although their flag was laid submissively at the captain's feet, and all were sufficiently civil in their deportment, yet they turned out to be mere wanderers, employed gathering a sort of seaweed, found on the coast of these (but in still greater abundance among the Pelew) islands, said by some to be an article of commerce with the Chinese epicures, who use it like the bird-nests in their

soups. All this was made out chiefly by signs, added to a few Malay words which some understood.

Mr. Hay, with his division armed, proceeded down to their anchorage, himself and some other officers, going on board with their Rajah, (as they styled him) who expressed a great desire to see the captain on board, and sent him a present of a piece of fish, and some cocoa-nut milk. During the night many schemes were proposed as to the best mode of negotiating with these people. Some thought that, by the hope of reward, they might be induced to carry part of us to Java, and our four remaining boats would then be equal to the conveyance of the rest. Others, adverting to the treacherous character of the Malays, and the great temptation to murder us when in their power, from that sort of property still in our possession, and to their great value, considered it safest to seize upon and disarm them, carrying ourselves to Batavia, and then most amply to remunerate them for any inconvenience they might have sustained from being pressed into the service.

The morning of Thursday, the 27th, however, perfectly relieved us from any further discussion on this subject, the Rajah and his suite having proceeded to plunder the wreck, which by this time they had espied. It is probable they were not certain of our real situation on the first evening, but might have supposed, from seeing the uniforms, colours, and other military appearance, that some settlement, as at Minto, (in the island of Banca) had been established

blished there; and this may also account for their civility in the first instance; for, from the moment their harpy-like spirit was excited by the wreck, and they saw our real condition, there were no more offerings of fish, or of cocoa-nut milk.

To have sent the boats openly to attack them was judged impolitic; it would only have driven them off for a moment, and put them on their guard against surprise by night, should it be thought necessary, in a day or two, to do so. They could deprive us of little; for the copper bolts and iron work, which they were now most interested about, were not to us of material importance.

We had the day before moved the boats into another cove, more out of sight (from the overspreading branches of the trees,) and safer in case of attack, being commanded by two strong little ports (one having a rude draw-bridge,) erected on the rocks immediately above it, and wattled in, where an officer and piquet were nightly placed; and a new serpentine path was cut down to this inlet, communicating with our main position aloft.

On Friday, the 28th, the Malays were still employed on the wreck. A boat approached us in the forenoon; but on the gig going out to meet it, they refused to correspond, and returned to their party. No relief having appeared from Batavia, and the period being elapsed at which (as was now thought) we had reason to expect it, measures were taken, by repairing the launch and constructing a firm raft, to give us additional powers of transporting our-

selves from our present abode, before our stock of provisions was entirely exhausted.

On Saturday, the 1st of March, the Malays acquired a great accession of strength, by the arrival of 14 more proas from the northward (probably of the old party,) who joined in breaking up the remains of the wreck.

At day-light, on Sunday, the 2d, still greater force having joined them during the night, the pirates (leaving a number at work on the wreck) advanced, with upwards of twenty of their heaviest vessels, towards our landing-place; fired one of their patereroes; beat their gongs; and, making a hideous yelling noise, they anchored in a line, about a cable's length from our cove. We were instantly under arms, the party covering the boats strengthened, and scouts sent out to watch their motions, as some of their boats had gone up the creek, at the back of our position; and to beat about, lest any should be lying in ambush from the land. About this time, the old Malay prisoner, who was under charge of the sentries at the well, and who had been incautiously trusted by them to cut some wood for the fire, hearing the howling of his tribe, left his wounded comrade to shift for himself, ran off into the wood, and escaped, carrying with him his hatchet. Finding, after waiting a short time in this state of preparation, that they made no attempt to land, an officer was sent a little outside the cove in a canoe, waving in a friendly manner, to try how they would act. After some deliberation, one of their boats, with several men armed with

with creses, or their crooked daggers, approached: here, as usual, little could be made out, except a display of their marauding spirit, by taking a fancy to the shirt and trowsers of one of the young gentlemen in the canoe; but, on his refusing to give them up, they used no force.

A letter was now written, and addressed to the chief authority at Minto, a small settlement on the northwest point of Banca, stating the situation in which we were placed, and requesting him to forward, if in his power, one or two small vessels to us, with a little bread and salt provisions, and some ammunition. Again the officer went out in the canoe, and was again met by the Malay boat. This letter was given to them, the word Minto repeatedly pronounced, (which they seemed to understand,) the direction pointed out, and signs made that on their return with an answer they should be rewarded with abundance of dollars, shewing them one as a specimen. This was done more to try them than with any hope of their performing the service; for, although a boat went down to Pulo Chalacca, (where they appeared to have somebody in superior authority,) yet none took the direction of Banca. Meantime their force rapidly increased, their proas and boats of different sizes amounting to fifty. The larger had from sixteen to twenty men; the smaller about seven or eight; so that, averaging even at the lowest ten each, they had fully five hundred men. The wreck seemed now nearly exhausted, and appeared to be a very secondary object, knowing the chief booty must be in our

possession; and they blockaded us with increased rigour, drawing closer into the cove, more especially at high water, fearful lest our boats, being afloat at that period, should push out and escape them. In the afternoon some of the Rajah's people (whom we at first considered our friends) made their appearance, as if seeking a parley; and on communicating with them, gave us to understand by signs, and as many words as could be made out, that all the Malays, except their party, were extremely hostile to us; that it was their determination to attack us that night; and urging also that some of their people should sleep up the hill, in order to protect us. Their former conduct and present connexions displayed so evidently the treachery of this offer, that it is needless to say it was rejected, giving them to understand we could trust to ourselves. They immediately returned to their gang, who certainly assumed a most menacing attitude. In the evening, when the officers and men were assembled as usual under arms, in order to inspect them, and settle the watches for the night, the captain spoke to them with much animation, almost verbatim as follows: "My lads, you must all have observed this day, as well as myself, the great increase of the enemy's force, for enemies we must now consider them, and the threatening posture they have assumed. I have, on various grounds, strong reason to believe they will attack us this night. I do not wish to conceal our real state, because I think there is not a man here who is afraid to face any sort of danger.

We

We are now strongly fenced in, and our position in all respects so good, that, armed as we are, we ought to make a formidable defence against even regular troops: what then would be thought of us, if we allowed ourselves to be surprised by a set of naked savages, with their spears and creeses? It is true they have swivels in their boats, but they cannot act here. I have not observed that they have any matchlocks or muskets; but, if they have, so have we. I do not wish to deceive you as to the means of resistance in our power. When we were first thrown together on shore, we were almost defenceless; seventy-five ball-cartridges only could be mustered: we have now sixteen hundred! They cannot, I believe, send up more than five hundred men; but, with two hundred such as now stand around me, I do not fear a thousand, nay, fifteen hundred of them! I have the fullest confidence we shall beat them; the pike-men standing firm, we can give them such a volley of musketry as they will be little prepared for; and, when we find they are thrown into confusion, we'll sally out among them, chase them into the water, and ten to one but we secure their vessels. Let every man, therefore, be on the alert with his arms in his hands; and, should these barbarians this night attempt our hill, I trust we shall convince them that they are dealing with Britons." Perhaps three jollier hurrahs were never given than at the conclusion of this short but well-timed address. The woods fairly echoed again; whilst the piquet at the cove, and those stationed at

the wells, the instant it caught their ear, instinctively joined their sympathetic cheers to the general chorus.

There was something like unity and concord in such a sound, (one neither resembling the feeble shout nor savage yell,) which, rung in the ears of these gentlemen, no doubt had its effect; for about this time (8 P.M.) they were observed making signals with lights to some of their tribe behind the islet. If ever seamen or marines had a strong inducement to fight, it was on the present occasion, for every thing conduced to animate them. The feeling excited by a savage, cruel, and inhospitable aggression on the part of the Malays,—an aggression adding calamity to misfortune,—roused every mind to a spirit of just revenge; and the appeal now made to them on the score of national character was not likely to let that feeling cool. That they might come, seemed to be the anxious wish of every heart. After a slender but cheerful repast, the men lay down as usual upon their arms, whilst the captain remained with those on guard to superintend his arrangements. An alarm during the night shewed the effect of preparation on the people's minds, for all like lightning were at their posts, and returned growling and disappointed because the alarm was false.

Day-light, on Monday the 3d, discovered the pirates exactly in the same position in front of us; ten more vessels having joined them during the night, making their number now at least six hundred men. "The plot began to thicken," and our situation be-
came

came hourly more critical. Their force rapidly accumulating, and our little stock of provisions daily shortening, rendered some desperate measure immediately necessary.

That which seemed most feasible was by a sudden night attack, with our four boats well armed, to carry by boarding some of their vessels, and, by manning them, repeat our attack with increased force, taking more, or dispersing them. The possession of some of their proas, in addition to our own boats, (taking into consideration that our numbers would be thinned on the occasion,) might enable us to shove off for Java, in defiance of them. Any attempt to move on a raft, with their vessels playing round it, armed with swivels, was evidently impossible. Awful as our situation now was, and every hour becoming more so;—starvation staring us in the face, on one hand, and without a hope of mercy from the savages on the other;—yet there were no symptoms of depression, or gloomy despair; every mind seemed buoyant; and, if any estimate of the general feeling could be collected from countenances, from the manner and expressions of all, there appeared to be formed in every breast a calm determination to dash at them, and be successful; or to fall, as became men, in the attempt to be free.

About noon on this day, whilst schemes and proposals were flying about, as to the mode of executing the measures in view, Mr. Johnstone, (ever on the alert,) who had mounted the look-out tree, one of the loftiest on the summit of our hill, descried a sail at a

great distance to the southward, which he thought larger than a Malay vessel. The buzz of conversation was in a moment hushed, and every eye fixed anxiously on the tree for the next report, a signal-man and telescope being instantly sent up. She was now lost sight of from a dark squall overspreading that part of the horizon, but in about twenty minutes she again emerged from the cloud, and was decidedly announced to be a square-rigged vessel. "Are you quite sure of that?" was eagerly inquired:—"Quite certain," was the reply:—"it is either a ship or a brig standing towards the island; under all sail!"—The joy this happy sight infused, and the gratitude of every heart at this prospect of deliverance, may be more easily conceived than described. It occasioned a sudden transition of the mind from one train of thinking to another, as if waking from a disagreeable dream. We immediately displayed our colours on the highest branch of the tree, to attract attention, lest she should only be a passing stranger.

The pirates soon after this discovered the ship, (a signal having been made with a gun by those anchored behind Pulo Chalacca,) which occasioned an evident stir among them. As the water was ebbing fast, it was thought possible, by an unexpected rush out to the edge of the reef, to get some of them under fire, and secure them. They seemed, however, to have suspected our purpose; for, the moment the seamen and marines appeared from under the mangroves, the nearest proa let fly her swivel among a party

party of the officers, who had been previously wading outwards, and the whole, instantly getting under weigh, made sail off, fired at by our people, but unfortunately without effect; for, in addition to the dexterous management of their boats, the wind enabled them to weather the rocks. It was fortunate, however, this attack on them took place, and that it had the effect of driving them away: for had they stood their ground, we were as much in their power as ever, the ship being obliged to anchor eight miles to leeward of the island, and eleven or twelve from our position, on account of the wind and current; and, as this wind and current continued the same for some time afterwards, they might, most easily, with their force, have cut off all communication between us. Indeed it was a most providential and extraordinary circumstance, during this monsoon, that the ship was able to fetch up so far as she did. The blockade being now raised, the gig, with Messrs. Sykes and Abbot, was despatched to the ship, which proved to be the Ternate, one of the company's cruisers, sent by Lord Amherst to our assistance, having on board Messrs. Ellis and Hoppner, who embarked on the day of their arrival at Batavia, and pushed back to the island.

The gig was able to return (being a light boat); but our friends, who attempted to pull ashore in the cutter, were compelled to put back, after struggling with the current for nine hours, during the night of Monday, and morning of Tuesday the 4th. That

day was employed in getting all the moveables we had saved from the wreck ready for embarkation. Wednesday the 5th, landed Messrs. Ellis and Hoppner: the recollection of the voluntary promise made by the former at parting, now fulfilled, and re-appearing as a deliverer, added to the many interesting and peculiar circumstances of the meeting, gave a new glow to every feeling of friendship; and on entering Fort Maxwell, they were received with heartfelt acclamation by the whole garrison under arms.

This fortification and its inhabitants had altogether a very singular and romantic look. The wigwams (or dens, as they were called) of some, neatly formed by branches, and thatched with the palm-leaf, scattered about at the feet of the majestic trees, which shaded our circle; the rude tents of others; the wrecked, unshaven, ragged appearance of the men, with pikes and cutlasses in their hands, gave, more especially by fire-light at night, a wild and picturesque effect to this spot, far beyond any robber-scene the imagination can pourtray.

Two of the Ternate's boats also arrived with a twelve-pounder carronade, some round and grape, and musket ammunition, in the event of the pirates thinking proper to return before we had finished our business; which, from the difficulty of communicating, required the whole of Wednesday to perform.

On Thursday the 6th, the majority of the officers and men embarked in the boats (now increased in number), and proceeded to

to the Ternate ; the raft, also, with four officers and forty-six men, and a cow, got under sail, and, after a comfortable cold-bath navigation of eight hours, reached the ship after dark. Every article which could not be carried off, and was thought might be of the slightest use to the savages, was piled into a heap, on the top of the hill, and made into a bonfire.

At midnight the boats returned to bring off Captain Maxwell, and those remaining with him ; the whole arriving safe on board the Ternate on the morning of the 7th March, where we were most hospitably received by Captain Davidson and his officers.

The island of Pulo Leat is about six miles long, and five broad ; situate about two degrees and a half to the southward of the equator : it lies next to Banca, and is in the line of islands between it and Borneo. As far as we could explore, (and exploring was no easy task) it appeared to produce nothing for the use of man. We found a great number of the rinds of what we afterwards discovered at Batavia to be the far famed and delicious mangustin, which only thrives near the Line ; but the baboons, who manage to live here, had previously monopolized all the fruit. Had we found any entire, we might have indulged in them, even without knowing their nature ; as, more especially in a case of short commons like ours, there could be no great danger in following the example of a monkey. We found a number of oysters adhering to the rocks along the sea-shore, which at first we were afraid to eat, from their exciting

thirst ; but as soon as we were happy enough to obtain a sufficient supply of water, they very speedily disappeared.

The soil of the island appears to be capable of affording any production of the torrid zone, and, if cleared and cultivated, would be a very pretty place ; the tree which produces the caoutchouc or Indian rubber grows here.

From something like smoke having been repeatedly observed rising at one particular place among the trees, about a mile from the head of our creek, it was by some imagined that either the island was peopled, or that the savages had taken post there. In various attempts, however, to reconnoitre this spot, no trace of human footstep could be found, being in every direction an impenetrable thicket ; and we ultimately ascertained that it was entirely uninhabited.

The small stock of provisions saved from the wreck, and the uncertainty of our stay there, rendered economy in their distribution, as well as the preventing any waste or abuse, a most important duty. The mode adopted by Captain Maxwell, to make things go as far as possible, was to chop up the allowance for the day into small pieces, whether fowls, salt beef, pork, or flour, mixing the whole hotch-potch, boiling them together, and serving out a measure of this to each, publicly and openly, and without any distinction. By these means no nourishment was lost ; it could be more equally divided than by any other way : and, although necessarily a scanty, it was not an unsavoury

unsavoury mess. All the bread, except a few pounds, was lost. The men had half allowance of rum divided between dinner and supper, (sometimes more on hard fags,) and the officers two glasses of wine at dinner, and a quarter allowance of rum (a small dram-glass) at supper. It is astonishing how soon order sprung out of confusion, and the general cheerfulness and content which prevailed, for Saturday night was drank in defiance of the Malays.

A small bag of oatmeal was found one morning, which some of the young Scotch midshipmen considered as their own, and sat down, with great glee and smiling countenances, round a washhand basin full of burgoo, made from it; but they reckoned too securely on the antipathies of their English friends, (for not thinking this, perhaps, a proper time for indulging national prejudices) they claimed their share, and managed to get through it without a wry face. A few weeks schooling on a desert isle would also be a great blessing to many thousands who are capriciously unbappy in the midst of superfluity, and wretched only because they have never known distress.

The guards at the posts, covering the boats, were generally under charge, alternately, of Lieut. Hay, Messrs. Casey, Johnstone, Sykes, Abbot, Brownrigg, and Hope. The garrison duty, at night, was conducted, in turns, by the surgeon, chaplain, Messrs. Eden, Raper, Mostyn, Stopford, and Gore; thus making it light, and enabling them to keep their eyes open, and walk vigilantly round to observe that all the sen-

tries were on the alert, and called out every quarter of an hour; the younger midshipmen, Messrs. Maxwell, Martin, Hawthorn, Gordon, and Browne, being perched, in rotation, on the look-out rock during the day, to watch the motions of the pirates, and give notice of any ship or vessel which might appear in the offing.

As there is no evil from which some good may not be derived, so the young officers had, on the present occasion, an opportunity of marking the resources which spring from self-possession and cool exertion, even under the most appalling difficulties; and thereby of imbibing a character of promptitude, with a contempt of helpless indecision—a failing of all others, in cases of danger or emergency, not only the most injurious to private fame, but to the public service.

It is somewhat remarkable, that, during our stay here of nineteen days, exposed alternately to heavy rain, and the fierce heat of a vertical sun, none were taken sick, and those who landed so (some very ill) all recovered, except a marine, who was in the last stage of a liver complaint, contracted whilst in China, as one of guard to the Ambassador. Another man, of very troublesome character, thought proper to leave his companions on the third day after landing. He may have been bitten by a serpent in the woods, and died there, or have fallen into the hands of the savages; but he was never afterwards heard of. We marked with oil and blacking, in large characters, on the rocks, the date of our departure, to be a guide to any that might come there

there in quest of us, and in the afternoon of the 7th, we bid adieu to Pulo Leat, where it is not wonderful that, in our situation, we should have suffered some hardship and privation; but it is remarkable, indeed, that, surrounded by so many dangers, the occurrence of any one of which would have proved fatal, that we should have escaped the whole. We had, for example, great reason to be thankful that the ship did not fall from the rocks on which she first struck into deeper water, for then all must have perished;—that no accident happened to the boats which conveyed the embassy to Batavia; for, in that case, we should never have been heard of;—that we found water;—that no mutiny or division took place among ourselves;—that we had been able and willing to stand our ground against the pirates;—and that the Ternate had succeeded in anchoring in sight of the island; which she was enabled to do by a fortuitous slant of wind for an hour or two. Had we been unfortunate in any one of these circumstances, few would have remained to tell our tale.

An Account of the Natives of the TONGA ISLANDS in the South Pacific Ocean. Compiled and arranged from the extensive Communications of Mr. William Mariner, several years resident in those islands. By JOHN MARTIN, M.D.
In 2 vols. 8vo.

The Tonga islands, named by Capt. Cook the Friendly islands, of which, one of the principal was known under the appellation of
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Tongataboo, lie nearly in latitude 20 S. to the west of Otaheite. William Mariner, then a youth, was engaged by his father's consent to accompany Captain Duck in a ship which had a two-fold commission, which was first to cruise for prizes, and then to double Cape Horn, and proceed into the Pacific Ocean in search of whales. The vessel, named the Port-au-Prince, having met with small success in the earlier part of her cruise, entered upon the second part of her commission, and employed a considerable part of the year 1806 in whaling. At length the ship anchored for the last time at Lefooga, one of the Friendly Islands, where it was deserted, first by four of the crew, and then by fifteen others. This desertion was probably the cause of an attack by the natives, which took place on the first of December 1806, and ended in the death of all the crew except Mariner, who was probably preserved in consequence of his youth. He fortunately attracted the notice of Finow, the king of the islands, before whom he was brought, and by whose orders the ship was run aground and plundered.

Mariner, who was born near London, on September 10, 1791, was somewhat past 15 at the time of this unhappy event. Under the patronage of Finow, and after his death, of his son, he passed some years in tolerable comfort; and he, with some of his remaining companions who had gone ashore before the massacre, were engaged to join an expedition against the Isle of Tonga. At length, in the year 1810, being with three other men, in a canoe of his own, he
cast