

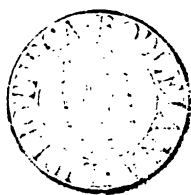
v. S.H. 1827.
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THE
ADVENTURES
OF
NAUFRAGUS.

—
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

—
There is a special Providence in the fall of a Sparrow !

HAMLET.



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cheek bones, and large black eyes; he was a half-cast, or creole, of Bengal, but educated in England. Scarcely had I made my bow to this original, when a loud, confused jabber, proceeding from the main hold, of "*Marrega! marrega!*" attracted our notice; and, on looking down the hatchway, I beheld three or four lascars, with billets of wood, crushing a huge centipede, which twirled its long, elastic body round and round, in agony and rage, until killed. The jabber of the black sailors, and their novel costume, together with the heat of the hold, and the smell of the pepper and betel-nut, of which the cargo consisted, produced on my mind an impression unlike any I had ever before felt.

All hands were busy receiving cargo, which we were to leave at Malacca for some China ship expected there; and all possible haste was made to sail immediately. It was four o'clock in the afternoon when I went on board, and at five Tassit very civilly asked me down to tea. I readily obeyed the summons, and followed him to the cabin. There I found the leg and wing of a cold fowl, toast, biscuits, butter, a piece of cold ham, and a smoking tea-kettle in the hands of a lascar. Down I sat, opposite to my new friend Tassit, and began upon the fowl and ham, which soon disappeared; the toast and tea also vanished, and with equal celerity, Tassit all the while ministering to my wants with much patience and good-nature; and when I afterwards told him that that meal was the only one I had had for four days, he laughed immoderately; but suddenly checking himself, said, in a serious tone—"By all that's wonderful, I thought you would have killed yourself!"

After tea, we chatted until eight, and I understood that my pay was to be eighty Sicca rupees (£10) per month. This was indeed agreeable news, and, at Tassit's suggestion, I went to bed at ten; but scarcely had I got into a comfortable dose, when I was roused up to assist in getting the brig under weigh. This was done in about an hour; and with the full moon to light us, we sailed down the Southern Channel. The captain had not yet come on board, so it was agreed that I should take the morning watch, from four to eight, and to bed I went again.

About twelve I was requested to go to the captain, who had come on board, and had sent for me. I quickly obeyed, and went into his cabin, when the first object I saw was a friend of

his, who had come on board to bid him farewell, measuring his length on the foor, and quite drunk; next appeared to my view the noble captain himself, seated in an arm-chair, his two thumbs playing round and round, *à la* Ephraim Smooth, and his eyes keeping time. His face was round, plump, and as red as a furnace, and his head rolled round his large, square shoulders, quite mechanically; and it was not without some difficulty that he contrived to stammer out, after two or three slight interruptions from a tormenting hiccough—"Well, sir, have you got your things?"—"No, sir."—"No, sir! then what's to be done? what's to be done? (hiccough) wh—*a—**a—**t's* to be d—done?" falling gently backward into a "rest thee, babe" slumber. Supposing him fast asleep, I was about to take a silent leave, when, to my surprise, he, on a sudden, started half out of his chair, bawling out—"D—n it, what's to be done?" and once more he fell asleep. In a few minutes there appeared much to be done, for we had run ashore. We lay on our beam-ends until morning, Tassit all the while, quite unconcerned, smoking a small hand hookah, and talking about his dear intended, who was in Bengal, until the stars began to disappear, and the day to break, bringing the rise of the tide, and with it boats from the shore to our assistance. All hands were now actively engaged, and so continued until nine o'clock, when we again floated. We bade adieu to Penang, and a fair, gentle breeze, wafted us through the Channel, towards the Straits of Malacca. The captain very kindly gave me, from his private stock of clothes, six shirts, six white jackets, a red cap, six pair of trowsers, and a watch-coat, and always continued to behave to me in the most kind and friendly manner. Professing himself my best friend, he invariably supported me, whenever any difference between myself and Tassit, or the sailors, rendered his interference necessary. He is now dead; but if his spirit witnesses the feelings of my heart, which beat so high in gratitude and affection to his memory, he has full assurance that his kindness was not ill bestowed.

The scenery which we passed was transcendently beautiful. Our little skiff was wafted by a gentle, refreshing zephyr, and the lascars, in groups, were relating some of their marvellous tales, while Tassit and myself, sipping our tea, sweetened with China candy, and enriched with the milk of a favourite goat,
were

were listening to the captain's descriptions of the different splendid or remarkable scenes which presented themselves. The sky continued, for many days, cloudless, and beautifully blue; and I may rank the evening hours of this day among the few really happy hours of my life. This period of enjoyment, especially in contrast with the sufferings which immediately preceded it, still refreshes both my memory and my imagination.

In a few days we reached Malacca, and, after discharging the pepper and betel which we had on board, prepared to sail for Pulo Lingin, an obscure Malay port to the eastward, seldom frequented by English traders. Previously to our sailing, as we were endeavouring to heave up an anchor left behind by some frigate, a black diver, who had dived for the purpose of ascertaining its exact situation, in consequence of the extreme difficulty experienced in heaving it up, remained under water so long, that we gave him up for lost. At length, however, he made his appearance at the surface, thus relieving us from our regret—but for a moment, however; for an enormous shark appeared almost instantaneously, snapped him completely asunder, and then swam away after the mangled remains, leaving the water, for a considerable space, dyed with blood. The shock to all of us, who were unable to render the least assistance, was truly horrific; and, for many months afterwards, a painful impression remained on our minds, in consequence of the melancholy fate of our unfortunate diver. The next day after this tragical event, we set sail, and on our passage through the Straits of Malacca, met the Java expedition on its return to Bengal.

In about three weeks we reached Pulo Lingin. The lofty peak so called, as seen from the deck of our little bark, on a clear day, had a grand and imposing effect. We had not been long at anchor before a canoe came alongside, with four Arabian chiefs, magnificently apparelled. The captain, suspecting them to be pirates in disguise, gave orders that the door of a cabin, in which was a large chest of treasure, should be locked. They said that they came merely to see the captain and the ship. Being received on board, they scrutinized, with rather suspicious minuteness, every thing within their view. On coming to the cabin where the treasure was concealed, and finding the door locked, they expressed great anxiety to have it opened. The captain, whose presence of

mind never forsook him, called to the *Cas-a-ab* for the key, telling them in Arabic "there was only a poor Christian lying there, who had died the day before," upon which they turned aside with symptoms of disgust, at the idea of seeing a Christian corpse, and precipitately returned on deck. One of the Arabs eyed me with expressive earnestness; which, indeed, was not to be wondered at, for a European lad had seldom, if ever, been seen in that part of the globe before. I was not more than fourteen years of age, with the glow of health on my cheek, and with long curly hair, as white as flax. The Arab then entered into conversation with the captain, expressing (as I afterwards learnt, to my no small astonishment) a wish to purchase me—nay, ventured so far, as to offer three hundred dollars for me. On being told that I was not for sale, he appeared much surprised, expressing, indeed, his wonder that the captain could refuse so large a sum for so young a boy; but endeavouring to account for the refusal, by observing—"He is perhaps some young prince, or a high cast Englishman, I suppose;" and after shewing off some consequential native airs, left us. No sooner were our visitors clear off, than the captain ordered all the small arms, and the four six-pounders, to be loaded, in readiness for an attack that night. No attack, however, was made, and the captain and myself went on shore the next morning.

We first paid our visit to the king, or rajah of Lingin, who was seated, cross-legged, on a cane mat, in a large hut. We were not suffered to approach his august presence without taking off our shoes and stockings, and were ordered not to advance nearer to his majesty's person than fifteen feet. The captain and I now sat down cross-legged, on a mat facing the king. He was an overgrown savage-looking Malay, with fat cheeks, a short flat chin, and a large mouth, down the corners of which ran the juice of the betel-nut, of a deep red colour, which gave him an appearance, at least in my eye, both terrifying and disgusting. We were surrounded on all sides by Malays, armed each with a crease, or dagger, probably poisoned, and whose countenances were marked with a ferocity quite in keeping with the rest of the scene. The captain broke silence by a flattering encomium on the king's improved looks, since last he saw him, and requested his acceptance of some costly and choice presents, which were produced.

produced. His majesty having accepted them, made some inquiries respecting me; he first admired the colour of my hair, then asked how many brothers I had—how old I was—and if I would like to stop in his dominions? and seemed quite pleased with my complimentary answers. Upon my expressing some surprise at seeing an organ in a corner of the room, he beckoned to one of his attendants to play it. A more villanous compound of harsh sounds I never before heard, but they seemed to please the Malay monarch mightily. He then ordered a flute to be brought me, which, as well as the organ, had doubtless been given him by some European, who well knew their use. I immediately received it, and, still in a sitting posture, played a few notes, to the surprise of the king and all the motley assembly.

The captain now rose to take leave, which we both did, by bowing very ceremoniously, and very low. We had not gone far, however, before we were recalled into the presence of the king, who, after we had again divested ourselves of stockings and shoes, and sat cross-legged on the mat, made me a present of the flute, and a bamboo salver full of sweetmeats. We were then allowed to depart.

After remaining at Lingin six days, during which time we were occupied in bartering piece goods and opium for block tin, we set sail for Pulo Minto, where we arrived in about three weeks. On our landing, we observed that the natives, who, as well as those of Pulo Lingin, were Malays, were less friendly and open than our Lingin friends; and the rajah would not grant our captain an interview: he was highly indignant, and half resolved to sail away without a cargo; but as this sacrifice would be too great, he reluctantly went on shore. He was by this time well aware of the treacherous disposition of the natives; and the first thing he did was to reeve signal-halyards on a prominent post on the beach, giving directions to Tassit to keep a good look-out, and, in the event of the union jack being unfurled, to hasten on shore with all the crew, well armed.

Pulo Minto is even a more lovely spot than Lingin: the scenery is indeed bewitching, not unlike that which the imagination might appropriate to the enchanted island of the Tempest; but, alas! no Prosperos, nor Ariels, nor Mirandas, were there: its inhabitants were very little, at least in my view, inferior in

manners, and in mental and personal endowments, to Caliban himself.

By dint of great activity and exertion, we completed our lading in about nine days, and without any closer intimacy with the natives than what was absolutely necessary. They evinced from the first no disposition to good fellowship; and on one occasion, when I approached a Malay prince, who wore a splendid crease, with a wish, expressed by signs, to be allowed to examine it, I thought I should have to pay with my life for my temerity, such was the savage malignity of his countenance, and the offensive manner in which he repulsed my advances.

We were on the point of departure, and, as we thought, had but to deliver over to the Malays a bale of piece goods, and five hundred dollars, due to them, when, to our dismay, we missed twenty-eight slabs of tin, represented to have been actually shipped on the preceding day, but which, as we afterwards found, had been very adroitly concealed by the Malays in the sand on the beach. No sooner had our captain made this discovery, than he ordered Tassit to go on shore immediately, and tell the Malay, that if the property was not given up, he would not only keep possession of the bale of piece goods, and the five hundred dollars, but report the case to the supreme government; and I was appointed to accompany Tassit. On rowing ashore, poor Tassit became more and more thoughtful, until a deep sigh would escape him, with—"Well, God knows how it will all end!" In the mean time, the brig got under weigh, and stood in shore as near as she could, her guns "grinning horribly," and the captain pacing the deck, with evident anxiety. We found the beach lined with Malays, and as our little boat crossed the surf, the countenance of Tassit assumed a most discouraging aspect. This, however, did not much intimidate me, for, armed as we were, each with two loaded pistols and a cutlass, I thought our boat's crew a match for them.

It was about four o'clock in the evening, when the gentle surf bore our boat on the sand, and Tassit, with an unwilling step, landed; that instant, a number of Malays seized and hurried him to a hut on the beach, and there surrounded him, making use of all the outrageous epithets in broken English and Malay, and using the most violent gesticulations of defiance and derision
imaginable;

imaginable; one drawing a crease across Tassit's cheek, others forming a ring, and seating him on a mat in the midst of them. At that instant, I, who with the boat's crew had followed him, came into the ring to speak to one of the chiefs, and to endeavour to release my mate: "Look! my dear Naufragus, behold!" ejaculated Tassit, "what a dangerous situation has the rashness of our captain placed me in!" He said this in a voice, and with a manner so deplorable, and at the same time so irresistibly droll, that I could not refrain from laughing, although there were, at that moment, twenty drawn daggers at our breasts. I comforted Tassit as well as I could, and told the Malays I would go on board, and make known to the captain their demands.—"Iss, tell im," said one of the chiefs, "he not pay my dollar, not give my bale of piece goods, I cut away this man's throat." At this poor Tassit turned up the whites of his eyes, bellowing after me—"My dear Naufragus, make haste, or I shall be lost to you for ever." I made my boat's crew row with all their might, till, in a few minutes, I got on board. Never shall I forget the violent rage of the captain, when I told him what the Malays had done; he was as mad as the roaring sea—"Ah!" said he, "if you could but have unfurled the union jack, I would have settled the business in an instant, but that was impossible. Go on shore, Naufragus; tell the Malays that I hoist my nation's ensign; shew it to them; tell them, if they insult that flag, by keeping a British subject prisoner, my countrymen will come and blow the town to atoms: tell them, too, I will have my twenty-eight slabs of tin." A second time I went on shore, not, I confess, quite pleased with my mission; but deeming any misgivings discreditable to my duty, as well as to my honour, I spurned those intruders, and looking sternly at my crew, told them, in their language, to pull like devils! "Ah! ha! sahib," was the reply, accompanied by a loud cheer, which reanimated poor Tassit, whose drooping spirits were just then at the lowest ebb of despair. I again entered the ring, and they were all listening attentively to my interpreter, when, whiz! sang a cannon ball from our captain, which passed just above our heads. This produced a violent consternation among the natives; but they had no time for words, for another thunderer came, and struck a cocoa-tree close to us, the top of which was shivered to atoms. At this moment, the brig hoisted

English colours. Tassit now expected every moment to be his last ; and I retreated three or four paces, to keep my arms clear, and prepared for defence. A rush towards Tassit made me give up the poor fellow for lost, and breathless with apprehension, but nevertheless determined either to defend or avenge him, I hastily approached the spot with my crew, and was surprised at the changed expression of Tassit's countenance: his dark eyes darted joy, a smile of delight beamed on his cheek, and, turning to me, he said, " Go on board, my dear Naufragus, and tell the captain to cease firing ; the Malays have agreed to his terms ; and on the return of the boat, I am to receive the tin." With joy I delivered the message ; the firing ceased ; I took the boat once more on shore, the tin was brought on board by Tassit, who shook the captain by the hand most heartily, and the captain, who was very fond of his chief officer, said, " Ah ! my old croney, had they cut you in slices, I'd have revenged you, my boy !" This consolation, however, was received by Tassit in silence, who no doubt thought with Othello, " 'tis better as it is." The dollars and the piece goods were then, of course, delivered to the natives. The captain afterwards went on shore, and was received with great respect by the king, who agreed to dine on board, with all his retinue, next day, which was Christmas day.

At an early hour, we were prepared for the reception of our royal guest: the rigging was decorated with the British ensign, and union jack ; the American, French, and Spanish ensigns were spread on the quarter-deck ; our guns, with six fresh charges at the side of each, were got in readiness to fire a salute ; curries, sweatmeats, wine, brandy, and Hodgson's pale ale, graced a well-spread table, laid out on deck ; while the captain, with his telescope, was looking anxiously towards the beach, for the embarkation of the king. Precisely at twelve o'clock, a large canoe, having in it three flags, and surrounded by a considerable number of smaller canoes, pushed off from the shore, and in about ten minutes the king arrived on board. He was a little fat man, with a lowering aspect, a flat nose, keen crafty-looking eyes, with a remarkably small chin. The moment he reached the deck, our six-pounders opened the salute, the thunder of which so alarmed his majesty, that, at his particular request, they were silenced.

The conversation then turned on the hopes of a continuance of friendship

friendship between his majesty and the English ; numerous were the professions of veneration and attachment exchanged, till at length our royal visitor began to feel the effects of the bumpers he had swallowed, and at every fresh one he declared—" No nation in the world was like the English !" His attendants wore each a crease, and surrounded their king, as if apprehensive for his safety. At three he rose to depart, and a finishing bumper to the health of the king of England concluded the entertainment, with which our visitor was highly gratified, and returned on shore, with, on his part, reiterated professions of everlasting friendship for the English, and on ours, (when he was at a distance not to feel alarm,) with a salute from the guns.

We then proceeded to get under weigh ; but my feelings were now to undergo a shock which I little anticipated, and which served to illustrate the unnatural, cruel practice of the slave trade—a beautiful girl, about twelve years of age, had been purchased by our captain for the sum of forty dollars, as a present for his wife in Calcutta. She was brought alongside in a canoe, shortly after the departure of the king, in a state sufficient to awaken sympathy and pity in the breasts even of those who were most accustomed to witness such scenes. She was " all tears," or rather, as if nature had exhausted itself, and denied to her the aid of tears to relieve her oppressed heart, she was insensible to all around, and wrapt in an agony of profound sorrow. Her hair, long, and black as a raven's wing, was flowing wildly over her face and shoulders : poor Yadhoo ! how often have I thought of thy afflictions ! alas ! thy moans were unheard—thy sighs unregarded ; our bark bore thee away, far, far from thy country, and the sacred breasts that reared thee, and thou wast doomed to bear thy griefs unsolaced and alone !

Soon the shore of Pulo Minto vanished from our sight. Wafted by a fair wind, and bending our course for Hindostan, poor Yadhoo was forgotten until the next morning, when she was nowhere to be found, though diligent search was made for her. It was at first supposed by all, that she had fallen a victim to her excessive grief, and thrown herself into the sea during the night ; but on the third evening of our departure, she was found by one of the lascars, stretched at her full length, in the main chains, a prey to dread and misery, and reduced to a mere skeleton :

leton: her hiding-place was probably the hold, which it was not possible to examine thoroughly. Every care was now taken of her by the captain, who left untried no means which tenderness could suggest, to reconcile her to her fate; but it was not until six weeks had elapsed that she ventured to hold up her head. Frequently, when in the evening, or in the night-watch, she seated to leeward, have I listened to her wild native song; her voice was impressively plaintive, well suited to the melancholy notes she warbled, and so soft and tender, that I never, before or since, heard any music which went so directly to my heart. The music of the Malays is, I believe, generally allowed by Europeans to possess a mellowness and mournful sweetness peculiar to itself; and is, from its simplicity and wildness, considered to be eminently beautiful.

My soul delights in sensibility, so that it would respond to any melancholy object; and such was the impression which it received from the wild notes of Yadhoo, in connexion with its cognizance of her desolate situation, that I shall never cease to think of her, though an untutored Indian, but as one possessing a soul of rare sensibility: in short—"To feel, 'twas but to hear her song."

The voyage from Pulo Minto to Calcutta occupied a period of seven weeks; and certainly I never spent a happier time on ship-board. The captain was exceedingly fond of music, and about an hour after the tea-things were removed, wine, grog, and small hand-hookahs, being placed on the table, Tassit was looked to for his song as regularly as if it had been part of his duty. Then would he strike up his favourite air—"Away with melancholy," the familiar *fal las* of which delighted the captain so much, that if I were not scrupulously attentive to lend to them the force of my lungs, he would fly into a violent passion, and thumping the table with his Gunter's scale, bawl out—"Well, sir!" then came the *fal la*, with a vengeance. It was not, however, at all times, that I could compose my muscles sufficiently for the purpose, so ludicrous was the effect produced by the uniform twang of Tassit's voice, in the verse beginning with—"Why what's the use of sighing," by his wide-extended lanky jaws, and by his eye stedfastly fixed on one of the beams, from which he never ventured to move it, until it came to the delectable

little society; the shops were opened—trade resumed its several avocations—and society its wonted gaiety; no longer were fears entertained of the English; nor indeed did we scarcely ever see an English soldier, unless when, on a Sunday evening, enjoying the music on the Champ de Mars. After a considerable period of time had been wasted, almost inevitably, in natural jealousies, and in frequent broils between the English and the French, the conduct of our conquerors was such as to win the confidence and esteem of the inhabitants in general; but as for me, such is the effect of habit, that, until I saw you, I continued to entertain an inconceivable dread of your countrymen. We at length ventured to remove our little treasures from their hiding-place, and found them in as good preservation as when we buried them."

Virginia and I had a favourable voyage to Tappanooly, enjoying together every external comfort—society, music, golden prospects, and especially young love. The objects which pleased her most were, the voracious shark in his entanglement*—the varying and iridescent hues of the dying dolphin—the shoals of bonetas and albacores, which, in countless numbers, bounded swiftly by;—the flying-fish—and the luminous appearance of the sea at night: all these were to her new objects of surprise, and her enjoyment was mine:—we were, indeed, happy!

In about seven weeks from our departure, we approached the west coast of the island of Sumatra; and when near to Tappanooly, rounded a small island, of a conical form, which rears its head about nine hundred feet above the surface of the sea; it is called "Munsular." The trees on it are decorated with leaves of an extremely small size and delicate texture, and disposed with admirable uniformity. As we approached this island from the southward, and sailed round its north-eastern extremity, a magnificent waterfall, the noise of which had caught our attention

* The shark is invariably attended by a remarkable fish, called the "pilot-fish." Two or three of this species precede his course, at the distance of a few feet, and one or two swim on each side of him. The vulgar opinion is, that they supply the deficiency of smell in the shark, and cater his food for him; in return for which services, they are received into his jaws as a place of refuge on the approach of danger. When the shark is caught, I have seen the pilot-fishes swim about, seemingly in great distress, until he is hauled up, when they disappear. They are each from eight to twelve inches in length, marked with transverse streaks of blue and a yellowish brown; and from the deck of a ship their appearance is extremely beautiful.

tion when we were some miles distant from it, suddenly burst upon our view. It takes its source at the mountain-summit of the island; it was at this time about twenty-seven feet in width, and rushed downwards to the sea, with a velocity and grandeur which so entranced us in enthusiastic admiration, as to prevent the expression of it. Its roar, as we approached nearer, became louder, and resembled continued reports from large cannon, reminding us of the truth of a remark by no means new, that the mighty scenes of nature, cause to appear insignificant and feeble, not only the highest productions of the human mind, but the mind itself, unable as it is to comprehend those scenes. Here, as in the neighbourhood of the Isle of France, the transparent clearness of the sea enabled us to distinguish, with amazing facility, the bottom, at the depth of thirty or forty feet, with its beds of coral, to a considerable extent, and the fishes sporting among them; but, on the whole, we were not now presented with so transcendently grand a spectacle as on the former occasion.

Tappanooly next opened to our view; it is a small island, about two miles distant from the main land; upon it is stationed an English resident, whose bungalow, out-houses, store-houses, the property of the East India Company, and a small Malay village, situated at its northern extremity, constitute the whole materia of the island. Between it and the main land, is formed one of the finest harbours in the world, said to be capable of containing one hundred and fifty sail of the line. In this harbour, about a quarter of a mile distant from Tappanooly, we came safe to anchor at three o'clock in the evening. The aspect of the main land is mountainous and woody, wild, and picturesque.

The natives of the island of Sumatra are Malays; and the inhabitants of its west coast are considered to be less treacherous and ferocious than those of Acheen, the Moluccas, Batavia, and other eastern settlements. Their complexion is actually yellow; being destitute of the red tinge which, with the yellow, constitutes the tawny or copper colour; their nails are dyed red: they are generally short in stature, seldom exceeding five feet eight, with noses rather flat, ears extended, cheek bones high, mouth wide, and hair long and flowing. What most strikes the attention of strangers, when considering their persons, is the admirable formation

formation of their legs, which, being left naked, are shown to great advantage. The Malay dress consists of a vest, a robe, a mantle, a girdle (in which is fixed the crease, or dagger), and short drawers. A fine cloth is worn round the head. The chief pride of Malayan dress, is the crease; the poorest vassal wears it; and that of a pangaran, or chief, is very expensive, the sheath and handle being finely carved, and richly fillagreed with gold. The Malays are fond of imitating the English uniform; and are often seen to wear the English cocked hat, and red or blue military jacket, with pantaloons and boots. If seriously offended, they are sanguinary, cruel, and unforgiving; and nothing but revenge, will satisfy them; but if well treated, they are found to be docile, faithful, and attached domestics, and courageous followers. They have a gravity in their general demeanour, and a dignity in their step and gait, which are very imposing and remarkable: they are indolent to excess, and it is difficult to persuade them to work for money, preferring, as they all do, poverty with independence, to splendour with servitude; they have few wants, and those few, bountiful nature satisfies with little or no labour on their part. As to their religion, it appears, from what I could glean from those of the best informed among them, whom I had an opportunity of conversing with, that some of them believe in a Creator, and in a future state of reward and punishment; but they have many absurd ideas on the subject of the power of invisible spirits over their persons, fates, and actions; and the rest of their faith is a mass of paganism, superstition, and idolatry. Some of them possess great courage; and I know several instances of even true heroism. One I will adduce, being acquainted with the parties; but it would be too much to infer, that every Malay would act with equal magnanimity in the same circumstances.

A few years ago, an English officer, who was on a visit to a friend at Padang, a settlement a few miles to the southward, then in the possession of the English, but since delivered over to the Dutch, frequently observed a young and lovely Malay girl, remarkable for fairness of complexion, and exquisite beauty, pass the bungalow he resided in. He felt a violent passion for her, and by bribing a third person, at length succeeded in communicating his sufferings to her. Through the same channel, he learnt, that she was married to a Malay, with whom she lived on good

good terms. Still he could not desist from indulging the hope of one day gratifying his infatuated passion, and expended large sums in endeavouring to undermine her virtue; but she rejected his addresses with becoming fortitude. Her resistance, unfortunately, only served to add fuel to his flame; and driven, at last, to desperation, he determined to resort to any measures, however dishonourable or dangerous, rather than lose his prize. There was a Malay, of apparent respectability, whose house the officer was in the habit of frequenting: to him the seducer, in confidence, imparted the secret which had so long agitated and oppressed his bosom; and he was overjoyed to hear the Malay promise to insure him the possession of the girl, in consideration of receiving a certain sum of money. The proposal was accepted with avidity; and he was to call at the same hour on the following day: he did so, and soon found himself in a room alone with the object of his passion, who was, or pretended to be, terrified at the sight of him, and attempted to escape, but in vain. He accomplished his purpose by force, and afterwards remained with her some days, in the Malay's house, using his utmost endeavours to sooth and console, by every means in his power, his much-injured victim, who, captivated by his winning and agreeable manners, and by the costly presents he lavished upon her, became at the end of that period, not only reconciled to her ravisher, but devotedly attached to him. Thus successful, he took a bungalow, or cottage, and made his favourite the mistress of it.

In the mean time, the unfortunate husband, finding that his wife did not return to her home on the evening of the day on which she left it, made diligent search and inquiry after her; but such was the secrecy with which the whole affair was conducted, that he could make no discovery; and concluded that she had either destroyed herself, or been kidnapped for the purpose of being sold to slavery. Being fond of her to distraction, it was some time before the poor wretch could hold up his head; and it was not until a period of six weeks had elapsed, that he heard she was living openly with an English officer; the infatuation of the parties had probably rendered them carelessly secure: his astonishment was then as great, as were his conflicting feelings of jealousy and revenge, insupportable. The Englishman being rich, respectable in rank, elegant and prepossessing, both in man-
ners

ners and in person, of social disposition, and indeed, notwithstanding this sad falling off in his conduct, occasioned by a whirlwind of passion, a man of amiable feelings, had a host of visitors continually at his dwelling. One evening, as he was enjoying their society, enlivened by the circulating glass, intimation was brought him, by one of his attendants, that a Malay sought admission. "Who is he?" was the question. "One who bears a message from another." He repaired to his verandah, and there saw an aged Malay, who was a perfect stranger to him. The stranger bowed respectfully, and, in a firm tone, addressed him to the following purport:—"Young man, I come from my son, to tell you that he knows you possess his wife; he insists upon your restoring her to him before this time to-morrow; otherwise you will as surely be a corpse, as that you now breathe and live." The latter part of this harangue was delivered with considerable energy and animation; the old man indeed, was even seen to shed tears; and having ended, disappeared instantly, without waiting a reply. The Englishman was paralysed at this sudden and unexpected denunciation; his countenance betrayed the emotions of his heart to his friends, who soon divined the cause; and, in the absence of the girl, strongly advised him to escape with her in a ship, then on the very eve of sailing for Batavia; but he spurned the suggestion, conceiving that to yield to it would be cowardice, and passing the bottle, determined to bury care in wine. The party did not separate until a late hour, and promised to meet on the following day, to keep their friend in countenance, to cheer up his spirits, and to defend him, if necessary. After securing his chamber, with more than ordinary precaution, and placing a brace of loaded pistols, and a crease, under his pillow, he retired to rest, of course refraining from imparting to the fair partner of his bed, the fearful threat of the stranger; but his uneasiness could not escape her observation, and she employed the most winning persuasives in order to prevail upon him to reveal to her its cause.

The next morning, a Malay servant of his, whose life he had been instrumental, through Providence, in preserving, by procuring him medical aid, and affording him personal assistance under a raging fever, which ended in a delirium from which he had but recently recovered, gently tapped at his chamber door, intimating a wish

a wish to speak to his master. The officer, suspecting treachery, went out into the verandah armed, when his servant told him, after repeated injunctions to secrecy, the breach of which, he said, would be his inevitable destruction, that there was a design on foot to murder him that night, unless the girl were sent home in the course of the day. The officer considering his servant's intimation as confirmatory of that of the old Malay, consulted with his friends, who thought it most prudent to communicate the whole affair to the English Resident, in order to obtain his advice, and, if possible, his assistance in their attempt to secure the person of the assassin. The resident, on hearing the tale, immediately dispatched officers for his apprehension, but he was nowhere to be found. That evening, like the preceding, was passed by the officer in the society of a numerous party of friends, when, about the hour of ten, information was brought that a man, whose person it was impossible to distinguish in consequence of the darkness of the night, had been seen to prow! about the premises, and on finding himself discovered, had quickly made his escape. At twelve o'clock the company broke up, and he retired to his chamber*, having satisfied himself that no stranger was in the room; and after taking, as before, extraordinary precautions to secure himself from the possibility of intrusion in the night, and, as before, placing his weapons under his pillow, he went to rest, and soon fell into a profound sleep, folded in the arms of his beautiful partner, whose bosom was his pillow. He had slept about three hours, when, on a sudden, he felt his bosom roughly pressed, and his shoulder violently shaken. He awoke, and was horror-struck to behold standing over him, a Malay, bearing in each hand a naked crease;—it was the injured husband. There is something in the very nature of guilt, which unnerves the strongest arm, and saps the resolution of the stoutest heart,—and these were the effects produced upon the Englishman: in his confusion, he forgot the pistols beneath his pillow; and before he could collect his scattered senses, the Malay, presenting the point of one crease to his bosom, while he held out the handle of another for his acceptance, said—“ Friend†, arise! take this, defend yourself quickly :

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* It is usual, in almost every part of Asia, to keep a lamp burning in the chamber during the night.

† The mode of salutation in use among these people, on the occasion of a hostile message, or on the onset of a contest, which is likely to end fatally to one or both of the parties.

you, or I, must now die!"—and at that instant, made a desperate lunge, which was quickly parried by the Englishman, the point of whose crease entered the fleshy part of his opponent's side. Quick as thought, a succession of lunges, or rather of transverse cuts (such as are usually made with the crease), followed. The Englishman, though an entire novice in the use of the weapon, while his opponent was a skilful adept in it, continued to parry his aims almost by miracle. During the contest, the girl succeeded in making her escape through a hole which her husband, to effect his entrance, had cut in the matting forming the sides of the bungalow: it is supposed that she fled into the interior, for she was never afterwards seen or heard of at Padang. At length, both being covered with wounds, and weak from the loss of blood, every cut, though made at random, took effect. The Englishman, now summoning all his energies, and in the hope of terminating the contest in his own favour, aimed a deadly blow at his adversary, who, in attempting to parry it, staggered, and, for a moment, threw himself off his guard. Of that moment the Englishman availed himself, and struck his crease into the Malay's shoulder, laying him prostrate at his feet, apparently dead, expecting every instant, from loss of blood, to be stretched side by side with his antagonist; he then tottered towards the door to arouse his servants, who, being all wrapt in sound sleep in the verandah, were unconscious of the scene which was passing in their master's chamber, when just as he was in the act of lifting the latch, the Malay, having recovered strength, leaped up with the fleetness of a roe, and ran him through the back. He fell; and having briefly related to his friends the particulars of the fight, he expired at eight o'clock, expressing, with his last breath, uneasiness for the girl, whose fate was uncertain;—commending the generosity and courage of his opponent, and leaving strict injunctions that he should be no further molested. The Malay, however, gave himself up to justice, was tried, found guilty of murder, and executed.

The Malay women are fair, and some of them handsome, possessing expressive dark eyes, eyebrows as regular as if pencilled, and small feet, which are esteemed a great beauty. From their known addictiveness to jealousy, however, under the dominion of which fatal passion they commonly resort to poison, to satiate their thirst of vengeance, Europeans, in general, consider it rather

rather hazardous to associate with them. I have heard Englishmen, who have spent the greater portion of their existence among these people, declare, that it is almost impossible to dissolve a connexion* once formed with a Malay female, and live, unless the dissolution be effected either by flight or by artifice. The females of Acheen, and of Java especially, are renowned for their expertness in the art of preparing poisons; and pride themselves in it: they can seal the doom of their victim prospectively, almost to an hour, even allowing a period of some months to intervene. Not only so, but when the demoniacal spirit of revenge actuates them, they will spare the life of the object of their hatred, or jealousy, for the very purpose of making it wretched by protracted torment: they can even, (and this practice is too often resorted to,) deprive him of the powers of manhood. I one day saw passing along the streets of Tappanooly, a Malay female, nearly as fair as a European, of exquisite form, of extremely delicate and sensitive exterior, and with the air and gait of a woman of education and acquirement: she wore a vest of cotton, which reached from her waist nearly down to her ankles; over this was thrown a robe of taffeta, covering her person from the shoulders to the feet, and fastened to the neck by buttons of gold. I observed to a European standing by me, that she was, to appearance, a divinity.—“ Would,” said he, “ she were as rich in humanity and virtue, as in personal charms; but, on the contrary, she possesses the passions of a satyr, totally ungovernable. Already has she buried, within the last three years, no less than four young husbands, two of them Europeans, and it is pretty well understood how she contrived to rid herself of them. In short, it is evident to all, that they were poisoned: but, such is the subtle nature of her art, that it is impossible to bring the proof home to her, with power sufficient to convict her. She is now perhaps in pursuit of a fifth; but I think her success doubtful; for although she possesses beauty enough to attract admiration, she is too notoriously dangerous to be trusted.” It would, however, be obviously unjust, so to generalize, as to brand the

* It may not be improper to observe, that a connexion with a female in the Eastern Archipelago, where the marriage tie is dispensed with, is viewed with indulgence, in consequence of the state of society, and of the scarcity of females of respectability, education, and acquirements.

the whole race with such a stigma; and every lover of the sex will naturally consider this instance as a lamentable exception.

No sooner had I brought my ship to anchor off Tappanooly, than I repaired to the dwelling of Mr. Prince, the resident, a gentleman as much and as deservedly esteemed for the amiable simplicity and engaging mildness of his manners, as he is distinguished for the able and indefatigable discharge of his public duties. I produced a letter addressed to this gentleman by my Pondicherry agents, requesting his information and assistance in the delivery of a cargo of pepper, which was consigned to me by a French merchant of Pondicherry, and was expected to have already arrived at Tappanooly; but he told me that he was totally ignorant of any such consignment having arrived on the island, or indeed of any being on its way; and that owing to the great scarcity of pepper on the coast just then, it was almost impossible to procure any. This was a severe disappointment to me; but it was amply compensated by the circumstance of a cargo of soft sugar, which had been recently left on the island by a ship, unable, from having sprung a leak at sea, to proceed on her voyage, being now for immediate sale. From recent accounts-current, received from Bengal, it appeared that the price of sugar at that place had risen, and was then extremely high; so that comparing the prime cost of the sugar at Tappanooly, with the Bengal price, I concluded that the purchase of it would be a speculation calculated to afford a more than reasonable profit, that is, according to an estimation by no means sanguine, one hundred and twenty per cent, at least. The circumstance also of my having on board the total proceeds of my various freights since I left Bengal, amounting in specie to eleven thousand three hundred and twenty dollars, and the loss which I should incur by sailing in ballast, acted as additional inducements to vest the whole of my funds in the purchase of the sugar on my own account.

This turn of fortune's wheel in my favour, threw me for a time into a transport of joy. Hard did we labour to get our vessel ready for sea with all possible expedition. In the short space of one day and night, the brig was hove down, her copper repaired, her sides fresh dammered*, and she was made altogether perfectly water-tight. I then immediately commenced taking in cargo, with all the energy which

* Dammer is a kind of vegetable pitch.

which the mind of a man furnished with the noblest stimuli to exertion—the desire of increasing the happiness of an affectionate and confiding wife, and, at the same time, of possessing riches, independence, and power, as the means of enjoyment and of doing good, is capable of exercising. While I was busied in superintending the weighing of a portion of the cargo on shore, Thomson was receiving on board the portion already weighed, and stowing it away. With respect to Virginia, her time was agreeably employed in making little excursions about the island, attended by Malay girls, her attention being much engaged in noticing its natural productions, most of which were entirely new to her, or in observing the manners and habits of the natives; and her remarks on all that she had both heard and seen, were delightfully refreshing to me after the fatigues of the day. A beautiful kid had been presented to her by a pangaran, or chief; then on a visit to the Resident; and often, when she was seated with it by her side, holding the playful little animal by a ribband, tied to its neck, did I think of Sterne's Maria, and rejoice that it was not Maria I saw before me. In the space of five days I was once more ready for sea, the cargo now my own, as well as the ship, in which "frail bark" I had ventured,—my all.

On the morning previous to our departure, we were concerned to find that our boat, the only one we had possessed, had disappeared during the night: having been fastened by a rope to the stern, we concluded it must have been stolen. We were the more chagrined at this, because there was no possibility of procuring another at Tappanooly; and to sail without one, was at least a hazardous undertaking. After bidding farewell to Mr. Prince, who kindly loaded us with presents of fruit, we set sail for Hindoostan, with a pleasant breeze in our favour. We had not however proceeded far, scarcely indeed having cleared the land, before the wind began to fall off; and a strong current setting against us, we came, as we supposed, to an anchor for the night, about two miles distant from the shore, which was lined with a formidable nest of breakers; and after paying out eight fathoms of cable, squaring the yards, and setting the watch, we retired to rest. Scarcely had the midnight hour passed, all on board being asleep, except Thomson, who had just relieved one of the secunnies on the watch, when I was awoken by the voice of the former bawling down the companion—"Captain Naufragus! Captain Naufragus! we're

out at sea, sir!"—"Indeed! how can that be?" True, however, it proved. Not a vestige of land did the moon gratify our gazing eyes withal, and we concluded that our cable must have been cut by the rocky bottom. I deeply lamented losing my anchor, so soon after my boat, and directed the lascars to haul in the slack of the cable; they did so; but instead of the cable's end making its appearance, a check was felt, which prevented their getting any more in. The serang then went over the bows to ascertain the cause, and discovered the anchor suspended by the buoy-rope; it had got entangled in the fore-chains, without having reached the bottom at all; consequently, while supposing ourselves to be safe at anchor, we were, in fact, at the mercy of the winds; but fortunate it was for us the wind was not from the sea, as in that case we must of course have been blown on the rocks: as it was, I was delighted at recovering my anchor, and finding the whole property safe, as also our lives. By the next morning, we regained our situation on the coast, but the wind still failed us, and continued to fail for a whole week, so that we made but little way. At length a breeze sprang up, which wafted us onwards, sixty or seventy miles, and died away again, leaving us once more becalmed; and I began to suspect that, so far as the elements were concerned, my good fortune had deserted me. On the morning of the tenth day from our departure, I was again awakened by Thomson—"Captain Naufragus!"—"Hulloa!"—"Here is our boat; she is come back, and is just beneath our bows."—"The deuce she is!" and true enough, there she lay, within ten yards ahead, as if expecting and waiting for us; but of her six oars, four were missing: glad enough, however, were we to see our old acquaintance, and she was soon hoisted up to her birth at the stern.

It was my custom, when we were coasting during the night, to station one lascar on each bow, and one on each gangway, for the purpose of keeping a good look-out. To keep their attention constantly awake, it was necessary for the officer of the watch (either Thomson or myself), to pass a watch-word every half-hour, which was—"Coup daek-ougeel!" or, "Look out forward!" This was immediately answered by the lascar at one gangway,—passed round forward, and concluded at the opposite one. It was amusing to hear the different voices, with the droll, unsonorous tones of these singular seamen. One night, how-

ever,

ever, when, in the absence of the moon, the stars were beautifully conspicuous in the vast expanse above—the sea quite calm, with a surface almost as unruffled as that of a mirror, and nothing to be seen but the fitful glittering of fishes' fins, reflecting the starlight—altogether forming a delightful scene for meditation, but one which, heightened as its effect was by the hour, and the reigning stillness, was apt to lull the senses, and seal the eyes in slumber, and of which indeed I myself began to feel the influence,—when, in fact, we were “*a' noddin'*,” I recollected myself, and having shaken off my own slumbers, I, with the intention of arousing the lascars from theirs, bawled out, with stentorian lungs—“*Coup daek-ougeel!*”—“*Coup daek-tegh!*” was the reply, long drawn out; another—“*Coup daek-tegh!*” (still slower); but the third lascar, (poor wretch!) drawling out, in a tone of voice hardly audible—“*Coup da-ek-tegh!*” in an instant,—fell into the sea! In vain was the alarm given, and the boat lowered: he sunk into his final sleep, his bed, the ocean.

A rising breeze soon wafted us beyond Sumatra's shores, to a more northern latitude; it was the south-east trade-wind, carrying us nearly within the influence of the south-west monsoon; but we were not favoured with such propitious gales as formerly. Still our spirits being in the true vein for enjoyment, we expressed a hope, which Thomsom heartily participated, that we might never be less happy than we then were! This hope was scarcely born, when the sun setting with more than usual brilliancy, and leaving its path marked with streaks of gold, a bird hovered over our heads, and suddenly alighted on our taffrail: it was one of “Mother Cary's chickens,” which by mariners are considered as harbingers of ill, and generally, of a furious storm. At a warning of this kind I did not then feel disposed to take alarm; but there were other warnings not to be slighted—the horizon to the east presented the extraordinary appearance of a black cloud in the shape of a bow, with its convex towards the sea, and which kept its singular shape and position unchanged, until nightfall. For the period too of twenty minutes after the setting of the sun, the clouds to the north-west continued of the colour of blood: but that which most attracted our observation was, to us, a remarkable phenomenon—the sea immediately around us, and as far as the eye could discern by the

minutes not a vestige of fire remained—not even embers ; ashes, dust, and a column of smoke, were the only indications of the rite which had been performed. Such was the end of a woman, who, instead of living to serve and adorn society, thus became the victim of a cruel and barbarous superstition.

The ceremony of suttee varies in different districts, but throughout the east is fundamentally the same. But India is not the only country in which this abominable rite has prevailed. Ancient authors speak of it as not unknown, in early times, in other parts of the globe. Herodotus, in particular, speaking of the Crestonæans, asserts, that the women disputed with each other the honour of dying with their husbands. The Hindoos, however, seem to be the only people who have continued the practice up to this day. But in recording the superstitions of the Hindoos, or those of any other nation, we must do so rather “ in sorrow than in anger.” Such, and perhaps still more degrading, were the superstitions of our ancestors ; and in such should we ourselves be sunk, but for the undeserved gift of Revelation, imparted to us by the Father of Light, for the purpose of rescuing us from the thick darkness in which our forefathers wandered : thanks then be to Him for that inestimable blessing !

To proceed in my narrative :—Wafted by a gentle north-east breeze, we crossed the equator five weeks after leaving Hindoostan, and in a few days afterwards, entered the Straits of Sunda, steering due east. Nothing in nature can surpass the beauty of these straits ; they are studded with myriads of small islands, of an oval shape, which greet the eye of the voyager in every direction, and produce a diversity of scenic effect, highly interesting. In exploring these regions, the excitement which the mind receives from novelty alone, affords in itself no ordinary gratification ; and never, in the Straits of Sunda, does the voyager feel the pain of disappointed expectation. The sea, bounded to the north by the Sumatra shore, and to the south by Java, seldom rises higher than a gentle curl ; and our bark sailed along, wafted by odoriferous gales, amid the surrounding beauty, considerably heightened by the reflection around from the effulgence of the atmosphere, until the ships at anchor in Batavia roads appeared in sight. Malays then came off in canoes, with parrots, Java spar-

rows,

rows, fruit, and curiously wrought mats, for sale. I felt a desire to purchase one of the mats, of a fine and curious texture, but considering that my thirty dollars would be materially diminished thereby, I prudently resolved not to part with a single stiver. After we came to an anchor, the captain obligingly favoured me with his boat, and I soon reached the entrance of a river, on the banks of which, at the distance of two miles, stands the princely and luxuriant city of Batavia.

Batavia, which is the capital of Java, and of the Dutch possessions in the East Indies, affords a striking specimen of Asiatic opulence and luxury. But it is perhaps the most unhealthy place in the universe, and is proclaimed, and not without justice, the "grave of Europeans." A fever carries off a whole family in the morning, and they are buried in one grave in the evening. The Dutch, ever addicted to canals, have formed several in this city, as in Batavia in Europe, and it is to this cause that the unhealthy state of the town is mainly attributed:—the stagnant state of these, and of the adjacent marshy ground and pools, with which the country abounds,—the noxious vapours ushered in by the morning sea breezes—together with inattention to cleanliness on the part of the inhabitants—all, doubtless, contribute to the fatal pestilence continually raging there. Europeans consider the segar an excellent preservative, and they eat and drink freely, heedless of danger. The merchants reside in country seats, a few miles from Batavia, where the air is considered to be as pure and healthy as in Europe, the city itself being the fatal seat of pestilence. The country seats are superb, the gardens being tastefully laid out, and ornamented with sculpture, while the interior of almost every house displays costly lustres and mirrors, corresponding with the general magnificence. The roads are upon a scale of grandeur which astonishes the European fresh from his native soil. The market abounds with good fish, fowl, vegetables, and plenty of fruit. The city of Batavia was taken by the British forces in the late war, but afterwards ceded to the Dutch, in conformity to the treaty of peace; but the Javanese are decidedly inimical to the Dutch sway, as are, indeed, the Malay people generally throughout India, which circumstance frequently involves the government in turbulent and expensive broils. The Chinese inhabitants

bitants are so numerous as to constitute, it is said, nearly one-third of the population*. In the whole, Batavia is a most superb city—a secondary Bagdat.

On entering the river, a Javanese on horseback, who was waiting for us on its bank, threw us a rope, which being fastened to the bow of our boat, he trotted off, towing us along at a rapid rate, until we reached the city. I then landed, followed by a lascar, carrying my trunk, my thirty dollars being wrapped carefully in paper, and placed with extraordinary precaution in my pocket. The first human beings I beheld were European soldiers, and their appearance instantly warned me of the unhealthiness of the spot I had landed in. They looked more like skeletons than men:—each the “grim tyrant” personified;—and on the visage they bore a pale yellow tinge, which, together with the “lack-lustre eye” sunk deep in the socket, gave them an appearance, absolutely appalling: I involuntarily shuddered at the sight of them, reflecting on the probability of my soon being in the same state. To these crawling emblems of death, however, I advanced, and requested to know the direction to a tavern. The vacant stare—the shrug of the shoulders—brought to mind the singular predicament which Goldsmith must have found himself on his arrival in Holland to teach the natives English, on discovering that he must first learn to speak Dutch. I proceeded forward, when three other shades of men appeared in advance: those also I addressed, but still no answer could I obtain, while the reigning stillness of the city impressed me with a mournful sensation, discouraging to my hopes, and foreboding, I thought, a gloomy sojourn in the place.

Onward, however, I advanced, until at length I beheld before me, to my infinite delight, a sign, “The Dutchman’s head,” suspended in front of a splendid hotel; thither I bent my steps, and found the landlord seated in front of the house, and he invited me, (to my agreeable surprise in broken English), to
“volk

* In 1740, twenty thousand Chinese were barbarously massacred by the Dutch, without the smallest offence having ever been proved against them. The massacre was too unprovoked and detestable to be defended, even by the Netherlands government, who, when the governor arrived in Europe, sent him back, to be tried in Batavia; but he has never been heard of since.

"volk in." My primary object was to agree for my board ; this was soon settled, at the rate of three dollars per day—a sum, however, which placed my little stock of cash in jeopardy of soon disappearing altogether. Having placed my trunk in a bedroom allotted to me, and discharged the lascar who carried it, I strolled into the billiard-room, the dining-room, and coffee-room, all of them on a scale of splendid magnificence, and full of Dutchmen, one Englishman only, besides myself, being in the hotel, and he, I understood, labouring under a derangement of intellect. Observing a number of Dutchmen standing in an ante-room, waiting for the welcome announcement of "dinner," I bent my steps thither, in the hope of meeting with one who could speak English ; nor was I disappointed—a middle-aged military officer accosted me, and in broken English, inquired as to the then state of Europe, —then spoke of Buonaparte,—and informed me that he himself had fought and bled on the field of "Vaterloo;" speaking of which, he observed—"De Duke of Vellington's army was all in confusion : de Duke was all in de wrong ! and he would lose de battle, if von vary clever Hollander had not come in de vay, and told him vat to do: if it was not for dis man—dis vary clever man, *Vanderbenholderstein*, de Duke of Vellington would have lost every ting in de vorld !" At that instant dinner was announced, and I bent my steps towards the dining-room, marvelling greatly at the profound wisdom of the said *Vanderbenholderstein*, but still more that I had never before heard mention even of his name.

I was naturally anxious to be seated next my countryman, deranged as he was, and watched my opportunity. I fortunately succeeded, and found that he was a surgeon in the army : his discourse was so rational, and his manners so mild, gentlemanly, and well-bred, that I seriously doubted the fact of his being deranged ; indeed, during dinner-time the only instance of singularity I observed in his conduct was, that every now and then he would slyly pinch the arm of the Dutchman, who was seated on his left-hand, and then burst out into a violent roar of laughter. Mynheer, however, took it all in good part, well knowing the malady his tormentor was afflicted with. The dinner consisted of an abundant supply of fish, poultry, wines, and liqueurs ; and the cloth being removed, a song was called for, and the request

quest was instantly complied with by one of the party, all joining vociferously, but with admirable uniformity, in the chorus. Shortly after, a Malay girl attired in the costume of the country, and of course bare-legged, entered the room with a guitar, and seating herself next to me, played and sang, in a soft, melodious strain, several favourite Malay airs. So enchanting was the melody, that we sat listening attentively for some time, and it was not until a late hour that we retired to rest.

On the following morning I was anxious to proceed to the residence of the captain of an English ship, then on the eve of departure for Padang, for the purpose of obtaining a passage; but my chagrin was extreme to find, that the hire of a carriage was indispensable, it being a positive stigma for a European to be seen *walking* in the streets of Batavia. Although I could not but grieve at an expensive sacrifice to tyrant custom, I was compelled to yield to necessity; and a carriage being sent for, the hire of which was four dollars, I rode towards the captain's residence, condemning, most heartily, a custom so absurd in itself and, in my case, so productive of evil.

I found the captain at home; he was in his dressing-gown, and eating radishes, with which he supplied himself from a side-board. Having invited me to breakfast, he swallowed some coffee, and handed me some fruit, cold beef, ham, tongue, and water-cresses (gaping and yawning wide all the time). Having thus employed himself for nearly half-an-hour, he apologized for his absence for a moment, and retired; he soon re-entered the room, sprucely dressed, and followed by attendants with,—breakfast-things! It was a maxim with me abroad never to appear surprised at any thing, but to take whatever oddities I might meet with in my travels, as things of course: so down we sat to a regular breakfast of,—eggs, toast, coffee, tea, ham, beef, radishes, water-cresses, and fruit,—consisting of mangoes, plantains, bananas, the jack-fruit, and mangosteens*; but

* The mangosteen is considered, and with justice, the most delicious fruit in the world; it is enclosed in a shell, is white, and round, and abounds with rich, sweet, and highly-flavoured juice. The mango is larger, of a yellow colour, and has a flat oval stone in the middle: it is also delicious, though in my opinion inferior to the mangosteen. The jack-fruit, pumaloes, bananas, and plantains, are likewise pleasing and refreshing to the palate.

but I confess I could with difficulty withhold the expression of my surprise, when two smoking dishes, one of boiled rice, the other of fried fish, borne by two lascars, were placed upon the table! After all, the best thing I procured by this invitation was a promise, by the captain, of a free passage in his ship to Padang, which was to sail in a few days. I then returned to the tavern; and on entering the dining-room, found the doctor in warm dispute on a political point, with a little Dutchman, who maintained his argument stoutly, and in a tone of haughty insolence, which roused the doctor's choler to such a degree, that he fairly saluted the Dutchman's seat of "honour" with three tremendous kicks. An immediate "set-to" was the consequence, in the presence of twenty Dutchmen who were seated round the room, and who certainly witnessed the ludicrous scene with inflexible gravity. By some means the Dutchman succeeded in getting the doctor down, and in that state, "peppered" away at his face, to an astounding shout of—"Bravo!" from all the Dutchmen in the room. This sample of foul play, however, calling upon me, as I considered, to interfere in behalf of my countryman, I advanced, amid a perfect stillness, and grasping the doctor round the waist, lifted him on his legs. The action now recommenced; but in this round, the doctor contrived to get the head of his antagonist beneath his left arm, and to keep it there, as tight as if it were in a blacksmith's vice, belabouring it with determined ferocity with his right fist, until Mynheer, blubbering like a great girl, and his face streaming with blood, extricated himself, and ran fairly out of the room. I was secretly rejoiced at this result of the battle, while the Dutchmen were equally chagrined, and vented their petulance and vexation by vociferating—"Vive Napoleon!" The doctor, however, calmly seated himself in the verandah, and thus the mighty affair ended.

It was usual with me to stroll about the town after sunset, to enjoy the luxury of a walk. On one of these occasions, my attention was attracted by an amphitheatre, in the front of which a crowd of natives had assembled, to witness the performance of some Chinese votaries of Thespis, who played their parts with singular adroitness in the open air. The dialogue of the piece, which was in Chinese, and had evidently a comic tendency, was

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supported

supported by two men and two females, but the countenances of the multitude disdained to evince a single symptom of merriment, until some gross show of indecency was resorted to in the action of the performers: this was frequently done, and never failed to raise a simultaneous grin of applause. Leaving this extraordinary scene, I walked leisurely homeward, calculating the state of my dollars to a nicety, when a Malay, stealing secretly behind me, under cover of the night, seized my hat, and decamped, with the fleetness of a roe; I instantly gave chase, but in vain. This loss was a severe one, and proved well-nigh irreparable; the price of a beaver hat being no less than twenty dollars: I was therefore reluctantly compelled to purchase, as a substitute for my fine beaver, a mean, black chip hat, the price of even that being ten dollars. This incident prevented my taking any more nocturnal rambles at Batavia. In a few days I set sail, and arrived in a fortnight at Padang, with but one dollar in the world.

Padang is situated at the distance of a mile and a half up a river, navigable only by boats, and is a picturesque Malay village: some of the houses are constructed of wood, others of bamboos and mats. The most remarkable feature in this little settlement (now in the possession of the Dutch), is its romantic scenery, mountains, hills, islands, and waterfalls, which indeed afford its chief and most interesting recommendation. The articles of importation are, piece goods, chintzes, palampores, wheat, and European luxuries, such as wine, beer, hams, and cheeses: gold-dust and pepper constitute the returns. I instantly repaired to Endtfield's, by whom I was no sooner observed, than he convinced me I was recognised, by embracing me with the fervour of a parent.—“Indeed, Naufragus,” said he, “I am heartily glad to see you!—we had all given you up, concluding you were either already provided for, or by this time an inhabitant of another planet: here—this is my wife—my daughter—my son.” In short, the good man's reception was that of a father; which convinced me of the worth of a truly religious heart, however the world may deride or despise it. After tea we sat together in a magnificent verandah, when, at the particular request of Endtfield, I related all that had befallen me since our separation; but not without continued interruptions of—“Bless me!” —“Dear

—“Dear me!”—Indeed!”—“My gracious!” and at the conclusion, he said—“In good truth, Naufragus, you have undergone extraordinary trials for your age. Bless me! you seem to be the tennis-ball of fortune. Let me see, let me see, now, what’s best to be done. I have succeeded, but with no small difficulty, in keeping the appointment at Bencoolen, vacant, at least I have reason to hope so: thither you must immediately repair. Make not yourself uneasy, Naufragus; Fortune may yet smile upon you. You are still young; so is your wife; and if her affection for you is sincere, she will wait patiently until you are able to send for her. Bless me! when I was married, I was younger than you are;—only a wedding-dinner the richer, which was a piece of roast beef—but even that pittance, Fortune (the jade!) denied me; for when my back was turned,—before even we had tasted the meat, my house-dog fairly decamped with the whole of it! Now, you see, I’m rich: well then, cheer up, Naufragus—*Nil desperandum*,’ and all may yet be well!” I was about to reply, when a cold aguish fit, set my teeth chattering. I found, too soon, it was the Batavia fever, the latent cause of which I had unconsciously brought with me from that pestilential place, and which had now broken out upon me. Endtfield instantly hired a bungalow, and procured me every requisite assistance; but for the space of six weeks, I was totally unconscious of surrounding objects. The only sensation I was susceptible of, was, that of burning with thirst, and being stretched on a mossy bank beneath a waterfall, gaping wide to catch a drop to cool my parched tongue,—but the tormenting liquid rolling down, turned aside, and still deceived me. My constitution got the better of the disease, and the first day I was able to walk, I attempted to reach the habitation of my friend Endtfield; but, on my way, a Malay horseman at full speed, knocked me down, and galloping over me, continued his course. The natives flocked round, and assisted me with the feelings of true Samaritans; but so great was the injury I had sustained, that it was not until the expiration of another month, that I could again venture abroad, when my appearance exactly resembled that of the Europeans I had first seen on landing at Batavia. Endtfield having procured me a passage to Bencoolen,

and favoured me with letters, I embarked, deeply affected at the recollection of his kindness ;—at a time when suffering under the affliction of sickness, and in a foreign land, the heart is perhaps most susceptible of kind and good offices.

Bencoolen being distant only two hundred and forty miles from the equator, is sultry almost beyond endurance ; and is subject to severe earthquakes. At the period of my arrival (1815), it was the seat of the Company's government on the west coast of Sumatra ; but it has since been ceded to the Netherlands government. The fortress called "Fort Marlborough," is considered one of great strength ; it commands the only good landing-place in the settlement, the whole line of the coast being protected by a tremendous surf. The sun has such power in this settlement, that a piece of raw meat placed on a cannon at mid-day, would be thoroughly broiled in a few minutes. The town is not large ; but the houses of the European inhabitants are compact, cleanly, and comfortable. The surrounding country is as romantic and picturesque as any perhaps in the world ; and on the sea beach in the evening a most luxurious walk may be enjoyed, sun-set presenting, in fine weather, a spectacle of great splendour. The nutmeg plantations also afford a delightful prospect, the number of the trees in different plantations, varying from five thousand to fifteen thousand : they are planted in parallel rows, at a distance of thirteen feet asunder. The outer covering of the nutmeg is of about the size of a peach, and bears an appearance very much resembling that fruit. When the nutmeg ripens, it cracks on one side, the aperture gradually widening, until the nutmeg is to be seen in the centre of its coating, entwined with fresh mace of a red colour. It is altogether an object pleasing to the eye, and refreshing to the smell ; and from its value well deserves care and attention. Here I had the pleasure of getting acquainted with a gentleman, whom I must designate as one of the ornaments of the settlement, and indeed of human nature : I mean the benevolent William Basket, Esq. Having resided in the settlement in the capacity of a merchant, nearly thirty years, he had not only acquired wealth, but had so gained the confidence and affections of the natives, that in case of any dispute, they would flock from distant parts of the interior to him, for judgment, and invariably abide

abide by his decision. The exercise of his benevolence was not, however, confined to the natives; his table was always at the service of his European brethren, poor, as well as rich; and his heart and purse were open to the needy and destitute, who often found shelter under his roof. He was remarkable for equanimity of temper, and his name was always associated with virtue. To this worthy man I was recommended by Endtfield, and was freely invited to partake of the hospitalities of his house and table. The introductory letters which I had received from Endtfield were forwarded to Government, and in a few days I received an appointment. I now cherished the hope of being settled for life, and looked forward with transport to the period when I should be able to send for Virginia, to partake of my good fortune. A rumour about this time obtained that we were shortly to have a new governor, in the person of that highly talented and popular individual—the late Honourable Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles. From this rumour emanated various speculations as to projected alterations in the administration of the settlement; but that the appointment would lead to increase of business, and consequently of emoluments, no doubt whatever was entertained.

Three years and upwards had I held an agreeable employment in this settlement, and had nearly acquired a sufficiency to enable me to send to Calcutta for my young wife, who had evinced admirable constancy in her correspondence, when, on the twenty-second March, 1818, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles did actually arrive and take charge of the government. So far, however, were my sanguine expectations from being realized, that myself, and many others, were doomed to suffer the pain of actual, and, as we considered, unmerited dismissal, in consequence of the introduction into the settlement of an entirely new and economical system of administration. The persons who were most immediately interested in this change, assembled at Basket's, looking to him as to a common father, all with gloomy countenances, and many with empty purses.

This event furnished me with new evidence of the uncertainty of every thing under the sun.—“ Ah !” thought I, “ without doubt, I am doomed to endure a life of trial, vexation, and dis-

appointment: I am still to be tantalized with hopes, but to feel the torture of their defeat; nor can I ever expect to be at rest on earth, or to attain my wishes." The good man, Basket, however, observed my uneasiness, and accosted me in terms of encouragement:—"This, I allow," said he, "is a sad event, Naufragus; but Government will, I suppose, provide for you; if not here, in Calcutta, or perhaps in Europe; so keep up your spirits; rely upon it, Government will not discard you. Apply for a certificate of your services, your conduct, and the cause of your dismissal; and if you prefer your claims, either in Bengal or in England, they will doubtless be attended to." Thanking him from my heart, I complied with his advice. A highly flattering certificate was immediately granted: and I prepared to embark for Calcutta, in a ship then on the eve of departure, with a view to prefer my claims to the Bengal government.

I cannot, however, quit Bencoolen, without saying a few words regarding the new system of administration introduced by Sir T. S. Raffles. In suddenly dispensing with the services of so many persons, who were unable to procure immediate employment, he threw a burden upon the settlement, and caused much personal suffering: but with reference to the latter effect, it may fairly be presumed that he did violence to his own benevolent feelings; for, by all accounts, a more susceptible or tender heart than his, never beat in the breast of man; and, on the whole, he no doubt acted for the public good, considering the measure as one, at least, of expediency: he might even have had in prospect that which has since taken place—the total abandonment of the settlement; and if so, the actual *necessity* of the measure must, to him, have been apparent. Be that, however, as it may, it is certain, and must be acknowledged, that his general administration had for its chief object the interests of the East India Company, in connexion with the moral improvement of the people, and the prosperity of the colony. Among those measures of Sir T. S. Raffles which merit to be recorded, are the establishment of native schools—the encouragement of the cultivation of grain—and the institution of a court called the "Pangaran's Court," at the head of which he presided in person, conjointly with the native chiefs, distributing justice fairly and impartially
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among all ranks of the people. He abolished cock-fighting, which was before publicly sanctioned; and, above all, he set on foot active measures with the view to prevent the infamous traffic in slaves, not only at Bencoolen, but in every island and spot in the Eastern Archipelago; and at Bencoolen, he himself made the experiment of emancipation. For a detailed and very satisfactory account of those measures, as well as for a full, highly-interesting and correct retrospect of his administration and general character, the reader is referred to a memoir of him, which has appeared in the annual volume of Biography, published by Longman and Co. on the first of January, 1827. I cannot here refrain from offering a few brief observations on slavery, digressing from my narrative for the last time.

In the performance of my official duties, I had to superintend the landing of the Company's stores, when numerous opportunities were afforded me of forming a just conception of the nature of slavery, as well as of witnessing the condition of the Company's slaves, who were employed in this task, their number amounting to upwards of two hundred. My experience confirms the conclusions of all legitimate reasoning on the subject;—that the state of slavery is a radical evil, inasmuch as it tends to debase the human mind, and to even place it on a level with the lower instincts of the brute. Of the treatment of the slaves of this colony, I need only observe (what perhaps is too evident), that cruelty, is the characteristic of all barbarous or uncivilized people armed with authority. But, for the sake of argument, even granting the slave to be well fed, well clothed, and well treated—still, as it respects the mind, the evil is equally degrading, and its tendency to engender vice, remains as powerful as ever. This truth was never perhaps more completely illustrated than in the Company's slaves: they were as well treated as free men; but many of them so debased, and stupid, as to reject the boon of freedom offered them by Sir T. S. Raffles; and all so vicious, that murder, theft, promiscuous intercourse, intoxication, and every disgusting feature of vice and immorality, appeared among them.

On departing from Bencoolen, I wrote an affectionate farewell letter to Mr. Endtfield; nor could I leave Basket and other
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esteemed

esteemed friends, without feeling deep and painful regret. Those delightful and romantic bowers too, which my soul was, as it were, enamoured of—the sea beach—the roaring of the fretful surge, become so familiar to me, as to be music to my ear—every tree and hut, with which there was some agreeable association in my memory—the glens and plains—the hills and grottoes, which I had traversed, musing on my past years and future destiny—these, all these, I was to leave for ever, instead of passing the remainder of my days among them, with the wife of my youth, in peace and happiness, as my heart had fondly flattered itself. Indeed, had I not received the consolation of knowing that I was going to meet her whom I valued more than life, I should have been absolutely wretched. As it was, I was borne away from Sumatra's shore, only rich in my certificate, and a few hundred dollars which I had saved. So used was I to disappointment, that on my passage I cherished the most gloomy apprehensions, which, however, were occasionally relieved by the conviction, that if by any chance they should be falsified, the more welcome would be my good fortune. Virginia was anxiously awaiting my arrival; and we met after an absence of three years, with less alteration in appearance on her part than on mine, the Batavia fever having left its traces on my countenance—certainly without any in our affections.

If I was afflicted with more than ordinary trials, I was gifted by nature with a more than ordinary share of perseverance; so that the more discouraging the prospects,—the greater the difficulty, the greater energy would I exert in my endeavours to surmount it. Immediately therefore on arriving at Calcutta, I laid my case in writing before the then governor-general, the late Marquis of Hastings. To my indescribable joy, I received in reply an official communication to the effect—"That Mr. Secretary A— was directed to provide for Naufagus, on the first opportunity that might offer." Three months did my patience feed on the hope with which this high-sounding communication inspired me. At the end of that time, not having heard any thing further, I resolved to wait on Mr. Secretary A—. On entering his room, he immediately rose, and politely offered me a chair; nay, to such a delicate extent was his politeness carried, that I began to doubt whether