

The Pilot, volume 1

James Fenimore Cooper

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TO WILLIAM BRANDFORD SHUBRICK, ESQUIRE, MAST. COM. U. S. NAVY.

MY DEAR SHUBRICK,

Each year causes some new and melancholy chasm in what is now the brief list of my naval friends and former associates. War, disease, and the casualties of a hazardous profession, have made fearful inroads in the limited number; while the places of the dead are supplied by names that to me are strangers. With the consequences of these sad changes before me, I cherish the recollection of those with whom I once lived in close familiarity with peculiar interest, and feel a triumph in their growing reputations, that is but little short of their own honest pride.

But neither time nor separation have shaken our intimacy: and I know that in dedicating to you these volumes, I tell you nothing new, when I add, that it is a tribute paid to an enduring friendship, by

Your old messmate, THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

The privileges of the Historian and of the writer of Romances are very different, and it behooves them equally to respect each other's rights. The latter is permitted to garnish a probable fiction, while he is sternly prohibited from dwelling on improbable truths; but it is the duty of the former to record facts as they have occurred, without a reference to consequences, resting his reputation on a firm foundation of realities, and vindicating his integrity by his authorities. How far and how well the Author has adhered to this distinction between the prerogatives of truth and fiction, his readers must decide; but he cannot forbear desiring the curious inquirers into our annals to persevere, until they shall find good poetical authority for every material incident in this veritable legend.

As to the Critics, he has the advantage of including them all in that extensive class, which is known by the sweeping appellation of "Lubbers." If they have common discretion, they will beware of exposing their ignorance.

If, however, some old seaman should happen to detect any trifling anachronisms in marine usages, or mechanical improvements, the Author begs leave to say to him, with a proper deference for his experience, that it was not so much his intention to describe the customs of a particular age, as to paint those scenes which belong only to the ocean, and to exhibit, in his imperfect manner, a few traits of a people who, from the nature of things, can never be much known.

He will probably be told, that Smollet has done all this, before him, and in a much better manner. It will be seen, however, that though he has navigated the same sea as Smollet, he has steered a different course; or, in other words, that he has considered what Smollet has painted as a picture which is finished, and which is not to be daubed over by every one who may choose to handle a pencil on marine subjects.

The Author wishes to express his regret, that the daring and useful services of a great portion of our marine in the old war should be suffered to remain in the obscurity under which it is now buried. Every one has heard of the victory of the Bon-Homme Richard, but how little is known of the rest of the life, and of the important services of the remarkable man who commanded, in our behalf, in that memorable combat. How little is known of his actions with the Milford, and the Solebay; of his captures of the Drake and Triumph; and of his repeated and desperate projects to carry the war into the 'island home' of our powerful enemy. Very many of the officers who served in that contest were to be found, afterwards, in the navy of the confederation; and it is fair to presume that it owes no small part of its present character to the spirit that descended from the heroes of the revolution.

One of the last officers reared in that school died, not long since, at the head of his profession; and now, that nothing but the recollection of their deeds remains, we should become more tenacious of their glory.

If his book has the least tendency to excite some attention to this interesting portion of our history, one of the objects of the writer will be accomplished.

The Author now takes his leave of his readers, wishing them all happiness.

CHAPTER I.

"Sullen waves, incessant rolling,
Rudely dash against her sides."

— Song

A single glance at the map will make the reader acquainted with the position of the eastern coast of the island of Great Britain, as connected with the shores of the opposite continent. Together they form the boundaries of the small sea, that has for ages been known to the world as the scene of maritime exploits, and as the great avenue through which commerce and war have conducted the fleets of the northern nations of Europe. Over this sea the islanders long asserted a jurisdiction, exceeding that which reason concedes to any power on the highway of nations, and which frequently led to conflicts that caused an expenditure of blood and treasure, utterly disproportioned to the advantages that can ever arise from the maintenance of a useless and abstract right. It is across the waters of this disputed ocean that we shall attempt to conduct our readers, in imagination, selecting a period for our incidents that has peculiar interests for every American, not only because it was the birth-day of his nation, but because it was also the era when reason and common sense began to take place of custom and feudal practices in the management of the affairs of nations.

Soon after the events of the revolution had involved the kingdoms of France and Spain, and the republics of Holland, in our quarrel, a group of labourers were collected in a field that lay exposed to the winds of the ocean, on the north-eastern coast of England. These men were lightening their toil in husbandry, and cheering the gloom of a day in December, by uttering their crude opinions on the political aspects of the times. The fact that England was engaged in a war with some of her dependencies on the other side of the Atlantic, had long been known to them, after the manner that faint rumours of distant and uninteresting events gain on the ear; but now that nations, with whom she had been used to battle, were armed against her in the quarrel, the din of war had disturbed the quiet even of these secluded and illiterate rustics. The principal speakers, on the occasion, were a Scotch drover, who was waiting the leisure of the occupant of the fields, and an Irish labourer, who had found his way across the channel, and thus far over the island, in quest of employment.

"The Nagurs wouldn't have been a job at all for ould England, letting alone Ireland," said the latter, "if these French and Spanishers hadn't been troubling themselves in the matter. I'm sure it's but little rason I have for thanking them, if a man is to kape as sober as a praist at mass, for fear he should find himself a souldier, and he knowing nothing about the same."

"Hoot! mon! ye ken but little of raising an airmy in Ireland, if ye mak' a drum o' a whiskey keg," said the drover, winking to the listeners. "Noo, in the north, they ca' a gathering of the folk, and follow the pipes as graciously as ye wad journey kirkward o' a Sabbeth morn. I've seen a' the names o' a Heeland raj'ment on a sma' bit paper, that ye might cover wi' a leddy's hand. They war' a' Camerons and M'Donalds, though they paraded sax hundred men! But what ha' ye gotten here! That chield has an ow'r liking to the land for a seafaring body; an' if the bottom o' the sea be only thing like the top o't, he's in gr'at danger o' a shipwrack!"

This unexpected change in the discourse, drew all eyes on the object towards which the staff of the observant drover was pointed. To the utter amazement of every individual present, a small vessel was seen moving slowly round a point of land that formed one of the sides of the little bay, to which the field the labourers were in composed the other. There was something very peculiar in the externals of this unusual visiter, which added in no small degree to the surprise created by her appearance in that retired place. None but the smallest vessels, and those rarely, with, at long intervals, a desperate smuggler, were ever known to venture so close to the land, amid the sand-bars and sunken rocks with which that immediate coast abounded. The adventurous mariners who now attempted this dangerous navigation in so wanton, and, apparently, so heedless a manner, were in a low, black schooner, whose hull seemed utterly disproportioned to the raking masts it upheld, which, in their turn, supported a lighter set of spars, that tapered away until their upper extremities appeared no larger than the lazy pennant, that in vain endeavoured to display its length in the light breeze.

The short day of that high northern latitude was already drawing to a close, and the sun wasthrowing his parting rays obliquely across the waters, touching the gloomy waves here and there with streaks of pale light. The

stormy winds of the German ocean were apparently lulled to rest; and, though the incessant rolling of the surge on the shore, heightened the gloomy character of the hour and the view, the light ripple that ruffled the sleeping billows was produced by a gentle air, that blew directly from the land. Notwithstanding this favourable circumstance, there was something threatening in the aspect of the ocean, which was speaking in hollow, but deep murmurs, like a volcano on the eve of an eruption, that greatly heightened the feelings of amazement and dread with which the peasants beheld this extraordinary interruption to the quiet of their little bay. With no other sails spread to the action of the air, than her heavy mainsail, and one of those light jibs that projected far beyond her bows, the vessel glided over the water with a grace and facility that seemed magical to the beholders, who turned their wondering looks from the schooner to each other, in silent amazement. At length the drover spoke in a low, solemn voice—

"He's a bold chield that steers her! and if that bit craft has wood in her bottom, like the brigantines that ply between Lon'on and the Frith at Leith, he's in mair danger than a prudent mon could wish. Ay! he's by the big rock that shows his head when the tide runs low, but it's no mortal man who can steer long in the road he's journeying, and not speedily find land wi' water a top o't."

The little schooner, however, still held her way among the rocks and sand-spits, making such slight deviations in her course, as proved her to be under the direction of one who knew his danger, until she had entered as far into the bay as prudence could at all justify, when her canvass was gathered into folds, seemingly without the agency of hands, and the vessel, after rolling for a few minutes on the long billows that hove in from the ocean, swung round in the currents of the tide, and was held by her anchor.

The peasantry, now, began to make their conjectures more freely, on the character and object of their visiter; some intimating that she was engaged in a contraband trade, and others that her views were hostile, and her business war. A few dark hints were hazarded on the materiality of her construction, for nothing of artificial formation, it was urged, would be ventured by men in such a dangerous place, at a time when even the most inexperienced landsman was enabled to foretell the certain gale. The Scotchman, who, to all the sagacity of his countrymen, added no small portion of their superstition, leaned greatly to the latter conclusion, and had begun to express this sentiment warily and with reverence, when the child of Erin, who appeared not to possess any very definite ideas on the subject, interrupted him, by exclaiming—

"Faith! there's two of them! a big and a little! sure the bogles of the saa likes good company the same as any other christians!"

"Twa!" echoed the drover; "twa! ill luck bides o' some o' ye. Twa craft a sailing without hands to guide them, in sic a place as this, whar' eyesight is na guid enough to show the dangers, bodes evil to a' that luik thereon. Hoot! she's na yearling the tither! Luik, mon! luik! she's a gallant boat, and a gr'at;" he paused, raised his pack from the ground, and first giving one searching look at the objects of his suspicions, he nodded with great sagacity to the listeners, and continued, as he moved slowly towards the interior of the country, "I should na wonder if she carried King George's commission aboot her; 'weel, 'weel, I wull journey upward to the town, and ha'a crack wi' the guid mon, for they craft have a suspecious aspect, and the sma' bit thing wu'd nab a mon quite easy, and the big ane wu'd hold us a' and no feel we war' in her."

This sagacious warning caused a general movement in the party, for the intelligence of a hot press was among the rumours of the times. The husbandmen collected their implements of labour, and retired homewards; and though many a curious eye was bent on the movements of the vessels from the distant hills, but very few of those not immediately interested in the mysterious visitors, ventured to approach the little rocky cliffs that lined the bay.

The vessel that occasioned these cautious movements, was a gallant ship, whose huge hull, lofty masts, and square yards, loomed in the evening's haze, above the sea, like a distant mountain rising from the deep. She carried but little sail, and though she warily avoided the near approach to the land that the schooner had attempted, the similarity of their movements was sufficiently apparent to warrant the conjecture that they were employed on the same duty. The frigate, for the ship belonged to this class of vessels, floated across the entrance of the little bay, majestically in the tide, with barely enough motion through the water to govern her movements, until she arrived opposite to where her consort lay, when she hove up heavily into the wind, squared the enormous yards on her mainmast, and attempted, in counteracting the power of her sails by each other, to remain stationary; but the light air that had at no time swelled her heavy canvass to the utmost, began to fail, and the long waves that rolled in from the ocean, ceased to be ruffled with the breeze from the land. The currents, and the billows, were

fast sweeping the frigate towards one of the points of the estuary, where the black heads of the rocks could be seen running far into the sea, and, in their turn, the mariners of the ship dropped an anchor to the bottom, and drew her sails in festoons to the yards. As the vessel swung round to the tide, a heavy ensign was raised to her peak, and a current of air opening, for a moment, its folds, the white field, and red cross, that distinguish the flag of England, were displayed to view. So much, even the wary drover had loitered at a distance to behold; but when a boat was launched from either vessel, he quickened his steps, observing to his wondering and amused companions, that "they craft were a' thegither, mair bonny to luik on than to abide wi'."

A numerous crew manned the barge that was lowered from the frigate, which, after receiving an officer, with an attendant youth, left the ship, and moved with a measured stroke of its oars, directly towards the head of the bay. As it passed at a short distance from the schooner, a light whale-boat, pulled by four athletic men, shot from her side, and rather dancing over, than cutting through the waves, crossed her course with a wonderful velocity. As the boats approached each other, the men, in obedience to signals from their officers, suspended their efforts, and for a few minutes they floated at rest, during which time, there was the following dialogue:

"Is the old man mad!" exclaimed the young officer in the whale-boat, when his men had ceased rowing; "does he think that the bottom of the Ariel is made of iron, and that a rock can't knock a hole in it! or does he think she is mann'd with alligators, who can't be drown'd!"

A languid smile played for a moment round the handsome features of the young man, who was rather reclining than sitting in the stern-sheets of the barge, as he replied,

"He knows your prudence too well, Captain Barnstable, to fear either the wreck of your vessel, or the drowning of her crew. How near the bottom does your keel lie?"

"I am afraid to sound," returned Barnstable. "I have never the heart to touch a lead-line when I see the rocks coming up to breathe like so many porpoises."

"You are afloat!" exclaimed the other, with a vehemence that denoted an abundance of latent fire.

"Afloat!" echoed his friend; "ay! the little Ariel would float in air!" As he spoke, he rose in the boat, and lifting his leathern sea-cap from his head, stroked back the thick clusters of black locks which shadowed his sun-burnt countenance, while he viewed his little vessel with the complacency of a seaman who was proud of her qualities. "But it's close work, Mr. Griffith, when a man rides to a single anchor in a place like this, and at such a nightfall. What are the orders?"

"I shall pull into the surf and let go a grapnel; you will take Mr. Merry into your whale-boat, and try to drive her through the breakers on the beach."

"Beach!" retorted Barnstable; "do you call a perpendicular rock of a hundred feet in height, a beach!"

"We shall not dispute about terms," said Griffith, smiling; "but you must manage to get on the shore; we have seen the signal from the land, and know that the pilot, whom we have so long expected, is ready to come off."

Barnstable shook his head with a grave air, as he muttered to himself, "this is droll navigation; first we run into an unfrequented bay that is full of rocks, and sand-spits, and shoals, and then we get off our pilot. But how am I to know him?"

"Merry will give you the pass-word, and tell you where to look for him. I would land myself, but my orders forbid it. If you meet with difficulties, show three oar-blades in a row, and I will pull in to your assistance. Three oars on end, and a pistol, will bring the fire of my muskets, and the signal repeated from the barge will draw a shot from the ship."

"I thank you, I thank you," said Barnstable, carelessly; "I believe I can fight my own battles against all the enemies we are likely to fall in with on this coast. But the old man is surely mad. I would—"

"You would obey his orders if he were here, and you will now please to obey mine," said Griffith, in a tone that the friendly expression of his eye contradicted. "Pull in, and keep a look out for a small man in a drab pea-jacket; Merry will give you the word; if he answer it bring him off to the barge."

The young men now nodded familiarly and kindly to each other, and the boy, who was called Mr. Merry, having changed his place from the barge to the whale-boat, Barnstable threw himself into his seat, and making a signal with his hand, his men again bent to their oars. The light vessel shot away from her companion, and dashed in boldly towards the rocks; after skirting the shore for some distance in quest of a favourable place, she was suddenly turned, and, dashing over the broken waves, was run upon a spot where a landing could be effected in safety.

In the mean time the barge followed these movements, at some distance, with a more measured progress, and when the whale-boat was observed to be drawn up along side of a rock, the promised grapnel was cast into the water, and her crew deliberately proceeded to get their firearms in a state for immediate service. Every thing appeared to be done in obedience to strict orders that must have been previously communicated; for the young man, who has been introduced to the reader by the name of Griffith, seldom spoke, and then only in the pithy expressions that are apt to fall from those who are sure of obedience. When the boat had brought up to her grapnel, he sunk back at his length on the cushioned seats of the barge, and drawing his hat over his eyes in a listless manner, he continued for many minutes apparently absorbed in thoughts altogether foreign to his present situation. Occasionally he rose, and would first bend his looks in quest of his companions on the shore, and then, turning his expressive eyes towards the ocean, the abstracted and vacant air that so often usurped the place of animation and intelligence in his countenance, would give place to the anxious and intelligent look of a seaman gifted with an experience beyond his years. His weather-beaten and hardy crew, having made their dispositions for offence, sat in profound silence, with their hands thrust into the bosoms of their jackets, but with their eyes earnestly regarding every cloud that was gathering in the threatening atmosphere, and exchanging looks of deep care, whenever the boat rose higher than usual on one of those long, heavy ground-swells that were heaving in from the ocean with increasing rapidity and magnitude.

CHAPTER II.

—"A horseman's coat shall hide
Thy taper shape and comeliness of side;
And with a bolder stride and looser air,
Mingled with men, a man thou must appear."

— Prior

When the whale-boat obtained the position we have described, the young lieutenant, who, in consequence of commanding a schooner, was usually addressed by the title of captain, stepped on the rocks, followed by the youthful midshipman, who had quitted the barge, to aid in the hazardous duty of their expedition.

"This is, at best, but a Jacob's ladder we have to climb," said Barnstable, casting his eyes upwards at the difficult ascent, "and it's by no means certain that we shall be well received, when we get up, though we should even reach the top."

"We are under the guns of the frigate," returned the boy; "and you remember, sir, three oar blades and a pistol, repeated from the barge, will draw her fire."

"Yes, on our own heads. Boy, never be so foolish as to trust a long shot. It makes a great smoke and some noise, but it's a terrible uncertain manner of throwing old iron about. In such a business as this, I would sooner trust Tom Coffin and his harpoon to back me, than the best broad-side that ever rattled out of the three decks of a ninety-gun ship. Come, gather your limbs together, and try if you can walk on terra firma, Master Coffin."

The seaman who was addressed by this dire appellation, arose slowly from the place where he was stationed as cockswain of the boat, and seemed to ascend high in air by the gradual evolution of numberless folds in his body. When erect, he stood nearly six feet and as many inches in his shoes, though, when elevated in his most perpendicular attitude, there was a forward inclination about his head and shoulders, that appeared to be the consequence of habitual confinement in limited lodgings. His whole frame was destitute of the rounded outlines of a well-formed man, though his enormous hands furnished a display of bones and sinews which gave indications of gigantic strength. On his head he wore a little, low, brown hat of wool, with an arched top, that threw an expression of peculiar solemnity and hardness over his harsh visage, the sharp prominent features of which were completely encircled by a set of black whiskers, that began to be grizzled a little with age. One of his hands grasped, with a sort of instinct, the staff of a bright harpoon, the lower end of which he placed firmly on the rock, as, in obedience to the order of his commander, he left the place, where, considering his vast dimensions, he had been established in an incredibly small space.

As soon as Captain Barnstable received this addition to his strength, after giving a few precautionary orders to the men in the boat, he proceeded to the difficult task of ascending the rocks. Notwithstanding the great daring and personal agility of Barnstable, he would have been completely baffled in this attempt, but for the assistance he occasionally received from his cockswain, whose prodigious strength, and great length of limbs, enabled him to make exertions which it would have been useless for most men to attempt. When within a few feet of the summit, they availed themselves of a projecting rock, to pause for consultation and breath; both of which seemed necessary for their further movements.

"This will be but a bad place for a retreat, if we should happen to fall in with enemies," said Barnstable. "Where are we to look for this pilot, Mr. Merry, or how are we to know him; and what certainty have you that he will not betray us?"

"The question you are to put to him is written on this bit of paper," returned the boy, as he handed the other the word of recognition; "we made the signal on the point of the rock at yon headland, but as he must have seen our boat, he will follow us to this place. As to his betraying us, he seems to have the confidence of Captain Munson, who has kept a bright look-out for him ever since we made the land."

"Ay," muttered the lieutenant, "and I shall have a bright look-out kept on him, now we are on the land. I like not this business of hugging the shore so closely, nor have I much faith in any traitor. What think you of it, Master Coffin?"

The hardy old seaman, thus addressed, turned his grave visage on his commander, and replied with a

becoming gravity—

"Give me plenty of sea—room, and good canvass, where there is no 'casion for pilots at all, sir. For my part, I was born on board a chebac—co—man, and never could see the use of more land than now and then a small island, to raise a few vegetables, and to dry your fish—I'm sure the sight of it always makes me feel uncomfortable, unless we have the wind dead off shore."

"Ah! Tom, you are a sensible fellow," said Barnstable, with an air half comic, half serious. "But we must be moving; the sun is just touching those clouds to sea—ward, and God keep us from riding out this night at anchor in such a place as this."

Laying his hand on a projection of the rock above him, Barnstable swung himself forward, and following this movement with a desperate leap or two, he stood at once on the brow of the cliff. His cockswain very deliberately raised the midshipman after his officer, and proceeding with more caution, but less exertion, he soon placed himself by his side.

When they reached the level land, that lay above the cliffs, and began to inquire, with curious and wary eyes, into the surrounding scenery, the adventurers discovered a cultivated country, divided, in the usual manner, by hedges and walls. Only one habitation for man, however, and that a small dilapidated cottage, stood within a mile of them, most of the dwellings being placed as far as convenience would permit, from the fogs and damps of the ocean.

"Here seems to be neither any thing to apprehend, nor the object of our search," said Barnstable, when he had taken the whole view in his survey; "I fear we have landed to no purpose, Mr. Merry. What say you, long Tom; see you what we want?"

"I see no pilot, sir," returned the cockswain; "but it's an ill wind that blows luck to nobody; there is a mouthful of fresh meat stowed away under that row of bushes, that would make a double ration to all hands in the Ariel."

The midshipman laughed, as he pointed out to Barnstable the object of the cockswain's solicitude, which proved to be a fat ox, quietly ruminating under a hedge near them.

"There's many a hungry fellow aboard of us," said the boy merrily, "who would be glad to second long Tom's motion, if the time and business would permit us to slay the animal."

"It's but a lubber's blow, Mr. Merry," returned the cockswain, without a muscle of his hard face yielding, as he struck the end of his harpoon violently against the earth, and then made a motion toward poisoning his weapon; "let Captain Barnstable but say the word, and I'll drive the iron through him to the quick; I've sent it to the seizing in many a whale, that hadn't a jacket of such blubber as that fellow wears."

"Pshaw! you are not on a whaling voyage, where every thing that offers is game," said Barnstable, turning himself pettishly away from the beast, as if he distrusted his own forbearance; "but stand fast! I see some one approaching behind the hedge. Look to your arms, Mr. Merry—the first thing we hear may be a shot."

"Not from that cruiser," cried the thoughtless lad; "he is a younker, like myself, and would hardly dare run down upon such a formidable force as we muster."

"You say true, boy," returned Barnstable, relinquishing the grasp he held on his pistol. "He comes on with caution, as if afraid. He is small, and is in drab, though I should hardly call it a pea-jacket—and yet he may be our man. Stand you both here, while I go and hail him."

As Barnstable walked rapidly towards the hedge, that in part concealed the stranger, the latter stopped suddenly, and seemed to be in doubt whether to advance or to retreat. Before he had decided on either, the active sailor was within a few feet of him.

"Pray, sir," said Barnstable, "what water have we in this bay?"

The slight form of the stranger started, with an extraordinary emotion, at this question, and he shrunk aside involuntarily, as if to conceal his features, before he answered, in a voice that was barely audible—

"I should think it would be the water of the German ocean."

"Indeed! you must have passed no small part of your short life in the study of geography, to be so well informed," returned the lieutenant; "perhaps, sir, your cunning is also equal to telling me how long we shall detain you, if I make you a prisoner, in order to enjoy the benefit of your wit?"

To this alarming intimation, the youth who was addressed made no reply; but, as he averted his face, and concealed it with both his hands, the offended seaman, believing that a salutary impression had been made upon the fears of his auditor, was about to proceed with his interrogatories. The singular agitation of the stranger's

frame, however, caused the lieutenant to continue silent a few moments longer, when, to his utter amazement, he discovered that what he had mistaken for alarm, was produced by an endeavour, on the part of the youth, to suppress a violent fit of laughter.

"Now, by all the whales in the sea," cried Barnstable, "but you are merry out of season, young gentleman. It's quite bad enough to be ordered to anchor in such a bay as this, with a storm brewing before my eyes, without landing to be laughed at, by a stripling who has not strength to carry a beard if he had one, when I ought to be getting an offing for the safety of both body and soul. But I'll know more of you and your jokes, if I take you into my own mess, and am giggled out of my sleep for the rest of the cruise."

As the commander of the schooner concluded, he approached the stranger, with an air of offering some violence, but the other shrunk back from his extended arm, and exclaimed, with a voice in which real terror had gotten the better of mirth—

"Barnstable! dear Barnstable! would you harm me?"

The sailor recoiled several feet, at this unexpected appeal, and rubbing his eyes, he threw the cap from his head, before he cried—

"What do I hear! and what do I see! There lies the Ariel—and yonder is the frigate. Can this be Katherine Plowden!"

His doubts, if any doubts remained, were soon removed, for the stranger sunk on the bank at her side, in an attitude in which female bashfulness was beautifully contrasted to her attire, and gave vent to her mirth in an uncontrollable burst of merriment.

From that moment, all thoughts of his duty, and the pilot, or even of the Ariel, appeared to be banished from the mind of the seaman, who sprang to her side, and joined in her mirth, though he hardly knew why or wherefore.

When the diverted girl had in some degree recovered her composure, she turned to her companion, who had sat good-naturedly by her side, content to be laughed at, and said—

"But this is not only silly, but cruel to others. I owe you an explanation of my unexpected appearance, and perhaps, also, of my extraordinary attire."

"I can anticipate every thing," cried Barnstable; "you heard that we were on the coast, and have flown to redeem the promises you made me in America. But I ask no more; the chaplain of the frigate—"

"May preach as usual, and to as little purpose," interrupted the disguised female; "but no nuptial benediction shall be pronounced over me, until I have effected the object of this hazardous experiment of mine. You are not usually selfish, Barnstable; would you have me forgetful of the happiness of others?"

"Of whom do you speak?"

"My poor, my devoted cousin. I heard that two vessels, answering the description of the frigate and the Ariel, were seen hovering on the coast, and I determined at once to have a communication with you. I have followed your movements for a week, in this dress, but have been unsuccessful till now. To-day I observed you to approach nearer to the shore than usual, and happily, by being adventurous, I have been successful."

"Ay, God knows we are near enough to the land! But does Captain Munson know of your wish to get on board his ship?"

"Certainly not—none know of it but yourself. I thought that if Griffith and you could learn our situation, you might be tempted to hazard a little to redeem us from our thralldom. In this paper I have prepared such an account as will, I trust, excite all your chivalry, and by which you may govern your movements."

"Our movements!" interrupted Barnstable, "you will pilot us in person."

"Then there's two of them," said a hoarse voice near them.

The alarmed female shrieked as she recovered her feet, but she still adhered, with instinctive dependence, to the side of her lover. Barnstable, who recognised the tones of his cockswain, bent an angry brow on the sober visage that was peering at them above the hedge, and demanded the meaning of the interruption.

"Seeing you were hull-down, sir, and not knowing but the chase might lead you ashore, Mr. Merry thought it best to have a look-out kept. I told him that you were overhauling the mail bags of the messenger for the news, but as he was an officer, sir, and I nothing but a common hand, I did as he ordered."

"Return, sir, where I ordered you to remain," said Barnstable, "and desire Mr. Merry to wait my pleasure."

The cockswain gave the usual reply of an obedient seaman, but before he left the hedge, he stretched out one

of his brawny arms towards the ocean, and said, in tones of solemnity suited to his apprehensions and character—

"I showed you how to knot a reef—point, and pass a gasket, Captain Barnstable, nor do I believe you could even take two half hitches when you first came aboard of the Spalmacitty. These be things that a man is soon expart in, but it takes the time of his nat'ral life to larn to know the weather. There be streaked wind—galls in the offing, that speak as plainly, to all that see them, and know God's language in the clouds, as ever you spoke through a trumpet, to shorten sail; besides, sir, don't you hear the sea moaning, as if it knew the hour was at hand when it was to wake up from its sleep!"

"Ay, Tom," returned his officer, walking to the edge of the cliffs, and throwing a seaman's glance at the gloomy ocean, "'tis a threatening night indeed: but this pilot must be had—and—"

"Is that the man?" interrupted the cockswain, pointing towards a man who was standing not far from them, an attentive observer of their proceedings, at the same time that he was narrowly watched himself by the young midshipman. "God send that he knows his trade well, for the bottom of a ship will need eyes to find its road out of this wild anchorage."

"That must indeed be the man!" exclaimed Barnstable, at once recalled to his duty. He then held a short dialogue with his female companion, whom he left concealed by the hedge, and proceeded to address the stranger. When near enough to be heard, the commander of the schooner demanded—

"What water have you in this bay?"

The stranger, who seemed to expect this question, answered, without the least hesitation—

"Enough to take all out in safety, who have entered with confidence."

"You are the man I seek," cried Barnstable; "are you ready to go off?"

"Both ready and willing," returned the pilot, "and there is need of haste. I would give the best hundred guineas that ever were coined for two hours more use of that sun which has left us, or for even half the time of this fading twilight."

"Think you our situation so bad?" said the lieutenant. "Follow this gentleman to the boat then; I will join you by the time you can descend the cliffs. I believe I can prevail on another hand to go off with us."

"Time is more precious now than any number of hands," said the pilot, throwing a glance of impatience from under his lowering brows, "and the consequences of delay must be visited on those who occasion it."

"And, sir, I will meet the consequences with those who have a right to inquire into my conduct," said Barnstable, haughtily.

With this warning and retort, they separated; the young officer retracing his steps impatiently towards his mistress, muttering his indignation in suppressed execrations, and the pilot, drawing the leathern belt of his pea-jacket mechanically around his body, as he followed the midshipman and cockswain to their boat, in moody silence.

Barnstable found the disguised female who had announced herself as Katherine Plowden, awaiting his return, with intense anxiety depicted on every feature of her intelligent countenance. As he felt all the responsibility of his situation, notwithstanding his cool reply to the pilot, the young man hastily drew an arm of the apparent boy, forgetful of her disguise, through his own, and led her forward.

"Come, Katherine," he said, "the time urges to be prompt."

"What pressing necessity is there for immediate departure?" she inquired, checking his movements by withdrawing herself from his side.

"You heard the ominous prognostic of my cockswain, on the weather, and I am forced to add my own testimony to his opinion. 'Tis a crazy night that threatens us, though I cannot repent of coming into the bay, since it has led to this interview."

"God forbid that we should either of us have cause to repent of it," said Katherine, the paleness of anxiety chasing away the rich bloom that had mantled the animated face of the brunette. "But you have the paper—follow its directions, and come to our rescue; you will find us willing captives, if Griffith and yourself are our conquerors."

"What mean you, Katherine!" exclaimed her lover; "you at least are now in safety—'twould be madness to tempt your fate again. My vessel can and shall protect you, until your cousin is redeemed; and then, remember, I have a claim on you for life."

"And how would you dispose of me in the interval," said the young maiden, retreating slowly from his

advances.

"In the Ariel—by heaven, you shall be her commander; I will bear that rank only in name."

"I thank you, thank you, Barnstable, but distrust my abilities to fill such a station," she said, laughing, though the colour that again crossed her youthful features was like the glow of a summer's sunset, and even her mirthful eyes seemed to reflect their tints. "Do not mistake me, saucy one. If I have done more than my sex will warrant, remember it was through a holy motive, and if I have more than a woman's enterprise, it must be—"

"To lift you above the weakness of your sex," he cried, "and to enable you to show your noble confidence in me."

"To fit me for, and to keep me worthy of being one day your wife." As she uttered these words, she turned, and disappeared, with a rapidity that eluded his attempt to detain her, behind an angle of the hedge, that was near them. For a moment, Barnstable remained motionless through surprise, and when he sprang forward in pursuit, he was able only to catch a glimpse of her light form, in the gloom of the evening, as she again vanished in a little thicket at some distance.

Barnstable was about to pursue, when the air lighted with a sudden flash, and the bellowing report of a cannon rolled along the cliffs, and was echoed among the hills far inland.

"Ay, grumble away, old dotard!" the disappointed young sailor muttered to himself, while he reluctantly obeyed the signal; "you are in as great a hurry to get out of your danger as you were to run into it."

The quick reports of three muskets from the barge beneath where he stood, urged him to quicken his pace, and as he threw himself carelessly down the rugged and dangerous passes of the cliffs, his experienced eye beheld the wellknown lights displayed from the frigate, which commanded the recall of all her boats.

CHAPTER III.

In such a time as this it is not meet
That every nice offence should bear its comment.

— Shakspeare.

The cliffs threw their dark shadows wide on the waters, and the gloom of the evening had so far advanced, as to conceal the discontent that brooded over the ordinarily open brow of Barnstable, as he sprang from the rocks into the boat, and took his seat by the side of the silent pilot.

"Shove off," cried the lieutenant, in tones that his men knew must be obeyed. "A seaman's curse light on the folly that exposes both planks and lives to such navigation, and all to burn some old timber—man, or catch a Norway trader asleep! give way, men, give way."

Notwithstanding the heavy and dangerous surf that was beginning to tumble in upon the rocks, in an alarming manner, the startled seamen succeeded in urging their light boat over the waves, and in a few seconds were without the point where danger was most to be apprehended. Barnstable had seemingly disregarded the crisis they had passed, but sat sternly eyeing the foam that rolled by them in successive surges, until the boat rose regularly on the long seas, when he turned his looks around the bay, in quest of the barge.

"Ay, Griffith has tired of rocking in his pillowed cradle," he muttered, "and will give us a pull to the frigate, when we ought to be getting the schooner out of this hard-featured landscape. This is just such a place as one of your sighing lovers would doat on: a little land, a little water, and a good deal of rock. Damme, long Tom, but I am more than half of your mind, that an island, now and then, is all the terra firma that a seaman needs."

"It's reason and philosophy, sir," returned the sedate cockswain; "and what land there is, should always be a soft mud, or a sandy ooze, in order that an anchor might hold, and to make soundings sartain. I have lost many a deep—sea, besides hand—leads by the dozens, on rocky bottoms; but give me the roadsted where a lead comes up light, and an anchor heavy. There's a boat pulling athwart our fore-foot, Captain Barnstable; shall I run her aboard, or give her a birth, sir?"

"'Tis the barge!" cried the officer; "Ned has not deserted me after all!"

A loud hail from the approaching boat confirmed this opinion, and, in a few seconds, the barge and whale-boat were again rolling by each other's side. Griffith was no longer reclining on the cushions of his seats, but spoke earnestly, and with a slight tone of reproach in his manner.

"Why have you wasted so many precious moments, when every minute threatens us with new dangers? I was obeying the signal, when I heard your oars, and pulled back, to take out the pilot. Have you been successful?"

"There he is, and if he finds his way out, through the shoals, he will earn a right to hisname. This bids fair to be a night when a man will need a spy-glass to find the moon. But when you hear what I have seen on those rascally cliffs, you will be more ready to excuse my delay, Mr. Griffith."

"You have seen the true man, I trust, or we incur this hazard to an evil purpose."

"Ay, I have seen him that is a true man, and him that is not," replied Barnstable, bitterly; "you have the boy with you, Griffith—ask him what his young eyes have seen."

"Shall I!" cried the young midshipman, laughing; "then I have seen a little clipper, in disguise, outsail an old man-of-war's-man in a hard chase, and I have seen a straggling rover in long-togs as much like my cousin—"

"Peace, gabbler!" exclaimed Barnstable, in a voice of thunder; "would you detain the boats with your silly nonsense, at a time like this. Away into the barge, sir, and if you find him willing to hear, tell Mr. Griffith what your foolish conjectures amount to, at your leisure."

The boy stepped lightly from the whale-boat to the barge, whither the pilot had already preceded him, and as he sunk, with a mortified air, by the side of Griffith, he said, in a low voice—

"And that won't be long, I know, if Mr. Griffith thinks and feels on the coast of England as he thought and felt at home."

A silent pressure of his hand, was the only reply that the young lieutenant made, before he paid the parting compliments to Barnstable, and directed his men to pull for their ship.

The boats were separating, and the splash of the oars was already heard, when the voice of the pilot was for the

first time raised in earnest.

"Hold!" he cried; "hold water, I bid ye!"

The men ceased their efforts, at the commanding tones of his voice, and turning towards the whale-boat, he continued, in the same manner—

"You will get your schooner under-way immediately, Captain Barnstable, and sweep into the offing, with as little delay as possible. Keep the ship well open from the northern headland, and as you pass us, come within hail."

"This is a clean chart and plain sailing, Mr. Pilot," returned Barnstable; "but who is to justify my moving without orders, to Captain Munson? I have it in black and white, to run the Ariel into this feather-bed sort of a place, and I must at least have it by signal or word of mouth from my betters, before my cut-water curls another wave. The road may be as hard to find going out as it was coming in—and then I had daylight, as well as your written directions to steer by."

"Would you lie there to perish on such a night!" said the pilot, sternly. "Two hours hence, this heavy swell will break where your vessel now rides so quietly."

"There we think exactly alike; but if I get drowned now, I am drowned according to orders; whereas, if I knock a plank out of the schooner's bottom, by following your directions, 'twill be a hole to let in mutiny, as well as sea-water. How do I know but the old man wants another pilot or two?"

"That's philosophy," muttered the cockswain of the whale-boat, in a voice that was audible: "but it's a hard strain on a man's conscience to hold on in such an anchorage."

"Then keep your anchor down, and follow it to the bottom," said the pilot to himself; "it's worse to contend with a fool than a gale of wind; but if—"

"No, no sir—no fool either," interrupted Griffith. "Barnstable does not deserve that epithet, though he certainly carries the point of duty to the extreme. Heave up at once, Mr. Barnstable, and get out of this bay as fast as possible."

"Ah! you don't give the order with half the pleasure with which I shall execute it; pull away, boys—the Ariel shall never lay her bones in such a hard bed, if I can help it."

As the commander of the schooner uttered these words with his cheering voice, his men spontaneously shouted, and the whale-boat darted away from her companion, and was soon lost in the gloomy shadows cast from the cliffs.

In the mean time, the oarsmen of the barge were not idle, but by strenuous efforts they forced the heavy boat rapidly through the water, and in a few minutes she ran alongside of the frigate. During this period the pilot, in a voice which had lost all that startling fierceness and authority that it had manifested in his short dialogue with Barnstable, requested Griffith to repeat to him, slowly, the names of the officers that belonged to his ship. When the young lieutenant had complied with this request, he observed to his companion—

"All good men and true, Mr. Pilot; and though this business in which you are just now engaged may be hazardous to an Englishman, there are none with us who will betray you. We need your services, and as we expect good faith from you, so shall we offer it to you in exchange."

"And how know you that I need its exercise?" asked the pilot, in a manner that denoted a cold indifference to the subject.

"Why, though you talk pretty good English, for a native," interrupted Griffith, "yet you have a small bur-r-r in your mouth that would prick the tongue of a man who was born on the other side of the Atlantic."

"It is of but little moment where a man is born, or how he speaks," returned the pilot, coldly, "so that he does his duty bravely, and in good faith."

It was perhaps fortunate for the harmony of this dialogue, that the gloom, which had now increased to positive darkness, completely concealed the look of scornful irony that crossed the handsome features of the young sailor, as he replied—

"True, true, so that he does his duty, as you say, in good faith. But, as Barnstable said, you must know your road well to travel among these shoals on such a night as this. Know you what water we draw?"

" 'Tis a frigate's draught, and I shall endeavour to keep you in four fathoms; less than that would be dangerous."

"She's a sweet boat!" said Griffith; "and minds her helm as a marine watches the eye of his sergeant at a drill;

but you must give her room in stays, for she fore—reaches, as if she would put out the wind's eye."

The pilot attended, with a practised ear, to this description of the qualities of the ship that he was about to attempt extricating from an extremely dangerous situation. Not a syllable was lost on him; and when Griffith had ended, he remarked, with the singular coldness that pervaded his manner—

"That is both a good and a bad quality in a narrow channel. I fear it will be the latter, to night, when we shall require to have the ship in leading strings."

"I suppose we must feel our way with the lead?" said Griffith.

"We shall need both eyes and leads," returned the pilot, recurring insensibly to his soliloquizing tone of voice. "I have been both in and out in darker nights than this, though never with a heavier draught than a half—two."

"Then, by heaven, you are not fit to handle that ship, among the rocks and breakers!" exclaimed Griffith; "your men of a light draught never know their water; 'tis the deep keel only, that finds a channel—pilot! pilot! beware how you trifle with us ignorantly; for 'tis a dangerous experiment to play at hazards with an enemy."

"Young man, you know not what you threaten, nor whom," said the pilot, sternly, though his quiet manner still remained undisturbed; "you forget that you have a superior here, and that I have none."

"That shall be as you discharge your duty," cried Griffith; "for if—"

"Peace," interrupted the pilot, "we approach the ship; let us enter her in harmony."

He threw himself back on the cushions, when he had said this, and Griffith, though filled with the apprehensions of suffering, either by great ignorance, or treachery, on the part of his companion, smothered his feelings so far as to be silent, and they ascended the side of the vessel in apparent cordiality.

The frigate was already riding on lengthened seas, that rolled in from the ocean, at each successive moment, with increasing violence, though her topsails still hung supinely from her yards; the air, which continued to breathe, occasionally, from the land, being unable to shake the heavy canvass of which they were composed.

The only sounds that were audible, when Griffith and the pilot had ascended to the gangway of the frigate, were produced by the sullen dashing of the sea against the massive bows of the ship, and the shrill whistle of the boatswain's mate, as he recalled the side—boys, who were placed on either side of the gangway, to do honour to the entrance of the first lieutenant and his companion.

But though such a profound silence reigned among the hundreds who inhabited the huge fabric, the light produced by a dozen battle lanterns, that were arranged in different parts of the decks, served not only to exhibit, faintly, the persons of the crew, but the mingled feeling of curiosity and care that dwelt on most of their countenances.

Large groups of men were collected in the gangways, around the mainmast, and on the booms of the vessel, whose faces were distinctly visible, while numerous figures, lying along the lower yards, or bending out of the tops, might be dimly traced in the back ground, all of whom expressed, by their attitudes, the interest they took in the arrival of the boat.

Though such crowds were collected in other parts of the vessel, the quarter deck was occupied only by the officers, who were disposed according to their ranks, and were equally silent and attentive as the remainder of the crew. In front stood a small collection of young men, who, by their similarity of dress, were the equals and companions of Griffith, though his juniors in rank; and on the opposite side of the vessel was a larger assemblage of youths, who claimed Mr. Merry as their fellow. Around the capstern, three or four figures were standing, one of whom wore a coat of blue, with the scarlet facings of a soldier, and another the black vestments of the ship's chaplain. Behind these, and nearer to the passage to the cabin, from which he had just ascended, stood the tall, erect form of the commander of the vessel.

After a brief salutation between Griffith and the junior officers, the former advanced, followed slowly by the pilot, to the place where he was expected by his veteran commander. The young man removed his hat entirely, as he bowed with a little more than his usual ceremony, and said—

"We have succeeded, sir, though not without more difficulty and delay than were anticipated."

"But you have not brought off the pilot," said the captain, doubtingly; "and without him, all our risk and trouble have been in vain."

"He is here," said Griffith, stepping aside, and extending his arm towards the man that stood behind him, wrapped to the chin in his coarse pea—jacket, and with his face shadowed by the falling rims of a large hat, that had seen much and hard service.

"This!" exclaimed the captain; "then there is a sad mistake—this is not the man I would have seen, nor can another supply his place."

"I know not whom you expected, Captain Munson," said the stranger, in a low, quiet voice; "but if you have not forgotten the day when a very different flag from that emblem of tyranny that now hangs over yon taffarel was first spread to the wind, you may remember the hand that raised it."

"Bring here the light!" exclaimed the commander, hastily.

When the lantern was extended towards the pilot, and the glare fell strong on his features, Captain Munson started, as he beheld the calm blue eye that met his gaze, and the composed, but pallid countenance of the other. Involuntarily raising his hat, and baring his silver locks, the veteran cried—

"It is he! though so changed—"

"That his enemies did not know him," interrupted the pilot, quickly; then touching the other by the arm as he led him aside, he continued, in a lower tone, "neither must his friends, until the hour and season shall arrive."

Griffith had fallen back, to reply to the eager questions of his messmates, and no part of this short dialogue was overheard by the officers, though it was soon perceived that their commander had discovered his error, and was satisfied that the proper man had been brought on board his vessel. For many minutes the two continued to pace a part of the quarter-deck, by themselves, engaged in deep and earnest discourse.

As Griffith had but little to communicate, the curiosity of his listeners was soon appeased, and all eyes were directed towards that mysterious guide, who was to conduct them from a situation already surrounded by perils, which each moment not only magnified in appearance, but increased in reality.

CHAPTER IV.

—"behold the threaten sails,
Borne with the invisible and creeping winds,
Draw the huge bottoms through the furrowed sea,
Breasting the lofty surge."

— Shakspeare,

It has been already explained to the reader, that there was something threatening in the appearance of the weather to create serious forebodings of evil in the breast of a seaman. When removed from the shadows of the cliffs, the night was not so dark but objects could be discerned at some little distance, and in the eastern horizon there was a streak of fearful light impending over the gloomy waters, in which the swelling outline formed by the rising waves, was becoming each moment more distinct, and consequently more alarming. Several dark clouds overhung the vessel, whose towering masts apparently propped the black vapour, while a few stars were seen twinkling, with a sickly flame, in the streak of clear sky that skirted the ocean. Still, light currents of air, occasionally, swept across the bay, bringing with them the fresh odour from the shore, but their flitting irregularity too surely foretold them to be the expiring breath of the land breeze. The roaring of the surf, as it rolled on the margin of the bay, produced a dull, monotonous sound, that was only interrupted, at times, by a hollow bellowing, as a larger wave than usual broke violently against some cavity in the rocks. Every thing, in short, united to render the scene gloomy and portentous, without creating instant terror, for the ship rose easily on the long billows, without even straightening the heavy cable that held her to her anchor.

The higher officers were collected around the capstern, engaged in earnest discourse about their situation and prospects, while some of the oldest and most favoured seamen would extend their short walk to the hallowed precincts of the quarter-deck, to catch, with greedy ears, the opinions that fell from their superiors. Numberless were the uneasy glances that were thrown from both officers and men at their commander and the pilot, who still continued their secret communion in a distant part of the vessel. Once, an ungovernable curiosity, or the heedlessness of his years, led one of the youthful midshipmen near them, but a stern rebuke from his captain sent the boy, abashed and cowering, to hide his mortification among his fellows. This reprimand was received by the elder officers as an intimation that the consultation which they beheld, was to be strictly inviolate; and, though it by no means suppressed the repeated expressions of their impatience, it effectually prevented an interruption to the communications, which all thought were unreasonably protracted for the occasion.

"This is no time to be talking over bearings and distances," observed the officer next in rank to Griffith. "But we should call the hands up, and try to kedge her off while the sea will suffer a boat to live."

"'Twould be a tedious and bootless job to attempt to warp a ship for miles against a head-beating sea," returned the first lieutenant; "but the land-breeze yet flutters aloft, and if our light sails would draw, with the aid of this ebb tide we might be able to shove her from the shore."

"Hail the tops, Griffith," said the other, "and ask if they feel the air move; 'twill be a hint at least to set the old man and that lubberly pilot in motion."

Griffith laughed, as he complied with the request, and when he received the customary reply to his call, he demanded, in a loud voice—

"Which way have you the wind, aloft?"

"We feel a light cat's-paw, now and then, from the land," returned the sturdy captain of the top; "but our topsail hangs in the clewlines, sir, without winking."

Captain Munson and his companion suspended their discourse, while this question and answer were exchanged, and then resumed their dialogue as earnestly as if it had received no interruption.

"If it did wink, the hint would be lost on our betters," said the officer of the marines, whose ignorance of seamanship added greatly to his perception of the danger, but who, from pure idleness, made more jokes than any other man in the ship. "That pilot will not receive a delicate intimation through his ears, Mr. Griffith; suppose you try him by the nose."

"Faith, there was a flash of gunpowder between us in the barge," returned the first lieutenant, "and he does not

seem a man to stomach such hints as you advise. Although he looks so meek and quiet, I doubt whether he has paid much attention to the book of Job."

"Why should he!" exclaimed the chaplain, whose apprehensions at least equalled those of the marine, and with a much more disheartening effect; "I'm sure it would have been a great waste of time; there are so many charts of the coast, and books on the navigation of these seas, for him to study, that I sincerely hope he has been much better employed."

A loud laugh was created at this speech, among the listeners, and it apparently produced the effect that was so long anxiously desired, by putting an end to the mysterious conference between their captain and the pilot. As the former came forward towards his expecting crew, he said, in the composed, steady manner, that formed the principal trait in his character—

"Get the anchor, Mr. Griffith, and make sail on the ship; the hour has arrived when we must be moving."

The cheerful "ay! ay! sir!" of the young lieutenant was hardly uttered, before the cries of half a dozen midshipmen were heard summoning the boatswain and his mates to their duty.

There was a general movement in the living masses that clustered around the mainmast, on the booms, and in the gangways, though their habits of discipline held the crew a moment longer in suspense. The silence was first broken by the sounds of the boatswain's whistle, followed by the hoarse cry of "all hands, up anchor, ahoy!"—the former rising on the night air, from its first low, mellow notes, to a piercing shrillness, that again gradually died away on the waters; and the latter, bellowing through every cranny of the ship, like the hollow murmurs of distant thunder.

The change produced by this customary summons was magical. Human beings sprung out from between the guns, rushed up the hatches, threw themselves with careless activity from the booms, and gathered from every quarterso rapidly, that, in an instant, the deck of the frigate was alive with men. The profound silence, that had hitherto been only interrupted by the low dialogue of the officers, was now exchanged for the stern orders of the lieutenants, mingled with the shriller cries of the midshipmen, and the hoarse bawling of the boatswain's crew, rising above the tumult of preparation and general bustle.

The captain and the pilot alone remained passive, in this scene of general exertion; for their apprehensions had even stimulated that class of officers which is called "idlers," to attempt something, though frequently reminded by their more experienced messmates, that they retarded, instead of forwarded, the duty of the vessel. The bustle, however, gradually ceased, and in a few minutes the same silence pervaded the ship as before.

"We are brought—to, sir," said Griffith, who stood overlooking the scene, holding in one hand a short speaking trumpet, and grasping, with the other, one of the shrouds of the ship, to steady himself in the position he had taken on a gun.

"Heave round, sir," was the calm reply.

"Heave round!" repeated Griffith, aloud.

"Heave round!" echoed a dozen eager voices at once, and the lively strains of a fife struck up a brisk air, to enliven the gloomy scene. The capstern was instantly set in motion, and the measured tread of the seamen was heard, as they stamped the deck in the circle of their march. For a few minutes, no other sounds were heard, if we except the voice of an officer, occasionally, cheering the sailors, when it was announced that they "were short," or, in other words, that the ship was nearly over her anchor.

"Heave and pall," cried Griffith; when the quavering notes of the whistle were again succeeded by a general stillness in the vessel.

"What is to be done now, sir?" continued the lieutenant; "shall we trip the anchor? There seems not a breath of air, and as the tide runs slack, I doubt whether the sea do not heave the ship ashore."

There was so much obvious truth in this conjecture, that all eyes turned from the light and animation afforded by the decks of the frigate, to look abroad on the waters, in a vain desire to pierce the darkness, as if to read the fate of their apparently devoted ship, from the aspect of nature.

"I leave all to the pilot," said the captain, after he had stood a short time by the side of Griffith, anxiously studying the heavens and the ocean. "What say you, Mr. Gray?"

The man who was, thus, first addressed by name, was leaning over the bulwarks, with his eyes bent in the same direction as the others; but as he answered, he turned his face towards the speaker, and the light from the deck fell full upon his quiet features, which exhibited a calmness bordering on the supernatural, considering his

station and responsibility.

"There is much to fear from this heavy ground—swell," he said, in the same unmoved tones as before; "but there is certain destruction to us, if the gale that is brewing in the east, finds us waiting its fury in this wild anchorage. All the hemp that was ever spun into cordage would not hold a ship an hour, chafing on these rocks, with a north—easter pouring its fury on her. If the powers of man can compass it, gentlemen, we must get an offing, and that speedily."

"You say no more, sir, than the youngest boy in the ship can see for himself," said Griffith— "ha! here comes the schooner!"

The dashing of the long sweeps in the water, was now plainly audible, and the little Ariel was seen through the gloom, moving heavily under their inadequate impulse. As she passed slowly under the stern of the frigate, the cheerful voice of Barnstable was first heard, opening the communications between them.

"Here's a night for spectacles, Captain Munson!" he cried; "but I thought I heard your fife, sir; I trust in God, you do not mean to ride it out here till morning?"

"I like the birth as little as yourself, Mr. Barnstable," returned the veteran seaman, in his calm manner, in which anxiety was however beginning to grow evident. "We are short, but are afraid to let go our hold of the bottom, lest the sea cast us ashore. How make you out the wind?"

"Wind!" echoed the other; "there is not enough to blow a lady's curl aside. If you wait, sir, till the land breeze fill your sails, you will wait another moon, I believe. I've got my egg—shell out of that nest of gray—caps, but how it has been done in the dark, a better man than myself must explain."

"Take your directions from the pilot, Mr. Barnstable," returned his commanding officer, "and follow them strictly and to the letter."

A death—like silence, in both vessels, succeeded this order, for all seemed to listen eagerly to catch the words that fell from the man, on whom, all now felt, depended their only hopes for safety. A short time was suffered to elapse, before his voice was heard, in the same low, but distinct tones as before—

"Your sweeps will soon be of no service to you," he said, "against the sea that begins to heave in; but your light sails will help them to get you out. So long as you can head east—and—by—north, you are doing well, and you can stand on till you open the light from that northern headland, when you can heave to, and fire a gun; but if, as I dread, you are struck aback, before you open the light, you may trust to your lead on the larboard tack, but beware, with your head to the southward, for no lead will serve you there."

"I can walk over the same ground on one tack as on the other," said Barnstable, "and make both legs of a length."

"It will not do," returned the pilot. "If you fall off a point to starboard from east—and—by—north, in going large, you will find both rocks and points of shoals to bring you up; and beware, as I tell you, of the starboard tack."

"And how shall I find my way; you will let me trust to neither time, lead, nor log."

"You must trust to a quick eye and a ready hand. The breakers only will show you the dangers, when you are not able to make out the bearings of the land. Tack in season, sir, and don't spare the lead, when you head to port."

"Ay, ay," returned Barnstable, in a low, muttering voice. "This is a sort of blind navigation with a vengeance, and all for no purpose that I can see—see! damme, eyesight is of about as much use now, as a man's nose would be in reading the bible."

"Softly, softly, Mr. Barnstable," interrupted his commander, for such was the anxious stillness in both vessels, that even the rattling of the schooner's rigging was heard, as she rolled in the trough of the sea—"the duty on which Congress has sent us must be performed at the hazard of our lives."

"I don't mind my life, Captain Munson," said Barnstable; "but there is a great want of conscience in trusting a vessel in such a place as this. However, it is a time to do, and not to talk. But if there be such danger to an easy draught of water, what will become of the frigate? had I not better play jackall, and try and feel the way for you."

"I thank you," said the pilot; "the offer is generous, but would avail us nothing. I have the advantage of knowing the ground well, and must trust to my memory and God's good favour. Make sail, make sail, sir, and if you succeed, we will venture to break ground."

The order was promptly obeyed, and in a very short time, the Ariel was covered with canvass. Though no air was perceptible on the decks of the frigate, the little schooner was so light, that she succeeded in stemming her way over the rising waves, aided a little by the tide, and in a few minutes, her low hull was just discernible in the

streak of light along the horizon; the dark outline of her sails rising above the sea, until their fanciful summits were lost in the shadows of the clouds.

Griffith had listened to the foregoing dialogue, like the rest of the junior officers, in profound silence; but when the Ariel began to grow indistinct to the eye, he jumped lightly from the gun to the deck, and cried—

"She slips off, like a vessel from the stocks! shall I trip the anchor, sir, and follow?"

"We have no choice," replied his captain. "You hear the question, Mr. Gray? shall we let go the bottom?"

"It must be done, Captain Munson; we may want more than the rest of this tide to get us to a place of safety," said the pilot; "I would give five years from a life, that I know will be short, if the ship lay one mile further seaward."

This remark was unheard by all, excepting the commander of the frigate, who again walked aside with the pilot, where they resumed their mysterious communications. The words of assent were no sooner uttered, however, than Griffith gave forth from his trumpet the command to "heave away!" Again the strains of the fife were followed by the tread of the men at the capstern. At the same time that the anchor was heaving up, the sails were loosened from the yards, and opened to invite the breeze. In effecting this duty, orders were thundered through the trumpet of the first lieutenant, and executed with the rapidity of thought. Men were to be seen, like spots in the dim light from the heavens, lying on every yard, or hanging as in air, while strange cries were heard issuing from every part of the rigging, and each spar of the vessel. "Ready the fore—royal," cried a shrill voice, as if from the clouds; "ready the fore yard," uttered the hoarse tones of a seaman beneath him; "all ready aft, sir," cried a third, from another quarter; and in a few moments, the order was given to "let fall."

The little light which fell from the sky, was now excluded by the falling canvass, and a deeper gloom was cast athwart the decks of the ship, that served to render the brilliancy of the lanterns even vivid, while it gave to objects outboard a more appalling and dreary appearance than before.

Every individual, excepting the commander and his associate, was now earnestly engaged in getting the ship under way. The sounds of "we're away," were repeated by a burst from fifty voices, and the rapid evolutions of the capstern announced that nothing but the weight of the anchor was to be lifted. The howling of cordage, the rattling of blocks, blended with the shrill calls of the boatswain and his mates, succeeded; and though to a landsman all would have appeared confusion and hurry, long practice and strict discipline enabled the crew to exhibit their ship under a cloud of canvass, from the deck to the trucks, in less time than we have consumed in relating it.

For a few minutes, the officers were not disappointed by the result, for though the heavy sails flapped lazily against the masts, the light duck on the loftier spars swelled outwardly, and the ship began sensibly to yield to their influence.

"She travels! she travels!" exclaimed Griffith, joyously; "ah! the hussy! she has as much antipathy to the land as any fish that swims! it blows a little gale aloft, yet!"

"We feel its dying breath," said the pilot, in low, soothing tones, but in a manner so sudden as to startle Griffith, at whose elbow they were unexpectedly uttered. "Let us forget, young man, every thing but the number of lives that depend, this night, on your exertions and my knowledge."

"If you be but half as able to exhibit the one, as I am willing to make the other, we shall do well," returned the lieutenant, in the same tone. "Remember, whatever may be your feelings, that we are on an enemy's coast, and love it not enough to wish to lay our bones there."

With this brief explanation, they separated, the vessel requiring the constant and close attention of the officer to her movements.

The exultation produced in the crew by the progress of their ship through the water, was of short duration; for the breeze that had seemed to await their motions, after forcing the vessel for a quarter of a mile, fluttered for a few minutes amid their light canvass, and then left them entirely. The quarter-master, whose duty it was to superintend the helm, soon announced that he was losing the command of the vessel, as she was no longer obedient to her rudder. This ungrateful intelligence was promptly communicated to his commander, by Griffith, who suggested the propriety of again dropping an anchor.

"I refer you to Mr. Gray," returned the captain; "he is the pilot, sir, and with him rests the safety of the vessel."

"Pilots sometimes lose ships, as well as save them," said Griffith; "know you the man well, Captain Munson, who holds all our lives in his keeping, and so coolly as if he cared but little for the venture?"

"Mr. Griffith, I do know him; he is, in my opinion, both competent and faithful. Thus much I tell you, to

relieve your anxiety; more you must not ask;—but is there not a shift of wind?"

"God forbid!" exclaimed his lieutenant; "if that north-easter catches us within the shoals, our case will be desperate indeed!"

The heavy rolling of the vessel caused an occasional expansion, and as sudden a re-action, in their sails, which left the oldest seamen in the ship in doubt which way the currents of air were passing, or whether there existed any that were not created by the flapping of their own canvass. The head of the ship, however, began to fall off from the sea, and notwithstanding the darkness, it soon became apparent that she was driving in, bodily, towards the shore.

During these few minutes of gloomy doubt, Griffith, by one of those sudden revulsions of the mind, that connect the opposite extremes of feeling, lost his animated anxiety, and relapsed into the listless apathy that so often came over him, even in the most critical moments of trial and danger. He was standing, with one elbow resting on the capstern, shading his eyes from the light of the battle-lantern that stood near him, with one hand, when he felt a gentle pressure of the other, that recalled his recollection. Looking affectionately, though still recklessly, at the boy who stood at his side, he said—

"Dull music, Mr. Merry."

"So dull, sir, that I can't dance to it," returned the midshipman. "Nor do I believe there is a man in the ship who would not rather hear 'The girl I left behind me,' than those execrable sounds."

"What sounds, boy! The ship is as quiet as the quaker meeting in the Jerseys, before your good old grandfather used to break the charm of silence with his sonorous voice."

"Ah! laugh at my peaceable blood, if thou wilt, Mr. Griffith," said the arch youngster; "but remember, there is a mixture of it in all sorts of veins. I wish I could hear one of the old gentleman's chants now, sir; I could always sleep to them, like a gull in a surf. But he that sleeps to night, with that lullaby, will make a nap of it."

"Sounds! I hear no sounds, boy, but the flapping aloft; even that pilot, who struts the quarter-deck like an admiral, has nothing to say."

"Is not that a sound to open a seaman's ear?"

"It is in truth a heavy roll of the surf, lad, but the night air carries it heavily to our ears. Know you not the sounds of the surf yet, younker?"

"I know it too well, Mr. Griffith, and do not wish to know it better. How fast are we tumbling in towards that surf, sir?"

"I think we hold our own," said Griffith, rousing again; "though we had better anchor. Luff, fellow, luff, you are broadside to the sea!"

The man at the wheel repeated his former intelligence, adding a suggestion that he thought the ship "was gathering stern-way."

"Haul up your courses, Mr. Griffith," said Captain Munson, "and let us feel the wind."

The rattling of the blocks was soon heard, and the enormous sheets of canvass that hung from the lower yards were instantly suspended "in the brails." When this change was effected, all on board stood silent and breathless, as if expecting to learn their fate by the result. Several contradictory opinions were, at length, hazarded among the officers, when Griffith seized a candle from the lantern, and springing on one of the guns, held it on high, exposed to the action of the air. The little flame waved, with uncertain glimmering, for a moment, and then burned steadily, in a line with the masts. Griffith was about to lower his extended arm, when, feeling a slight sensation of coolness on his hand, he paused, and the light turned slowly towards the land, flared, flickered, and finally deserted the wick.

"Lose not a moment, Mr. Griffith," cried the pilot, aloud; "clew up and furl every thing but your three topsails, and let them be double-reefed. Now is the time to fulfil your promise."

The young man paused one moment, in astonishment, as the clear, distinct tones of the stranger struck his ears so unexpectedly; but turning his eyes to seaward, he sprang on the deck, and proceeded to obey the order, as if life and death depended on his despatch.

CHAPTER V.

"She rights, she rights, boys! wear off shore!"

— Song

The extraordinary activity of Griffith, which communicated itself with promptitude to the crew, was produced by a sudden alteration in the weather. In place of the well-defined streak along the horizon, that has been already described, an immense body of misty light appeared to be moving in, with rapidity, from the ocean, while a distinct but distant roaring announced the sure approach of the tempest, that had so long troubled the waters. Even Griffith, while thundering his orders through the trumpet, and urging the men, by his cries, to expedition, would pause, for instants, to cast anxious glances in the direction of the coming storm, and the faces of the sailors who lay on the yards were turned, instinctively, towards the same quarter of the heavens, while they knotted the reef-points, or passed the gaskets, that were to confine the unruly canvass to the prescribed limits.

The pilot alone, in that confused and busy throng, where voice rose above voice, and cry echoed cry, in quick succession, appeared as if he held no interest in the important stake. With his eyes steadily fixed on the approaching mist, and his arms folded together, in composure, he stood calmly awaiting the result.

The ship had fallen off, with her broadside to the sea, and was become unmanageable, and the sails were already brought into the folds necessary to her security, when the quick and heavy fluttering of canvass was thrown across the water, with all the gloomy and chilling sensations that such sounds produce, where darkness and danger unite to appal the seaman.

"The schooner has it!" cried Griffith; "Barnstable has held on, like himself, to the last moment—God send that the squall leave him cloth enough to keep him from the shore!"

"His sails are easily handled," the commander observed, "and she must be over the principal danger. We are falling off before it, Mr. Gray; shall we try a cast of the lead?"

The pilot turned from his contemplative posture, and moved slowly across the deck, before he returned any reply to this question—like a man who not only felt that every thing depended on himself, but that he was equal to the emergency.

"'Tis unnecessary," he at length said; "'twould be certain destruction to be taken aback, and it is difficult to say, within several points, how the wind may strike us."

"'Tis difficult no longer," cried Griffith; "for here it comes, and in right earnest!"

The rushing sounds of the wind were now, indeed, heard at hand, and the words were hardly past the lips of the young lieutenant, before the vessel bowed down heavily to one side, and then, as she began to move through the water, rose again majestically to her upright position, as if saluting, like a courteous champion, the powerful antagonist with which she was about to contend. Not another minute elapsed, before the ship was throwing the waters aside, with a lively progress, and, obedient to her helm, was brought as near to the desired course, as the direction of the wind would allow. The hurry and bustle on the yards gradually subsided, and the men slowly descended to the deck, all straining their eyes to pierce the gloom in which they were enveloped, and some shaking their heads, in melancholy doubt, afraid to express the apprehensions they really entertained. All on board anxiously waited for the fury of the gale; for there were none so ignorant or inexperienced in that gallant frigate, as not to know, that they, as yet, only felt the infant efforts of the wind. Each moment, however, it increased in power, though so gradual was the alteration, that the relieved mariners began to believe that all their gloomy forebodings were not to be realized. During this short interval of uncertainty, no other sounds were heard than the whistling of the breeze, as it passed quickly through the mass of rigging that belonged to the vessel, and the dashing of the spray, that began to fly from her bows, like the foam of a cataract.

"It blows fresh," cried Griffith, who was the first to speak in that moment of doubt and anxiety; "but it is no more than a cap-full of wind, after all. Give us elbow-room, and the right canvass, Mr. Pilot, and I'll handle the ship like a gentleman's yacht, in this breeze."

"Will she stay, think ye, under this sail?" said the low voice of the stranger.

"She will do all that man, in reason, can ask of wood and iron," returned the lieutenant; "but the vessel don't float the ocean that will tack under double-reefed topsails alone, against a heavy sea. Help her with the courses,

pilot, and you'll see her come round like a dancing-master."

"Let us feel the strength of the gale first," returned the man who was called Mr. Gray, moving from the side of Griffith to the weather gangway of the vessel, where he stood in silence, looking ahead of the ship, with an air of singular coolness and abstraction.

All the lanterns had been extinguished on the deck of the frigate, when her anchor was secured, and as the first mist of the gale had passed over, it was succeeded by a faint light that was a good deal aided by the glittering foam of the waters, which now broke in white curls around the vessel, in every direction. The land could be faintly discerned, rising like a heavy bank of black fog, above the margin of the waters, and was only distinguishable from the heavens, by its deeper gloom and obscurity. The last rope was coiled, and deposited in its proper place, by the seamen, and for several minutes the stillness of death pervaded the crowded decks. It was evident to every one, that their ship was dashing at a prodigious rate through the waves; and as she was approaching, with such velocity, the quarter of the bay where the shoals and dangers were known to be situated, nothing but the habits of the most exact discipline could suppress the uneasiness of the officers and men within their own bosoms. At length the voice of Captain Munson was heard, calling to the pilot.

"Shall I send a hand into the chains, Mr. Gray," he said, "and try our water?"

Although this question was asked aloud, and the interest it excited drew many of the officers and men around him, in eager impatience for his answer, it was unheeded by the man to whom it was addressed. His head rested on his hand, as he leaned over the hammock-cloths of the vessel, and his whole air was that of one whose thoughts wandered from the pressing necessity of their situation. Griffith was among those who had approached the pilot, and after waiting a moment, from respect, to hear the answer to his commander's question, he presumed on his own rank, and leaving the circle that stood at a little distance, stepped to the side of the mysterious guardian of their lives.

"Captain Munson desires to know whether you wish a cast of the lead?" said the young officer, with a little impatience of manner. No immediate answer was made to this repetition of the question, and Griffith laid his hand, unceremoniously, on the shoulder of the other, with an intent to rouse him, before he made another application for a reply, but the convulsive start of the pilot held him silent in amazement.

"Fall back there," said the lieutenant, sternly, to the men who were closing around them in a compact circle; "away with you to your stations, and see all clear for stays." The dense mass of heads dissolved, at this order, like the water of one of the waves commingling with the ocean, and the lieutenant and his companion were left by themselves.

"This is not a time for musing, Mr. Gray," continued Griffith; "remember our compact, and look to your charge—is it not time to put the vessel in stays? of what are you dreaming?"

The pilot laid his hand on the extended arm of the lieutenant, and grasped it with a convulsive pressure, as he answered—

"'Tis a dream of reality. You are young, Mr. Griffith, nor am I past the noon of life; but should you live fifty years longer, you never can see and experience what I have encountered in my little period of three-and-thirty years!"

A good deal astonished at this burst of feeling, so singular at such a moment, the young sailor was at a loss for a reply; but as his duty was uppermost in his thoughts, he still dwelt on the theme that most interested him.

"I hope much of your experience has been on this coast, for the ship travels lively," he said, "and the daylight showed us so much to dread, that we do not feel over-valiant in the dark. How much longer shall we stand on, upon this tack?"

The pilot turned slowly from the side of the vessel, and walked towards the commander of the frigate, as he replied, in a tone that seemed deeply agitated by his melancholy reflections—

"You have your wish, then; much, very much of my early life was passed on this dreaded coast. What to you is all darkness and gloom, to me is as light as if a noon day sun shone upon it. But tack your ship, sir, tack your ship; I would see how she works, before we reach the point, where she must behave well, or we perish."

Griffith gazed after him in wonder, while the pilot slowly paced the quarter-deck, and then, rousing from his trance, gave forth the cheering order that called each man to his station, to perform the desired evolution. The confident assurances which the young officer had given to the pilot, respecting the qualities of his vessel, and his own ability to manage her, were fully realized by the result. The helm was no sooner put a-lee, than the huge ship

bore up gallantly against the wind, and dashing directly through the waves, threw the foam high into the air, as she looked boldly into the very eye of the wind, and then, yielding gracefully to its power, she fell off on the other tack, with her head pointed from those dangerous shoals that she had so recently approached with such terrifying velocity. The heavy yards swung round, as if they had been vanes to indicate the currents of the air, and in a few moments the frigate again moved, with stately progress, through the water, leaving the rocks and shoals behind her on one side of the bay, but advancing towards those that offered equal danger on the other.

During this time, the sea was becoming more agitated, and the violence of the wind was gradually increasing. The latter no longer whistled amid the cordage of the vessel, but it seemed to howl, surlily, as it passed the complicated machinery that the frigate obtruded on its path. An endless succession of white surges rose above the heavy billows, and the very air was glittering with the light that was disengaged from the ocean. The ship yielded, each moment, more and more before the storm, and in less than half an hour from the time that she had lifted her anchor, she was driven along, with tremendous fury, by the full power of a gale of wind. Still, the hardy and experienced mariners who directed her movements, held her to the course that was necessary to their preservation, and still Griffith gave forth, when directed by their unknown pilot, those orders that turned her in the narrow channel where safety was, alone, to be found.

So far, the performance of his duty appeared easy to the stranger, and he gave the required directions in those still, calm tones, that formed so remarkable a contrast to the responsibility of his situation. But when the land was becoming dim, in distance as well as darkness, and the agitated sea was only to be discovered as it swept by them in foam, he broke in upon the monotonous roaring of the tempest, with the sounds of his voice, seeming to shake off his apathy, and rouse himself to the occasion.

"Now is the time to watch her closely, Mr. Griffith," he cried; "here we get the true tide and the real danger. Place the best quarter-master of your ship in those chains, and let an officer stand by him, and see that he gives us the right water."

"I will take that office on myself," said the captain; "pass a light into the weather main-chains."

"Stand by your braces!" exclaimed the pilot, with startling quickness. "Heave away that lead!"

These preparations taught the crew to expect the crisis, and every officer and man stood in fearful silence, at his assigned station, awaiting the issue of the trial. Even the quarter-master at the gun gave out his orders to the men at the wheel, in deeper and hoarser tones than usual, as if anxious not to disturb the quiet and order of the vessel.

While this deep expectation pervaded the frigate, the piercing cry of the leadsman, as he called, "by the mark seven," rose above the tempest, crossed over the decks, and appeared to pass away to leeward, borne on the blast, like the warnings of some water spirit.

"'Tis well," returned the pilot, calmly; "try it again."

The short pause was succeeded by another cry, "and a half-five!"

"She shoals! she shoals!" exclaimed Griffith; "keep her a good full."

"Ay! you must hold the vessel in command, now," said the pilot, with those cool tones that are most appalling in critical moments, because they seem to denote most preparation and care.

The third call of "by the deep four!" was followed by a prompt direction from the stranger to tack.

Griffith seemed to emulate the coolness of the pilot, in issuing the necessary orders to execute this manœuvre.

The vessel rose slowly from the inclined position into which she had been forced by the tempest, and the sails were shaking violently, as if to release themselves from their confinement, while the ship stemmed the billows, when the wellknown voice of the sailing-master was heard shouting from the fore-castle—

"Breakers! breakers, dead ahead!"

This appalling sound seemed yet to be lingering about the ship, when a second voice cried—

"Breakers on our lee-bow!"

"We are in a bight of the shoals, Mr. Gray," said the commander. "She loses her way; perhaps an anchor might hold her."

"Clear away that best-bower," shouted Griffith through his trumpet.

"Hold on!" cried the pilot, in a voice that reached the very hearts of all who heard him; "hold on every thing."

The young man turned fiercely to the daring stranger, who thus defied the discipline of his vessel, and at once demanded—

"Who is it that dares to countermand my orders?—is it not enough that you run the ship into danger, but you must interfere to keep her there! If another word—"

"Peace, Mr. Griffith," interrupted the captain, bending from the rigging, his gray locks blowing about in the wind, and adding a look of wildness to the haggard care that he exhibited by the light of his lantern; "yield the trumpet to Mr. Gray; he alone can save us."

Griffith threw his speaking trumpet on the deck, and as he walked proudly away, muttered, in bitterness of feeling—

"Then all is lost, indeed, and among the rest, the foolish hopes with which I visited this coast."

There was, however, no time for reply; the ship had been rapidly running into the wind, and as the efforts of the crew were paralyzed by the contradictory orders they had heard, she gradually lost her way, and in a few seconds, all her sails were taken aback.

Before the crew understood their situation, the pilot had applied the trumpet to his mouth, and in a voice that rose above the tempest, he thundered forth his orders. Each command was given distinctly, and with a precision that showed him to be master of his profession. The helm was kept fast, the head yards swung up heavily against the wind, and the vessel was soon whirling round on her heel, with a retrograde movement.

Griffith was too much of a seaman, not to perceive that the pilot had seized, with a perception almost intuitive, the only method that promised to extricate the vessel from her situation. He was young, impetuous, and proud—but he was also generous. Forgetting his resentment and his mortification, he rushed forward among the men, and, by his presence and example, added certainty to the experiment. The ship fell off slowly before the gale, and bowed her yards nearly to the water, as she felt the blast pouring its fury on her broadside, while the surly waves beat violently against her stern, as if in reproach at departing from her usual manner of moving.

The voice of the pilot, however, was still heard, steady and calm, and yet so clear and high as to reach every ear; and the obedient seamen whirled the yards at his bidding, in despite of the tempest, as if they handled the toys of their childhood. When the ship had fallen off dead before the wind, her head sails were shaken, her after yards trimmed, and her helm shifted, before she had time to run upon the danger that had threatened, as well to leeward as to windward. The beautiful fabric, obedient to her government, threw her bows up gracefully towards the wind again, and as her sails were trimmed, moved out from amongst the dangerous shoals, in which she had been embayed, as steadily and swiftly as she had approached them.

A moment of breathless astonishment succeeded the accomplishment of this nice manœuvre, but there was no time for the usual expressions of surprise. The stranger still held the trumpet, and continued to lift his voice amid the howlings of the blast, whenever prudence or skill directed any change in the management of the ship. For an hour longer, there was a fearful struggle for their preservation, the channel becoming, at each step, more complicated, and the shoals thickening around the mariners, on every side. The lead was cast rapidly, and the quick eye of the pilot seemed to pierce the darkness, with a keenness of vision that exceeded human power. It was apparent to all in the vessel, that they were under the guidance of one who understood the navigation thoroughly, and their exertions kept pace with their reviving confidence. Again and again, the frigate appeared to be rushing blindly on shoals, where the sea was covered with foam, and where destruction would have been as sudden as it was certain, when the clear voice of the stranger was heard warning them of the danger, and inciting them to their duty. The vessel was implicitly yielded to his government, and during those anxious moments when she was dashing the waters aside, throwing the spray over her enormous yards, each ear would listen eagerly for those sounds that had obtained a command over the crew, that can only be acquired, under such circumstances, by great steadiness and consummate skill. The ship was recovering from the inaction of changing her course, in one of those critical tacks that she had made so often, when the pilot, for the first time, addressed the commander of the frigate, who still continued to superintend the all-important duty of the leadsmen.

"Now is the pinch," he said, "and if the ship behaves well, we are safe—but if otherwise, all we have yet done will be useless."

The veteran seaman whom he addressed left the chains, at this portentous notice, and calling to his first lieutenant, required of the stranger an explanation of his warning.

"See you yon light on the southern headland?" returned the pilot; "you may know it from the star near it—by its sinking, at times, in the ocean. Now observe the hom-moc, a little north of it, looking like a shadow in the horizon—'tis a hill far inland. If we keep that light open from the hill, we shall do well—but if not, we surely go

to pieces."

"Let us tack again!" exclaimed the lieutenant.

The pilot shook his head, as he replied—

"There is no more tacking or box—hauling to be done to night. We have barely room to pass out of the shoals on this course, and if we can weather the 'Devil's-Grip,' we clear their outermost point—but if not, as I said before, there is but an alternative."

"If we had beaten out the way we entered!" exclaimed Griffith, "we should have done well."

"Say, also, if the tide would have let us do so," returned the pilot, calmly. "Gentlemen, we must be prompt; we have but a mile to go, and the ship appears to fly. That topsail is not enough to keep her up to the wind; we want both jib and mainsail."

"'Tis a perilous thing, to loosen canvass in such a tempest!" observed the doubtful captain.

"It must be done," returned the collected stranger; "we perish, without it—see! the light already touches the edge of the hom-moc; the sea casts us to leeward!"

"It shall be done!" cried Griffith, seizing the trumpet from the hand of the pilot.

The orders of the lieutenant were executed almost as soon as issued, and every thing being ready, the enormous folds of the mainsail were trusted, loose, to the blast. There was an instant when the result was doubtful; the tremendous threshing of the heavy sails, seeming to bid defiance to all restraint, shaking the ship to her centre; but art and strength prevailed, and gradually the canvass was distended, and bellying as it filled, was drawn down to its usual place, by the power of a hundred men. The vessel yielded to this immense addition of force, and bowed before it, like a reed bending to a breeze. But the success of the measure was announced by a joyful cry from the stranger, that seemed to burst from his inmost soul.

"She feels it! she springs her luff! observe," he said, "the light opens from the hom-moc already; if she will only bear her canvass, we shall go clear!"

A report, like that of a cannon, interrupted his exclamation, and something resembling a white cloud was seen drifting before the wind from the head of the ship, till it was driven into the gloom far to leeward.

"'Tis the jib, blown from the bolt-ropes," said the commander of the frigate. "This is no time to spread light duck—but the mainsail may stand it yet."

"The sail would laugh at a tornado," returned the lieutenant; "but that mast springs like a piece of steel."

"Silence all!" cried the pilot. "Now, gentlemen, we shall soon know our fate. Let her luff—luff you can!"

This warning effectually closed all discourse, and the hardy mariners, knowing that they had already done all in the power of man, to ensure their safety, stood in breathless anxiety, awaiting the result. At a short distance ahead of them, the whole ocean was white with foam, and the waves, instead of rolling on, in regular succession, appeared to be tossing about in mad gambols. A single streak of dark billows, not half a cable's length in width, could be discerned running into this chaos of water; but it was soon lost to the eye, amid the confusion of the disturbed element. Along this narrow path the vessel moved more heavily than before, being brought so near the wind as to keep her sails touching. The pilot, silently, proceeded to the wheel, and, with his own hands, he undertook the steerage of the ship. No noise proceeded from the frigate to interrupt the horrid tumult of the ocean, and she entered the channel among the breakers, with the silence of a desperate calmness. Twenty times, as the foam rolled away to leeward, the crew were on the eve of uttering their joy, as they supposed the vessel past the danger; but breaker after breaker would still rise before them, following each other into the general mass, to check their exultation. Occasionally, the fluttering of the sails would be heard; and when the looks of the startled seamen were turned to the wheel, they beheld the stranger grasping its spokes, with his quick eye glancing from the water to the canvass. At length the ship reached a point, where she appeared to be rushing directly into the jaws of destruction, when, suddenly, her course was changed, and her head receded rapidly from the wind. At the same instant, the voice of the pilot was heard, shouting—

"Square away the yards!—in mainsail!"

A general burst from the crew echoed, "square away the yards!" and, quick as thought, the frigate was seen gliding along the channel, before the wind. The eye had hardly time to dwell on the foam, which seemed like clouds driving in the heavens, and directly the gallant vessel issued from her perils, and rose and fell on the heavy waves of the open sea.

The seamen were yet drawing long breaths, and gazing about them like men recovered from a trance, when

Griffith approached the man who had so successfully conducted them through their perils. The young lieutenant grasped the hand of the other, as he said—

"You have this night proved yourself a faithful pilot, and such a seaman as the world cannot equal."

The pressure of the hand was warmly returned by the unknown mariner, who replied—

"I am no stranger to the seas, and I may yet find my grave in them. But you, too, have deceived me; you have acted nobly, young man, and Congress—"

"What of Congress?" asked Griffith, observing him to pause.

"Why, Congress is fortunate, if it has many such ships as this," said the stranger, coldly, and walking towards the commander.

Griffith gazed after him, a moment, in surprise; but as his duty required his attention, other thoughts soon engaged his mind.

The vessel was pronounced to be in safety. The gale was heavy and increasing, but there was a clear sea before them, and, as she slowly stretched out into the bosom of the ocean, preparations were made for her security during its continuance. Before midnight, every thing was in order. A gun from the Ariel had announced the safety of the schooner also, which had gone out by another and an easier channel, that the frigate had not dared to attempt; and the commander directed the usual watch to be set, and the remainder of the crew to seek their necessary repose.

The captain withdrew with the mysterious pilot to his own cabin. Griffith gave his last order, and renewing his charge to the officer intrusted with the care of the vessel, he wished him a pleasant watch, and sought the refreshment of his own cot. For an hour, the young lieutenant lay musing on the events of the day. The remark of Barnstable would occur to him, in connexion with the singular comment of the boy; and then his thoughts would recur to the pilot, who, taken from the hostile shores of Britain, and with her accent on his tongue, had served them so faithfully and so well. He remembered the anxiety of Captain Munson to procure this stranger, at the very hazard from which they had just been relieved, and puzzled himself with conjecturing why a pilot was to be sought at such a risk. His more private feelings would then resumetheir sway, and the recollection of America, his mistress, and his home, mingled with the confused images of the drowsy youth. The dashing of the billows against the side of the ship, the creaking of guns and bulk-heads, with the roaring of the tempest, however, became gradually less and less distinct, until nature yielded to necessity, and the young man forgot even the romantic images of his love, in the deep sleep of a seaman.

CHAPTER VI.

"The letter! ay! the letter!

"Tis there a woman loves to speak her wishes;
It spares the blushes of the love-sick maiden,
And every word's a smile, each line a tongue."

— Duo

The slumbers of Griffith continued till late on the following morning, when he was awakened by the report of a cannon, issuing from the deck above him. He threw himself, listlessly, from his cot, and perceiving the officer of marines near him, as his servant opened the door of his state-room, he inquired, with some little interest in his manner, if "the ship was in chase of any thing, that a gun was fired?"

Letter

The soldier replied—

"'Tis no more than a hint to the Ariel, that there is bunting abroad for them to read. It seems as if all hands were asleep on board her, for we have shown her signal, these ten minutes, and she takes us for a collier, I believe, by the respect she pays it."

"Say, rather, that she takes us for an enemy, and is wary," returned Griffith. "Brown Dick has played the English so many tricks himself, that he is tender of his faith."

"Why, they have shown him a yellow flag over a blue one, with a cornet, and that spells Ariel, in every signal-book we have; surely he can't suspect the English of knowing how to read Yankee."

"I have known Yankees read more difficult English," said Griffith, smiling; "but, in truth, I suppose that Barnstable has been, like myself, keeping a dead reckoning of his time, and his men have profited by the occasion. She is lying too, I trust."

"Ay! like a cork in a mill-pond, and I dare say you are right. Give Barnstable plenty of sea-room, a heavy wind, and but little sail, and he will send his men below, put that fellow he calls long Tom at the tiller, and follow himself, and sleep as quietly as I ever could at church."

"Ah! yours is a somniferous orthodoxy. Captain Manual," said the young sailor, laughing, while he slipped his arms into the sleeves of a morning round-about, covered with the gilded trappings of his profession; "sleep appears to come most naturally to all you idlers. But give me a passage, and I will go up, and call the schooner down to us, in the turning of an hour-glass."

The indolent soldier raised himself from the leaning posture he had taken against the door of the state-room, and Griffith proceeded through the dark ward-room, up the narrow stairs, that led him to the principal battery of the ship, and thence, by another and broader flight of steps, to the open deck.

The gale still blew strong, but steadily; the blue water of the ocean was rising in mimic mountains, that were crowned with white foam, which the wind, at times, lifted from its kindred element, to propel, in mist, through the air, from summit to summit. But the ship rode on these agitated billows, with an easy and regular movement, that denoted the skill with which her mechanical powers were directed. The day was bright and clear, and the lazy sun, who seemed unwilling to meet the toil of ascending to the meridian, was crossing the heavens with a southern inclination, that hardly allowed him to temper the moist air of the ocean with his genial heat. At the distance of a mile, directly in the wind's eye, the Ariel was seen, obeying the signal, which had caused the dialogue we have related. Her low, black hull was barely discernible, at moments, when she rose to the crest of a larger wave than common; but the spot of canvass that she exposed to the wind, was to be seen, seeming to touch the water on either hand, as the little vessel rolled amid the seas. At times, she was entirely hid from view, when the faint lines of her raking masts would be again discovered, issuing, as it were, from the ocean, and continuing to ascend, until the hull itself would appear, thrusting its bows into the air, surrounded by foam, and apparently ready to take its flight into another element.

After dwelling a moment on the beautiful sight we have attempted to describe, Griffith cast his eyes upward, to examine, with the keenness of a seaman, the disposition of things aloft, and then turned his attention to those who were on the deck of the frigate.

His commander stood, in his composed manner, patiently awaiting the execution of his order by the Ariel, and at his side was placed the stranger, who had acted so recently such a conspicuous part in the management of the ship. Griffith availed himself of daylight and his situation, to examine the appearance of this singular being more closely than the darkness and confusion of the preceding night had allowed. He was rather below the middle size in stature, but his form was muscular and athletic, exhibiting the finest proportions of manly beauty. His face appeared rather characterized by melancholy and thought, than by that determined decision which he had so powerfully displayed in the moments of their most extreme danger; but Griffith well knew, that it could also exhibit looks of the fiercest impatience. At present, it appeared, to the curious youth, when compared to the glimpses he had caught by the lights of their lanterns, like the ocean at rest, contrasted with the waters around him. The eyes of the pilot rested on the deck, or when they did wander, it was with uneasy and rapid glances. The large pea-jacket, that concealed most of his other attire, was as roughly made, and of materials as coarse, as that worn by the meanest seaman in the vessel; and yet, it did not escape the inquisitive gaze of the young lieutenant, that it was worn with an air of neatness and care, that was altogether unusual in men of his profession. The examination of Griffith ended here, for the near approach of the Ariel attracted the attention of all on the deck of the frigate, to the conversation that was about to pass between their respective commanders.

As the little schooner rolled along under their stern, Captain Munson directed his subordinate to leave his vessel, and repair on board the ship. As soon as the order was received, the Ariel rounded—to, and drawing ahead into the smooth water occasioned by the huge fabric that protected her from the gale, the whale-boat was again launched from her decks, and manned by the same crew that had landed on those shores which were now faintly discerned far to leeward, looking like blue clouds on the skirts of the ocean.

When Barnstable had entered his boat, a few strokes of the oars sent it, dancing over the waves, to the side of the ship. The little vessel was then veered off, to a distance, where it rode in safety, under the care of a boat-keeper, and the officer and his men ascended the side of the lofty frigate.

The usual ceremonials of reception were rigidly observed by Griffith and his juniors, when Barnstable touched the deck; and though every hand was ready to be extended towards the reckless seaman, none presumed to exceed the salutations of official decorum, until a short and private dialogue had taken place between him and their captain.

In the mean time, the crew of the whale-boat passed forward, and mingled with the seamen of the frigate, with the exception of the cockswain, who established himself in one of the gangways, where he stood in the utmost composure, fixing his eyes aloft, and shaking his head, in evident dissatisfaction, as he studied the complicated mass of rigging above him. This spectacle soon attracted to his side some half-dozen youths, with Mr. Merry at their head, who endeavoured to entertain their guest in a manner that should most conduce to the indulgence of their own waggish propensities.

The conversation between Barnstable and his superior soon ended; when the former, beckoning to Griffith, passed the wondering group who had collected around the capstern, awaiting his leisure to greet him more cordially, and led the way to the ward-room, with the freedom of one who felt himself no stranger. As this unsocial manner formed no part of the natural temper or ordinary deportment of the man, the remainder of the officers suffered their first lieutenant to follow him alone, believing that duty required that their interview should be private. Barnstable was determined that it should be so, at all events; for he seized the lamp from the mess-table, and entered the state-room of his friend, closing the door behind them, and turning the key. When they were both within its narrow limits—pointing to the only chair the little apartment contained, with a sort of instinctive deference to his companion's rank—the commander of the schooner threw himself carelessly on a sea-chest, and, placing the lamp on the table, he opened the discourse as follows:

"What a night we had of it! twenty times I thought I could see the sea breaking over you, and I had given you over as drowned men, or, what is worse, as men driven ashore, to be led to the prison-ships of these islanders, when I saw your lights in answer to my gun. Had you hoisted the conscience out of a murderer, you wouldn't have relieved him more than you did me, by showing that bit of tallow and cotton, tip'd with flint and steel.—But, Griffith, I have a tale to tell of a different kind—"

"Of how you slept, when you found yourself in deep water, and how your crew strove to outdo their commander, and how all succeeded so well, that there was a gray-head on board here, that began to shake with displeasure," interrupted Griffith; "truly, Dick, you will get into lubberly habits on board that bubble in which you

float about, where all hands go to sleep as regularly as the inhabitants of a poultry yard go to roost."

"Not so bad, not half so bad, Ned," returned the other, laughing; "I keep as sharp a discipline as if we wore a flag. To be sure, forty men can't make as much parade as three or four hundred; but as for making or taking in sail, I am your better, any day."

"Ay, because a pocket handkerchief is sooner opened and shut than a table-cloth. But I hold it to be unseamanlike, to leave any vessel without human eyes, and those open, to watch whether she goes east or west, north or south."

"And who is guilty of such a dead-man's watch?"

"Why, they say on board here, that when it blows hard, you seat the man you call long Tom by the side of the tiller, tell him to keep her head-to-sea, and then pipe all hands to their night-caps, where you all remain, comfortably stowed in your hammocks, until you are awakened by the snoring of your helmsman."

"Tis a damned scandalous insinuation," cried Barnstable, with an indignation that he in vain attempted to conceal. "Who gives currency to such a libel, Mr. Griffith?"

"I had it of the marine," said his friend, losing the archness that had instigated him to worry his companion, in the vacant air of one who was careless of every thing; "but I don't believe half of it myself—I have no doubt you all had your eyes open, last night, whatever you might have been about this morning."

"Ah! this morning! there was an oversight, indeed! But I was studying a new signal-book, Griffith, that has a thousand times more interest for me, than all the bunting you can show, from the head to the heel of your masts."

"What! have you found out the Englishman's private talk?"

"No, no," said the other, stretching forth his hand, and grasping the arm of his friend. "I met, last night, one, on those cliffs, who has proved herself what I always believed her to be and loved her for, a girl of quick thought and bold spirit."

"Of whom do you speak?"

"Of Katherine—"

Griffith started from his chair involuntarily, at the sound of this name, and the blood passed quickly through the shades of his countenance, leaving it now pale as death, and then burning as if oppressed by a torrent from his heart. Struggling to overcome an emotion, which he appeared ashamed to betray even to the friend he most loved, the young man soon recovered himself so far as to resume his seat, when he asked, gloomily—

"Was she alone?"

"She was; but she left with me this paper, and this invaluable book, which is worth a library of all other works."

The eye of Griffith rested vacantly on the treasure that the other valued so highly, but his hand seized, eagerly, the open letter which was laid on the table for his perusal. The reader will at once understand, that it was in the handwriting of a female, and that it was the communication Barnstable had received from his betrothed, on the cliffs. Its contents were as follows:

"Believing that Providence may conduct me where we shall meet, or whence I may be able to transmit to you this account, I have prepared a short statement of the situation of Cecilia Howard and myself; not, however, to urge you and Griffith to any rash or foolish hazards, but that you may both sit down, and, after due consultation, determine on what is proper for our relief.

"By this time, you must understand the character of Colonel Howard too well to expect he will ever consent to give his niece to a rebel. He has already sacrificed to his loyalty, as he calls it, (but I whisper to Cecilia, 'tis his treason,) not only his native country, but no small part of his fortune also. In the frankness of my disposition, (you know my frankness, Barnstable, but too well!) I confessed to him, after the defeat of the mad attempt Griffith made to carry off Cecilia, in Carolina, that I had been foolish enough to enter into some weak promise to the brother officer who had accompanied the young sailor in his traitorous visits to the plantation. Heigho! I sometimes think it would have been better for us all, if your ship had never been chased into the river, or after she was there, if Griffith had made no attempt to renew his acquaintance with my cousin. The colonel received the intelligence as such a guardian would hear that his ward was about to throw away thirty thousand dollars and herself on a traitor to his king and country. I defended you stoutly; said that you had no king, as the tie was dissolved; that America was your country, and that your profession was honourable; but it would not all do. He called you rebel; that I was used to. He said you were a traitor; that, in his vocabulary, amounts to the same thing.

He even hinted that you were a coward; and that I knew to be false, and did not hesitate to tell him so. He used fifty opprobrious terms that I cannot remember, but among others were the beautiful epithets of 'disorganizer,' 'leveller,' 'democrat,' and 'jacobin.' (I hope he did not mean a monk!) In short, he acted Colonel Howard in a rage. But as his dominion does not, like that of his favourite kings, continue from generation to generation, and one short year will release me from his power, and leave me mistress of my own actions, that is, if your fine promises are to be believed, I bore it all very well, being resolved to suffer any thing but martyrdom, rather than abandon Cecilia. She, dear girl, has much more to distress her than I can have; she is not only the ward of Colonel Howard, but his niece, and his sole heir. I am persuaded this latter circumstance makes no difference in either her conduct or her feelings, but he appears to think it gives him a right to tyrannize over her on all occasions. After all, Colonel Howard is a gentleman when you do not put him in a passion, and, I believe, a thoroughly honest man, and Cecilia even loves him. But a man who is driven from his country, in his sixtieth year, with the loss of near half his fortune, is not apt to canonize those who compel the change.

"It seems that when the Howards lived on this island, a hundred years ago, they dwelt in the county of Northumberland. Hither, then, he brought us, when political events, and his dread of becoming the uncle to a rebel, induced him to abandon America, as he says, for ever. We have been here now three months, and for two thirds of that time we lived in tolerable comfort; but latterly, the papers have announced the arrival of the ship and your schooner in France, and from that moment as strict a watch has been kept over us, as if we had meditated a renewal of the Carolina flight. The colonel, on his arrival here, hired an old building, that is part house, part abbey, part castle, and all prison, because it is said to have once belonged to an ancestor of his. In this delightful dwelling there are many cages, that will secure more uneasy birds than we are. About a fortnight ago an alarm was given in a neighbouring village, which is situated on the shore, that two American vessels, answering your description, had been seen hovering along the coast; and, as the people in this quarter dream of nothing but that terrible fellow, Paul Jones, it was said that he was on board one of them. But I believe that Colonel Howard suspects who you really are. He was very minute in his inquiries, I hear; and since then, has established a sort of garrison in the house, under the pretence of defending it against marauders, like those who are said to have laid my Lady Selkirk under contribution.

"Now, understand me, Barnstable; on no account would I have you risk yourself on shore; neither must there be blood spilt, if you love me; but that you may know what sort of a place we are confined in, and by whom surrounded, I will describe both our prison and the garrison. The whole building is of stone, and not to be attempted with slight means. It has windings and turnings, both internally and externally, that would require more skill than I possess to make intelligible; but the rooms we inhabit are in the upper or third floor of a wing, that you may call a tower, if you are in a romantic mood, but which, in truth, is nothing but a wing. Would to God I could fly with it! If any accident should bring you in sight of the dwelling, you will know our rooms, by the three smoky vanes that whiffle about its pointed roof, and, also, by the windows in that story being occasionally open. Opposite to our windows, at the distance of half a mile, is a retired, unfrequented ruin, concealed, in a great measure, from observation by a wood, and affording none of the best accommodations, it is true, but shelter in some of its vaults or apartments. I have prepared, according to the explanations you once gave me on this subject, a set of small signals, of differently coloured silks, and a little dictionary of all the phrases that I could imagine as useful, to refer to, properly numbered to correspond with the key and the flags, all of which I shall send you with this letter. You must prepare your own flags, and of course I retain mine, as well as a copy of the key and book. If opportunity should ever offer, we can have, at least, a pleasant discourse together; you from the top of the old tower in the ruins, and I from the east window of my dressing-room! But now for the garrison. In addition to the commandant, Colonel Howard, who retains all the fierceness of his former military profession, there is, as his second in authority, that bane of Cecilia's happiness, Kit Dillon, with his long Savannah face, scornful eyes of black, and skin of the same colour. This gentleman, you know, is a distant relative of the Howards, and wishes to be more nearly allied. He is poor, it is true, but then, as the colonel daily remarks, he is a good and loyal subject, and no rebel. When I asked why he was not in arms in these stirring times, contending for the prince he loves so much, the colonel answers, that it is not his profession, that he has been educated for the law, and was destined to fill one of the highest judicial stations in the colonies, and that he hoped he should yet live to see him sentence certain nameless gentlemen to condign punishment. This was consoling, to be sure, but I bore it. However, he left Carolina with us, and here he is, and here he is likely to continue, unless you can catch him, and anticipate his

judgment on himself. This gentleman the colonel has long desired to see the husband of Cecilia, and since the news of your being on the coast, the siege has nearly amounted to a storm. The consequences are, that my cousin at first kept her room, and then the colonel kept her there, and even now she is precluded from leaving the wing we inhabit. In addition to these two principal gaolers, we have four men servants, two black and two white; and an officer and twenty soldiers from the neighbouring town are billeted on us, by particular desire, until the coast is declared free from pirates! yes, that is the musical name they give you—and when their own people land, and plunder, and rob, and murder the men and insult the women, they are called heroes! It's a fine thing to be able to make dictionaries, and invent names—and it must be your fault, if mine has been framed for no purpose. I declare, when I recollect all the insulting and cruel things I hear in this country, of my own and her people, it makes me lose my temper, and forget my sex; but do not let my ill humour urge you to any thing rash; remember your life, remember their prisons, remember your reputation, but do not, do not forget your

"Katherine Plowden." "P. S. I had almost forgotten to tell you, that in the signal-book you will find a more particular description of our prison, where it stands, and a drawing of the grounds,"

When Griffith concluded this epistle, he returned it to the man to whom it was addressed, and fell back in his chair, in an attitude that denoted deep reflection.

"I knew she was here, or I should have accepted the command offered to me by our commissioners in Paris," at length he uttered; "and I thought that some lucky chance might throw her in my way; but this is bringing us close, indeed! This intelligence must be acted on, and that promptly. Poor girl, what does she not suffer, in such a situation!"

"What a beautiful hand she writes!" exclaimed Barnstable; "'tis as clear, and as pretty, and as small, as her own delicate fingers. Griff. what a log-book she would keep!"

"Cecilia Howard touch the coarse leaves of a log-book!" cried the other, in amazement; but perceiving Barnstable to be poring over the contents of his mistress's letter, he smiled at their mutual folly, and continued silent. After a short time spent in cool reflection, Griffith required of his friend the nature and circumstances of his interview with Katherine Plowden. Barnstable related it, briefly, as it occurred, in the manner already known to the reader.

"Then," said Griffith, "Merry is the only one, besides ourselves, who knows of this meeting, and he will be too chary of the reputation of his kinswoman to mention it."

"Her reputation needs no shield, Mr. Griffith," cried her lover; "'tis as spotless as the canvass above your head, and—"

"Peace, dear Richard; I entreat your pardon; my words may have conveyed more than I intended; but it is important that our measures should be secret, as well as prudently concerted."

"We must get them both off," returned Barnstable, forgetting his displeasure the moment it was exhibited, "and that too before the old man takes it into his wise head to leave the coast. Did you ever get a sight of his instructions, or does he keep silent?"

"As the grave. This is the first time we have left port, that he has not conversed freely with me on the nature of the cruise; but not a syllable has been exchanged between us on the subject, since we sailed from Brest."

"Ah! that is your Jersey bashfulness," said Barnstable; "wait till I come alongside him, with my eastern curiosity, and I pledge myself to get it out of him in an hour."

"'Twill be diamond cut diamond, I doubt," said Griffith, laughing; "you will find him as acute at evasion, as you can possibly be at a cross-examination."

"At any rate, he gives me a chance to-day; you know, I suppose, that he sent for me to attend a consultation of his officers, on important matters."

"I did not," returned Griffith, fixing his eyes intently on the speaker; "what has he to offer?"

"Nay, that you must ask your pilot; for while talking to me, the old man would turn and look at the stranger, every minute, as if watching for signals how to steer."

"There is a mystery about that man, and our connexion with him, that I cannot fathom," said Griffith. "But I hear the voice of Manual, calling for me; we are wanted in the cabin. Remember, you do not leave the ship without seeing me again."

"No, no, my dear fellow, from the public, we must retire to a private consultation."

The young men arose, and Griffith, throwing off the round-about in which he had appeared on deck, drew on

a coat of more formal appearance, and taking a sword carelessly in his hand, they proceeded together, along the passage already described, to the gun-deck, where they entered, with the proper ceremonials, into the principal cabin of the frigate.

CHAPTER VII.

"Sempronius, speak."

— Cato

The arrangements for the consultation were brief and simple. The veteran commander of the frigate received his officers with punctilious respect, and pointing to the chairs that were placed around the table, which was a fixture in the centre of his cabin, he silently seated himself, and his example was followed by all, without further ceremony. In taking their stations, however, a quiet, but rigid observance was paid to the rights of seniority and rank. On the right of the captain was placed Griffith, as next in authority; and opposite to him, was seated the commander of the schooner. The officer of marines, who was included in the number, held the next situation in point of precedence, the same order being observed to the bottom of the table, which was occupied by a hard-featured, square-built, athletic man, who held the office of sailing-master. When order was restored, after the short interruption of taking their places, the officer who had required the advice of his inferiors, opened the business on which he demanded their opinions.

"My instructions direct me, gentlemen," he said, "after making the coast of England, to run the land down—"

The hand of Griffith was elevated respectfully for silence, and the veteran paused, with a look that inquired the reason of his interruption.

"We are not alone," said the lieutenant, glancing his eye towards the part of the cabin where the pilot stood, leaning on one of the guns, in an attitude of easy indulgence.

The stranger moved not at this direct hint; neither did his eye change from its close survey of a chart that lay near him on the deck. The captain dropped his voice to tones of cautious respect, as he replied—

"'Tis only Mr. Gray. His services will be necessary on the occasion, and, therefore, nothing need be concealed from him."

Glances of surprise were exchanged among the young men, but Griffith bowing his silent acquiescence in the decision of his superior, the latter proceeded—

"I was ordered to watch for certain signals from the headlands that we made, and was furnished with the best of charts, and such directions as enabled us to stand into the bay we entered last night. We have now obtained a pilot, and one who has proved himself a skilful man; such a one, gentlemen, as no officer need hesitate to rely on, in any emergency, either on account of his integrity or his knowledge."

The veteran paused, and turned his looks on the countenances of the listeners, as if to collect their sentiments on this important point. Receiving no other reply than the one conveyed by the silent inclinations of the heads of his hearers, the commander resumed his explanations, referring to an open paper in his hand—

"It is known to you all, gentlemen, that the unfortunate question of retaliation has been much agitated between the two governments, our own and that of the enemy. For this reason, and certain political purposes, it has become an object of solicitude with our commissioners in Paris, to obtain a few individuals of character from the enemy, who may be held as a check on their proceedings, at the same time it brings the evils of war, from our own shores, home to those who have caused it. An opportunity now offers to put this plan in execution, and I have collected you, in order to consult on the means."

A profound silence succeeded this unexpected communication of the object of their cruise. After a short pause, their captain added, addressing himself to the sailing-master—

"What course would you advise me to pursue, Mr. Boltrope?"

The weather-beaten seaman who was thus called on to break through the difficulties of a knotty point, with his opinion, laid one of his short, bony hands on the table, and began to twirl an inkstand with great industry, while with the other he conveyed a pen to his mouth, which was apparently masticated with all the relish that he could possibly have felt had it been a leaf from the famous Virginian weed. But perceiving that he was expected to answer, after looking first to his right hand, and then to his left, he spoke as follows, in a hoarse, thick voice, in which the fogs of the ocean seemed to have united with sea-damps and colds, to destroy every thing like melody—

"If this matter is ordered, it is to be done, I suppose," he said; "for the old rule runs, 'obey orders, if you break

owners;' though the maxim, which says, 'one hand for the owner, and t'other for yourself,' is quite as good, and has saved many a hearty fellow from a fall that would have balanced the purser's books. Notthat I mean a purser's books are not as good as any other man's books, but that when a man is dead, his account must be closed, or there will be a false muster. Well, if the thing is to be done, the next question is, how is it to be done? There is many a man that knows there is too much canvass on a ship, who can't tell how to shorten sail. Well, then, if the thing is really to be done, we must either land a gang to seize them, or we must show false lights, and sham colours, to lead them off to the ship. As for landing, Captain Munson, I can only speak for one man, and that is myself, which is to say, that if you run the ship with her jibboom into the king of England's parlour windows, why, I'm consenting, nor do I care how much of his crockery is cracked in so doing; but as to putting the print of my foot on one of his sandy beaches, if I do, that is always speaking for only one man, and saving your presence, may I hope to be d—d."

The young men smiled as the tough old seaman uttered his sentiments so frankly, rising with his subject, to that which with him was the climax of all discussion; but his commander, who was but a more improved scholar from the same rough school, appeared to understand his arguments entirely, and without altering a muscle of his rigid countenance, he required the opinion of the junior lieutenant.

The young man spoke firmly, but modestly, though the amount of what he said was not much more distinct than that uttered by the master, and was very much to the same purpose, with the exception, that he appeared to entertain no personal reluctance to trusting himself on dry ground.

The opinions of the others grew gradually more explicit and clear, as they ascended in the scale of rank, until it came to the turn of the captain of marines to speak. There was a trifling exhibition of professional pride about the soldier, in delivering his sentiments on a subject that embraced a good deal more of his peculiar sort of duty than ordinarily occurred in the usual operations of the frigate.

"It appears to me, sir, that the success of this expedition depends altogether upon the manner in which it is conducted." After this lucid opening, the soldier hesitated a moment, as if to collect his ideas for a charge that should look down all opposition, and proceeded. "The landing, of course, will be effected on a fair beach, under cover of the frigate's guns, and could it be possibly done, the schooner should be anchored in such a manner as to throw in a flanking fire on the point of debarkation. The arrangements for the order of march must a good deal depend on the distance to go over; though I should think, sir, an advanced party of seamen, to act as pioneers for the column of marines, should be pushed a short distance in front, while the baggage and baggageguard might rest upon the frigate, until the enemy was driven into the interior, when it could advance without danger. There should be flankguards, under the orders of two of the oldest midshipmen; and a light corps might be formed of the top-men, to co-operate with the marines. Of course, sir, Mr. Griffith will lead, in person, the musket-men and boarders, armed with their long pikes, whom I presume he will hold in reserve, as I trust my military claims and experience entitle me to the command of the main body."

"Well done, field marshal!" cried Barnstable, with a glee that seldom regarded time or place; "you should never let salt-water mould your buttons, but in Washington's camp, ay! and in Washington's tent, you should swing your hammock in future. Why, sir, do you think we are about to invade England?"

"I know that every military movement should be executed with precision, Captain Barnstable," returned the marine. "I am too much accustomed to hear the sneers of the sea-officers, to regard what I know proceeds from ignorance. If Captain Munson is disposed to employ me and my command in this expedition, I trust he will discover that marines are good for something more than to mount guard or pay salutes." Then, turning haughtily from his antagonist, he continued to address himself to their common superior, as if disdaining further intercourse with one who, from the nature of the case, must be unable to comprehend the force of what he said. "It will be prudent, Captain Munson, to send out a party to reconnoitre, before we march; and as it may be necessary to defend ourselves, in case of a repulse, I would beg leave to recommend that a corps be provided with entrenching tools, to accompany the expedition. They would be extremely useful, sir, in assisting to throw up field-works; though, I doubt not, tools might be found in abundance in this country, and labourers impressed for the service, on an emergency.—"

This was too much for the risibility of Barnstable, who broke forth in a burst of scornful laughter, which no one saw proper to interrupt; though Griffith, on turning his head, to conceal the smile that was gathering on his own face, perceived the fierce glance which the pilot threw at the merry seaman, and wondered at its significance

and impatience. When Captain Munson thought that the mirth of the lieutenant was concluded, he mildly desired his reasons for amusing himself so exceedingly with the plans of the marine.

"'Tis a chart for a campaign!" cried Barnstable, "and should be sent off express to Congress, before the Frenchmen are brought into the field!"

"Have you any better plan to propose, Mr. Barnstable?" inquired the patient commander.

"Better! ay, one that will take no time, and cause no trouble, to execute it," cried the other; "'tis a seaman's job, sir, and must be done with a seaman's means."

"Pardon me, Captain Barnstable," interrupted the marine, whose jocular vein was entirely absorbed in his military pride; "if there be service to be done on shore, I claim it as my right to be employed."

"Claim what you will, soldier, but how will you carry on the war, with a parcel of fellows who don't know one end of a boat from the other," returned the reckless sailor. "Do you think, that a barge or a cutter is to be beached in the same manner you ground firelock, by word of command? No, no, Captain Manual—I honour your courage, for I have seen it tried, but d—e if—"

"You forget we wait for your project, Mr. Barnstable," said the veteran.

"I crave your patience, sir; but no project is necessary. Point out the bearings and distance of the place where the men you want are to be found, and I will take the heel of the gale, and run into the land, always speaking for good water and no rocks. Mr. Pilot, you will accompany me, for you carry as true a map of the bottom of these seas, in your head, as ever was made of dry ground. I will look out for good anchorage, or, if the wind should blow off shore, let the schooner stand off and on, till we should be ready to take the broad sea again. I would land, out of my whale-boat, with long Tom and a boat's crew, and finding out the place you will describe, we shall go up, and take the men you want, and bring them aboard. It's all plain-sailing; though, as it is a well-peopled country, it may be necessary to do our shore work in the dark."

"Mr. Griffith, we only wait for your sentiments," proceeded the captain, "when, by comparing opinions, we may decide on the most prudent course."

The first lieutenant had been much absorbed in thought, during the discussion of the subject, and might have been, on that account, better prepared to give his opinion with effect. Pointing to the man who yet stood behind him, leaning on a gun, he commenced by asking—

"Is it your intention that man shall accompany the party?"

"It is."

"And from him you expect the necessary information, sir, to guide our movements?"

"You are altogether right."

"If, sir, he has but a moiety of the skill on the land that he possesses on the water, I will answer for his success," returned the lieutenant, bowing slightly to the stranger, who received the compliment by a cold inclination of his head. "I must desire the indulgence of both Mr. Barnstable and Captain Manual," he continued, "and claim the command as of right belonging to my rank."

"It belongs naturally to the schooner," exclaimed the impatient Barnstable.

"There may be enough for us all to do," said Griffith, elevating a finger to the other, in a manner, and with an impressive look, that was instantly comprehended. "I neither agree wholly with the one nor the other of these gentlemen. 'Tis said, that since our appearance on the coast, the dwellings of many of the gentry are guarded by small detachments of soldiers from the neighbouring towns."

"Who says it?" asked the pilot, advancing among them, with a suddenness that caused a general silence.

"I say it, sir," returned the lieutenant, when the momentary surprise had passed away.

"Can you vouch for it?"

"I can."

"Name a house, or an individual, that is thus protected."

Griffith gazed at the man who thus forgot himself in the midst of a consultation like the present, and yielding to his native pride, hesitated to reply. But mindful of the declarations of his captain, and the recent services of the pilot, he at length said, with a little embarrassment of manner—

"I know it to be the fact, in the dwelling of a Colonel Howard, who resides but a few leagues to the north of us."

The stranger started at the name, and then raising his eye keenly to the face of the young man, appeared to

study his thoughts in his varying countenance. But the action, and the pause that followed, were of short continuance. His lip slightly curled, whether in scorn or with a concealed smile, would have been difficult to say, so closely did it resemble both, and as he dropped quietly back to his place at the gun, he said—

"'Tis more than probable you are right, sir; and if I might presume to advise Captain Munson, it would be to lay great weight on your opinion."

Griffith turned, to see if he could comprehend more meaning in the manner of the stranger than his words expressed, but his face was again shaded by his hand, and his eyes were once more fixed on the chart with the same vacant abstraction as before.

"I have said, sir, that I agree wholly neither with Mr. Barnstable nor Captain Manual," continued the lieutenant, after a short pause. "The command of this party is mine, as the senior officer, and I must beg leave to claim it. I certainly do not think the preparation that Captain Manual advises necessary; neither would I undertake the duty with as little caution as Mr. Barnstable proposes. If there are soldiers to be encountered, we should have soldiers to oppose to them; but as it must be sudden boat-work, and regular evolutions must give place to a seaman's bustle, a sea-officer should command. Is my request granted, Captain Munson?"

The veteran replied, without hesitation—

"It is, sir; it was my intention to offer you the service, and I rejoice to see you accept it so cheerfully."

Griffith with difficulty concealed the satisfaction with which he listened to his commander, and a radiant smile illumined his pale features, when he observed—

"With me, then, sir, let the responsibility rest. I request that Captain Manual, with twenty men, may be put under my orders, if that gentleman does not dislike the duty." The marine bowed, and cast a glance of triumph at Barnstable. "I will take my own cutter, with her tried crew, go on board the schooner, and when the wind lulls, we will run in to the land, and then be governed by circumstances."

The commander of the schooner threw back the triumphant look of the marine, and exclaimed, in his joyous manner—

"'Tis a good plan, and done like a seaman, Mr. Griffith. Ay, ay, let the schooner be employed, and if it be necessary, you shall see her anchored in one of their duck-ponds, with her broadside to bear on the parlour-windows of the best house in the island! But twenty marines! they will cause a jam in my little craft."

"Not a man less than twenty would be prudent," returned Griffith. "More service may offer than that we seek."

Barnstable well understood his allusion, but still he replied—

"Make it seamen, and I will give you room for thirty. But these soldiers never know how to stow away their arms and legs, unless at a drill. One will take the room of two sailors; they swing their hammocks athwart-ships, heads to leeward, and then turn-out wrong end uppermost at the call. Why, damn it, sir, the chalk and rotten-stone of twenty soldiers will chock my hatches!"

"Give me the launch, Captain Munson!" exclaimed the indignant marine, "and we will follow Mr. Griffith in an open boat, rather than put Captain Barnstable to so much inconvenience."

"No, no, Manual," cried the other, extending his muscular arm across the table, with an open palm, to the soldier; "you would all become so many Jonahs in uniform, and I doubt whether the fish could digest your cartridge-boxes and bayonet-belts. You shall go with me, and learn, with your own eyes, whether we keep the cat's-watch aboard the Ariel, that you joke about."

The laugh was general, at the expense of the soldier, if we except the pilot and the commander of the frigate. The former was a silent, and apparently an abstracted, but in reality a deeply interested listener to the discourse; and there were moments when he bent his looks on the speakers, as if he sought more in their characters than was exhibited by the gay trifling of the moment. Captain Munson seldom allowed a muscle of his wrinkled features to disturb their repose; and if he had not the real dignity to repress the untimely mirth of his officers, he had too much good nature to wish to disturb their harmless enjoyments. He expressed himself satisfied with the proposed arrangements, and beckoned to his steward, to place before them the usual beverage, with which all their consultations concluded.

The sailing-master appeared to think that the same order was to be observed in their potations as in council, and helping himself to an allowance which retained its hue even in its diluted state, he first raised it to the light, and then observed—

"This ship's-water is nearly the colour of rum of itself; if it only had its flavour, what a set of hearty dogs we

should be. Mr. Griffith, I find you are willing to haul your land-tacks aboard. Well, it's natural for youth to love the earth; but there is one man, and he is sailing-master of this ship, who saw land enough, last night, to last him a twelve-month. But if you will go, here's a good land-fall and a better offing to you. Captain Munson, my respects to you. I say, sir, if we should keep the ship more to the south'ard, it's my opinion, and that's but one man's, we should fall in with some of the enemy's homewardbound West-Indiamen, and find wherewithal to keep the life in us when we see fit to go ashore ourselves."

As the tough old sailor made frequent applications of the glass to his mouth, with one hand, and kept a firm hold of the decanter with the other, during this speech, his companions were compelled to listen to his eloquence, or depart with their thirst unassuaged. Barnstable, however, quite coolly dispossessed the tar of the bottle, and mixing for himself a more equal potation, observed, in the act—

"That is the most remarkable glass of grog you have, Boltrope, that I ever sailed with; it draws as little water as the Ariel, and is as hard to find the bottom. If your spirit-room enjoys the same sort of engine to replenish it, when you pump out your rum, Congress will sail this frigate cheaply."

The other officers helped themselves with still greater moderation, Griffith barely moistening his lips, and the pilot rejecting the offered glass altogether. Captain Munson continued standing, and his officers, perceiving that their presence was no longer necessary, bowed, and took their leave. As Griffith was retiring last, he felt a hand laid lightly on his shoulder, and turning, perceived that he was detained by the pilot.

"Mr. Griffith," he said, when they were quite alone with the commander of the frigate, "the occurrences of the last night should teach us confidence in each other; without it, we go on a dangerous and fruitless errand."

"Is the hazard equal?" returned the youth. "I am known to all to be the man I seem—am in the service of my country—belong to a family, and enjoy a name, that is a pledge for my loyalty to the cause of America—and yet I trust myself on hostile ground, in the midst of enemies, with a weak arm, and under circumstances where treachery would prove my ruin. Who and what is the man who thus enjoys your confidence, Captain Munson? I ask the question less for myself than for the gallant men who will fearlessly follow wherever I lead."

A shade of dark displeasure crossed the features of the stranger, at one part of this speech, and at its close he sunk into deep thought. The commander, however, replied—

"There is a show of reason in your question, Mr. Griffith—and yet you are not the man to be told that implicit obedience is what I have a right to expect. I have not your pretensions, sir, by birth or education, and yet Congress have not seen proper to overlook my years and services. I command this frigate—"

"Say no more," interrupted the pilot. "There is reason in his doubts, and they shall be appeased. I like the proud and fearless eye of the young man, and while he fears a gibbet from my hands, I will show him how to repose a noble confidence. Read this, sir, and tell me if you distrust me now?"

While the stranger spoke, he thrust his hand into the bosom of his dress, and drew forth a parchment, decorated with ribbands and bearing a massive seal, which he opened, and laid on the table before the youth. As he pointed with his finger, impressively, to different parts of the writing, his eye kindled with a look of unusual fire, and there was a faint tinge discernible on his pallid features, when he spoke.

"See!" he said. "Royalty itself does not hesitate to bear witness in my favour, and that is not a name to occasion dread to an American."

Griffith gazed with wonder at the fair signature of the unfortunate Louis, which graced the bottom of the parchment; but when his eye obeyed the signal of the stranger, and rested on the body of the instrument, he started back from the table, and fixing his animated eyes on the pilot, he cried, while a glow of fiery courage flitted across his countenance—

"Lead on! I'll follow you to death!"

A smile of gratified exultation struggled around the lips of the stranger, who took the arm of the young man, and led him into a state-room, leaving the commander of the frigate, standing in his unmoved and quiet manner, a spectator of, but hardly an actor in the scene.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship,
Like grayhound starting from the slip,
To seize his flying prey."

— Lord of the Isles

Although the subject of the consultation remained a secret with those whose opinions were required, yet enough of the result leaked out among the subordinate officers, to throw the whole crew into a state of eager excitement. The rumour spread itself along the decks of the frigate, with the rapidity of an alarm, that an expedition was to attempt the shore on some hidden service, dictated by the Congress itself; and conjectures were made respecting its force and destination, with all that interest which might be imagined would exist among the men whose lives or liberties were to abide the issue. A gallant and reckless daring, mingled with the desire of novelty, however, was the prevailing sentiment among the crew, who would have received with cheers the intelligence that their vessel was commanded to force the passage of the united British fleet. A few of the older and more prudent of the sailors were exceptions to this thoughtless hardihood, and one or two, among whom the cockswain of the whale-boat was the most conspicuous, ventured to speak doubtingly of all sorts of land service, as being of a nature never to be attempted by seamen.

Captain Manual had his men paraded in the weather-gangway, and after a short address, calculated to inflame their military ardour and patriotism, acquainted them, that he required twenty volunteers, which was in truth half their number, for a dangerous service. After a short pause, the company stepped forward, like one man, and announced themselves as ready to follow him to the end of the world. The marine cast a look over his shoulder, at this gratifying declaration, in quest of Barnstable; but observing that the sailor was occupied with some papers, on a distant part of the quarter-deck, he proceeded to make a most impartial division among the candidates for glory; taking care, at the same time, to cull his company in such a manner as to give himself the flower of his men, and, consequently, to leave the ship the refuse.

While this arrangement was taking place, and the crew of the frigate was in this state of excitement, Griffith ascended to the deck, his countenance flushed with unusual enthusiasm, and his eyes beaming with a look of animation and gayety that had long been strangers to the face of the young man. He was giving forth the few necessary orders to the seamen he was to take with him from the ship, when Barnstable again motioned him to follow, and led the way once more to the state-room.

"Let the wind blow its pipe out," said the commander of the Ariel, when they were seated; "there will be no landing on the eastern coast of England, till the sea goes down. But this Kate was made for a sailor's wife! see, Griffith, what a set of signals she has formed, out of her own cunning head."

"I hope your opinion may prove true, and that you may be the happy sailor who is to wed her," returned the other. "The girl has indeed discovered surprising art in this business! where could she have learnt the method and system so well?"

"Where! why, where she learnt better things; how to prize a whole-hearted seaman, for instance. Do you think that my tongue was jammed in my mouth, all the time we used to sit by the side of the river in Carolina, and that we found nothing to talk about!"

"Did you amuse your mistress with treatises on the art of navigation, and the science of signals?" said Griffith, smiling.

"I answered her questions, Mr. Griffith, as any civil man would to a woman he loved. The girl has as much curiosity as one of my own townswomen who has weathered cape forty without a husband, and her tongue goes like a dogvane in a calm, first one way and then another. But here is her dictionary. Now own, Griff., in spite of your college learning and sentimentals, that a woman of ingenuity and cleverness is a very good sort of a helpmate."

"I never doubted the merits of Miss Plowden," said the other, with a droll gravity that often mingled with his deeper feelings, the result of a sailor's habits, blended with native character. "But this indeed surpasses all my expectations! Why, she has, in truth, made a most judicious selection of phrases. 'No. 168. **** indelible;' '169.

**** end only with life;' '170. **** I fear yours misleads me;' '171.—"

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Barnstable, snatching the book from before the laughing eyes of Griffith; "what folly, to throw away our time now on such nonsense. What think you of this expedition to the land?"

"That it may be the means of rescuing the ladies, though it fail in making the prisoners we anticipate."

"But this pilot! you remember that he holds us by our necks, and can run us all up to the yard—arm of some English ship, whenever he chooses to open his throat, at their threats or bribes."

"It would have been better that he should have cast the ship ashore, when he had her entangled in the shoals; it would have been our last thought to suspect him of treachery then," returned Griffith. "I follow him with confidence, and must believe that we are safer with him than we should be without him."

"Let him lead to the dwelling of his foxhunting ministers of state," cried Barnstable, thrusting his book of signals into his bosom; "but here is a chart that will show us the way to the port we wish to find. Let my foot once more touch terra firma, and you may write craven against my name, if that laughing vixen slips her cable before my eyes, and shoots into the wind's eye again, like a flying—fish chased by a dolphin. Mr. Griffith, we must have the chaplain with us to the shore."

"The madness of love is driving you into the errors of the soldier. Would you lie—by to hear sermons, with a flying party like ours?"

"Nay, nay, we must lay—to for nothing that is not unavoidable; but there are so many tacks in such a chase, when one has time to breathe, that we might as well spend our leisure in getting that fellow to splice us together. He has a handy way with a prayer—book, and could do the job as well as a bishop, and I should like to be able to say, that this is the last time these two saucy names, which are written at the bottom of this letter, should ever be seen sailing in the company of each other."

"It will not do," said his friend, shaking his head, and endeavouring to force a smile which his feelings suppressed; "it will not do, Richard; we must yield our own inclinations to the service of our country; nor is this pilot a man who will consent to be led from his purpose."

"Then let him follow his purpose alone," cried Barnstable. "There is no human power, always saving my superior officer, that shall keep me from throwing abroad these tiny signals, and having a private talk with my dark-eyed Kate. But for a paltry pilot! he may luff and bear away as he pleases, while I shall steer as true as a magnet for that old ruin, where I can bring my eyes to bear on that romantic wing and three smoky vanes. Not that I'll forget my duty; yes, I'll help you catch the Englishmen, but when that is done, hey! for Katherine Plowden and my true love!"

"Hush, madcap! the ward—room holds long ears, and our bulkheads grow thin by wear. I must keep you and myself to our duty. This is no children's game that we play; it seems the commissioners at Paris have thought proper to employ a frigate in the sport."

Barnstable's gayety was a little repressed by the grave manner of his companion; but after reflecting a moment, he started on his feet, and made the usual movements for departure.

"Whither?" asked Griffith, gently detaining his impatient friend.

"To old Moderate; I have a proposal to make, that may remove every difficulty."

"Name it to me, then; I am in his council, and may save you the trouble and mortification of a refusal."

"How many of those gentry does he wish to line his cabin with?"

"The pilot has named no less than six, all men of rank and consideration with the enemy. Two of them are peers, two more belong to the commons' house of parliament, one is a general, and the sixth, like ourselves, is a sailor, and holds the rank of captain. They muster at a hunting seat, near the coast, and believe me, the scheme is not without its plausibility."

"Well, then, there are two a—piece for us. You follow the pilot, if you will; but let me sheer off for this dwelling of Colonel Howard, with my cockswain and boat's—crew. I will surprise his house, release the ladies, and on my way back, lay my hands on two of the first lords I fall in with. I suppose, for our business, one is as good as another."

Griffith could not repress a faint laugh, while he replied—

"Though they are said to be each other's peers, there is, I believe some difference even in the quality of lords. England might thank us for ridding her of some among them. Neither are they to be found, like beggars, under every hedge. No, no, the men we seek must have something better than their nobility to recommend them to our

favour. But let us examine more closely into this plan and map of Miss Plowden; something may occur, that shall yet bring the place within our circuit, like a contingent duty of the cruise."

Barnstable reluctantly relinquished his own wild plan, to the more sober judgment of his friend, and together they passed an hour, inquiring into the practicability, and consulting on the means, of making their public duty subserve the purposes of their private feelings.

The gale continued to blow heavily, during the whole of that morning; but towards noon, the usual indications of better weather became apparent. During these few hours of inaction in the frigate, the marines, who were drafted for service on the land, moved through the vessel with a busy and stirring air, as if they were about to participate in the glory and danger of the campaign their officer had planned, while the few seamen who were to accompany the expedition steadily paced the deck, with their hands thrust into the bosoms of their neat blue jackets, or, occasionally, stretched towards the horizon, as their fingers traced, for their less experienced shipmates, the signs of an abatement in the gale among the driving clouds. The last lagging among the soldiers had appeared with his knapsack on his back in the lee-gangway, where his comrades were collected, armed and accoutred for the strife, when Captain Munson ascended to the quarter-deck, accompanied by the stranger and his first lieutenant. A word was spoken by the latter in a low voice to a midshipman, who skipped gayly along the deck, and presently the shrill call of the boatswain was heard, preceding the hoarse cry of—

"Away there, you tigers, away!"

A smart roll of the drum followed, and the marines paraded, while the six seamen who belonged to the cutter that owned so fierce a name, made their preparations for lowering their little bark from the quarter of the frigate into the troubled sea. Every thing was conducted in the most exact order, and with a coolness and skill that bid defiance to the turbulence of the angry elements. The marines were safely transported from the ship to the schooner, under the favouring shelter of the former, though the boat appeared, at times, to be seeking the cavities of the ocean, and again, to be riding in the clouds, as she passed from one vessel to the other.

At length, it was announced that the cutter was ready to receive the officers of the party. The pilot walked aside, and held private discourse, for a few moments, with the commander, who listened to his sentences with marked and singular attention. When their conference was ended, the veteran bared his gray head again to the blasts, and offered his hand to the other, with a seaman's frankness, mingled with the deference of an inferior. The compliment was carelessly returned by the stranger, who turned quickly on his heel, and directed the attention of those who awaited his movements, by a significant gesture, to the gangway.

"Come, gentlemen, let us go," said Griffith, starting from a reverie, and bowing his hasty compliments to his brethren in arms.

When it appeared that his superiors were ready to enter the boat, the boy, who was styled Mr. Merry, by nautical courtesy, and who had been ordered to be in readiness, sprang over the side of the frigate, and glided into the cutter, with the activity of a squirrel. But the captain of marines paused, and cast a meaning glance at the pilot, whose place it was to precede him. The stranger, as he lingered on the deck, was examining the aspect of the heavens, and seemed unconscious of the expectations of the soldier, who gave vent to his impatience, after a moment's detention, by saying—

"We wait for you, Mr. Gray."

Aroused by the sound of his name, the pilot glanced his quick eye on the speaker, but instead of advancing, he gently bent his body, as he again signed towards the gangway with his hand. To the astonishment not only of the soldier, but of all who witnessed this breach of naval etiquette, Griffith bowed low, and entered the boat with the same promptitude as if he were preceding an admiral. Whether the stranger became conscious of his want of courtesy, or was too indifferent to surrounding objects to note occurrences, he immediately followed himself, leaving to the marine the post of honour. The latter, who was distinguished for his skill in all matters of naval or military etiquette, thought proper to apologize, at a fitting time, to the first lieutenant, for suffering his senior officer to precede him into a boat, but never failed to show a becoming exultation, when he recounted the circumstance, by dwelling on the manner in which he had brought down the pride of the haughty pilot.

Barnstable had been several hours on board his little vessel, which was every way prepared for their reception; and as soon as the heavy cutter of the frigate was hoisted on her deck, he announced that the schooner was ready to proceed. It has been already intimated, that the *Ariel* belonged to the smallest class of sea-vessels, and as her construction reduced even that size in appearance, she was peculiarly well adapted to the sort of service in which

she was about to be employed. Notwithstanding her lightness rendered her nearly as buoyant as a cork, and at times she actually seemed to ride on the foam, her low decks were perpetually washed by the heavy seas that dashed against her frail sides, and she tossed and rolled in the hollows of the waves, in a manner that compelled even the practised seamen who trod her decks to move with guarded steps. Still she was trimmed and cleared with an air of nautical neatness and attention that afforded the utmost possible room for her dimensions; and though in miniature, she wore the trappings of war as proudly as if the metal she bore was of a more fatal and dangerous character. The murderous gun which, since the period of which we are writing, has been universally adopted in all vessels of inferior size, was then in the infancy of its invention, and was known to the American mariner only by reputation, under the appalling name of a "smasher." Of a vast caliber, though short, and easily managed, its advantages were even in that early day beginning to be appreciated, and the largest ships were thought to be unusually well provided with the means of offence, when they carried two or three cannon of this formidable invention among their armament. At a later day this weapon has been improved and altered, until its use has become general in vessels of a certain size, taking its appellation from the Carron, on the banks of which river it was first moulded. In place of carronades, six light brass cannon were firmly lashed to the bulwarks of the Ariel, their brazen throats blackened by the sea-water, which so often broke harmlessly over these engines of destruction. In the centre of the vessel, between her two masts, a gun of the same metal, but of nearly twice the length of the others, was mounted on a carriage of a new and singular construction, which admitted of its being turned in any direction, so as to be of service in most of the emergencies that occur in naval warfare.

The eye of the pilot examined this armament closely, and then turned to the well-ordered decks, the neat and compact rigging, and the hardy faces of the fine young crew, with manifest satisfaction. Contrary to what had been his practice during the short time he had been with them, he uttered his gratification freely and aloud.

"You have a tight boat, Mr. Barnstable," he said, "and a gallant looking crew. You promise good service, sir, in time of need, and that hour may not be far distant."

"The sooner the better," returned the reckless sailor; "I have not had an opportunity of scaling my guns since we quitted Brest, though we passed several of the enemy's cutters coming up channel, with whom our bull-dogs longed for a conversation. Mr. Griffith will tell you, pilot, that my little sixes can speak, on occasion, with a voice nearly as loud as the frigate's eighteens."

"But not to as much purpose," observed Griffith; "'vox et preterea nihil,' as we said at the school."

"I know nothing of your Greek or Latin, Mr. Griffith," retorted the commander of the Ariel; "but if you mean that those seven brass play-things won't throw a round shot as far as any gun of their size and height above the water, or won't scatter grape and cannister with any blunderbuss in your ship, you may possibly find an opportunity that will convince you to the contrary, before we part company."

"They promise well," said the pilot, who was evidently ignorant of the good understanding that existed between the two officers, and wished to conciliate all under his directions, "and I doubt not they will argue all the leading points of a combat with good discretion. I see that you have christened them—I suppose for their respective merits. They are indeed expressive names!"

"'Tis the freak of an idle moment," said Barnstable, laughing, as he glanced his eyes to the cannon, above which were painted the several quaint names of "boxer," "plumper," "grinder," "scatterer," "exterminator," and "nail-driver."

"Why have you thrown the midship-gun without the pale of your baptism?" asked the pilot; "or do you know it by the usual title of the 'old woman?'"

"No, no, I have no such petticoat terms on board me," cried the other; "but move more to starboard, and you will see its style painted on the cheeks of the carriage, and it's a name that need not cause them to blush either."

"'Tis a singular epithet, though not without some meaning!"

"It has more than you, perhaps, dream of, sir. That worthy seaman whom you see leaning against the foremast, and who would serve, on occasion, for a spare spar himself, is the captain of that gun, and more than once has decided some warm disputes with John Bull, by the manner in which he has wielded it. No marine can trail his musket more easily than my cockswain can train his nine-pounder on an object; and thus from their connexion, and some resemblance there is between them in length, it has got the name which you perceive it carries; that of 'long Tom.'"

The pilot smiled as he listened, but turning away from the speaker, the deep reflection that crossed his brow

but too plainly showed that he trifled only from momentary indulgence; and Griffith intimated to Barnstable, that as the gale was sensibly abating, they would pursue the object of their destination.

Thus recalled to his duty, the commander of the schooner forgot the delightful theme of expatiating on the merits of his vessel, and issued the necessary orders to direct their movements. Slowly the little schooner obeyed the impulse of her helm, and fell off before the wind, when the folds of her squaresail, though limited by a prudent reef, were opened to the blasts, and she shot away from her consort, like a meteor dancing across the waves. The black mass of the frigate's hull soon sunk in distance, and long before the sun had fallen below the hills of England, her tall masts were barely distinguishable by the small cloud of sail that held the vessel to her station. As the ship disappeared, the land seemed to issue out of the bosom of the deep, and so rapid was their progress, that the dwellings of the gentry, the humbler cottages, and even the dim lines of the hedges, became gradually more distinct to the eyes of the bold mariners, until they were beset with the gloom of evening, when the whole scene faded from their view in the darkness of the hour, leaving only the faint outline of the land visible in the track before them, and the sullen billows of the ocean raging with appalling violence in their rear.

Still the little Ariel held on her way, skimming the ocean like a water-fowl seeking its place of nightly rest, and shooting in towards the land as fearlessly as if the dangers of the preceding night were forgotten, like the warnings of an ill-remembered experience. No shoals or rocks appeared to arrest her course, and we must leave her gliding into the dark streak that was thrown from the high and rocky cliffs, that lined a basin of bold entrance, where the mariners often sought and found a refuge from the dangers of the German ocean.

CHAPTER IX.

"Sirrah! how dare you leave your barley broth,
To come in armour thus, against your king!"

— Drama

The large, irregular building, inhabited by Colonel Howard, well deserved the description it had received from the pen of Katherine Plowden. Notwithstanding the confusion in its orders, owing to the different ages in which its several parts had been erected, the interior was not wanting in that appearance of comfort which forms the great characteristic of English domestic life. Its dark and intricate mazes of halls, galleries, and apartments, or by such other names as they were properly to be distinguished, were all well provided with good and substantial furniture, and whatever might have been the purposes of their original construction, they were now peacefully appropriated to the service of a quiet and well-ordered family.

There were divers portentous traditions, of cruel separations and blighted loves, which always linger, like cobwebs, around the walls of old houses, to be heard here also, and which, doubtless, in abler hands, might easily have been wrought up into scenes of high interest and delectable pathos. But our humbler efforts must be limited by an attempt to describe man as God has made him, vulgar and unseemly as he may appear to sublimated faculties, to the possessors of which enviable qualifications we desire to say, at once, that we are determined to eschew all things supernaturally refined, as we would the devil. To all those, then, who are tired of the company of their species, we would bluntly insinuate, that the sooner they throw aside our pages, and seize upon those of some more highly gifted bard, the sooner will they be in the way of quitting earth, if not of attaining heaven. Our business is solely to treat of man, and this fair scene on which he acts, and that not in his subtleties and metaphysical contradictions, but in his palpable nature, that all may understand our meaning as well as ourselves—whereby we manifestly reject the prodigious advantage of being thought a genius, by perhaps foolishly refusing the mighty aid of incomprehensibility to establish such a character.

Leaving the gloomy shadows of the cliffs, under which the little Ariel has been seen to steer, and the sullen roaring of the surf along the margin of the ocean, we shall endeavour to transport the reader to the dining parlour of St. Ruth's Abbey, taking the evening of the same day as the time for introducing another collection of those personages, whose acts and characters it has become our duty to describe.

The room was not of very large dimensions, and every part was glittering with the collected light of half a dozen candles, aided by the fierce rays that glanced from the grate, which held a most cheerful fire of seacoal. The mouldings of the dark oak wainscoting threw back upon the massivetable of mahogany, streaks of strong light, which played among the rich fluids, that were sparkling on the board, in mimic haloes. The outline of this picture of comfort was formed by damask curtains of a deep red, enormous oak chairs with leathern backs and cushioned seats, as if the apartment were hermetically sealed against the world and its chilling cares.

Around the table, which still stood in the centre of the floor, were seated three gentlemen, in the easy enjoyment of their daily repast. The cloth had been drawn, and the bottle was slowly passing among them, as if those who partook of its bounty well knew that neither the time nor the opportunity would be wanting for their deliberate indulgence in its pleasures.

At one end of the table an elderly man was seated, who performed whatever little acts of courtesy the duties of a host would appear to render necessary, in a company where all seemed to be equally at their ease and at home. This gentleman was in the decline of life, though his erect carriage, quick movements, and steady hand, equally denoted that it was an old age free from the usual infirmities. In his dress, he belonged to that class whose members always follow the fashions of the age anterior to the one in which they live, whether from disinclination to sudden changes of any kind, or from the recollections of a period which, with them, has been hallowed by scenes and feelings that the chilling evening of life can neither revive nor equal. Age might possibly have thrown its blighting frosts on his thin locks, but art had laboured to conceal the ravages with the nicest care. An accurate outline of powder covered not only the parts where the hair actually remained, but wherever nature had prescribed that hair should grow. His countenance was strongly marked in features, if not in expression, exhibiting, on the whole, a look of noble integrity and high honour, which was a good deal aided in its effect, by the lofty receding

forehead, that rose like a monument, above the whole, to record the character of the aged veteran. A few streaks of branching red mingled with the swarthiness that was rendered more conspicuous by the outline of unsullied white which nearly surrounded his prominent features.

Opposite to the host, who it will at once be understood was Colonel Howard, was the thin, yellow visage of Mr. Christopher Dillon, that bane to the happiness of her cousin, already mentioned by Miss Plowden.

Between these two gentlemen was a middle-aged, hard-featured man, attired in the livery of King George, whose countenance emulated the scarlet of his coat, and whose principal employment, at the moment, appeared to consist in doing honour to the cheer of his entertainer.

Occasionally, a servant entered or left the room in silence, giving admission, however, through the opened door, to the rushing sounds of the gale, as the wind murmured amid the angles and high chimneys of the edifice.

A man, in the dress of a rustic, was standing near the chair of Colonel Howard, between whom and the master of the mansion a dialogue had been maintained, which closed as follows. The colonel was the first to speak, after the curtain is drawn from between the eyes of the reader and the scene.

"Said you, farmer, that the Scotchman beheld the vessels with his own eyes?"

The answer was a simple negative.

"Well, well," continued the colonel, "you can withdraw."

The man made a rude attempt at a bow, which being returned by the old soldier with formal grace, he left the room. The host, turning to his companions, resumed the subject.

"If those rash boys have really persuaded the silly dotard who commands the frigate, to trust himself within the shoals, on the eve of such a gale as this, their case must have been hopeless indeed! Thus may rebellion and disaffection ever meet with the just indignation of Providence! It would not surprise me, gentlemen, to hear that my native land has been engulfed by earthquakes, or swallowed by the ocean, so awful and inexcusable has been the weight of her transgressions! And yet it was a proud and daring boy who held the second station in that ship! I knew his father well, and a gallant gentleman he was, who, like my own brother, the parent of Cecilia, preferred to serve his master on the ocean rather than on the land. His son inherited the bravery of his high spirit, without its loyalty. One would not wish to have such a youth drowned either."

This speech, which partook much of the nature of a soliloquy, especially towards its close, called for no immediate reply; but the soldier, having held his glass to the candle, to admire the rosy hue of its contents, and then sipped of the fluid so often that nothing but a clear light remained to gaze at, quietly replaced the empty vessel on the table, and, as he extended an arm towards the blushing bottle, he spoke, in the careless tones of one whose thoughts were dwelling on another theme—

"Ay, true enough, sir; good men are scarce, and, as you say, one cannot but mourn his fate, though his death be glorious; quite a loss to his majesty's service, I dare say, it will prove."

"A loss to the service of his majesty!" echoed the host—"his death glorious! no, Captain Borroughcliffe, the death of no rebel can be glorious; and how he can be a loss to his majesty's service, I am myself quite at a loss to understand."

The soldier, whose ideas were in that happy state of confusion that renders it difficult to command the one most needed, but who still, from long discipline, had them under a wonderful control for the disorder of his brain, answered, with great promptitude—

"I mean the loss of his example, sir. It would have been so appalling to others, to have seen the young man executed instead of shot in battle."

"He is drowned, sir."

"Ah! that is the next thing to being hung; that circumstance had escaped me."

"It is by no means certain, sir, that the ship and schooner that the drover saw are the vessels you take them to have been," said Mr. Dillon, in a harsh, drawling tone of voice. "I should doubt their daring to venture so openly on the coast, and in the direct track of our vessels of war."

"These people are our countrymen, Christopher, though they be rebels," exclaimed the colonel. "They are a hardy and brave nation. When I had the honour to serve his majesty, some twenty years since, it was my fortune to face the enemies of my king in a few small affairs, Captain Borroughcliffe; such as the siege of Quebec, and the battle before its gates, a trifling occasion at Ticonderoga, and that unfortunate catastrophe of General Braddock—with a few others. I must say, sir, in favour of the colonists, that they played a manful game on the

latter day; and this gentleman who now heads the rebels sustained a gallant name among us for his conduct in that disastrous business. He was a discreet, well-behaved young man, and quite a gentleman. I have never denied that Mr. Washington was very much of a gentleman."

"Yes," said the soldier, yawning, "he was educated among his majesty's troops, and he could hardly be otherwise. But I am quite melancholy about this unfortunate drowning, Colonel Howard. Here will be an end of my vocation, I suppose, and I am far from denying that your hospitality has made these quarters most agreeable to me."

"Then, sir, the obligation is only mutual," returned the host, with a polite inclination of his head; "but gentlemen, who, like ourselves, have been made free of the camp, need not bandy idle compliments about such trifles. If it were my kinsman Dillon, now, whose thoughts run more on Coke upon Littleton than on the gayeties of a mess-table, and a soldier's life, he might think such formalities as necessary as all his hard words are to a deed. Come, Borroughcliffe, my dear fellow, I believe we have given an honest glass to each of the royal family, (God bless them all!) let us swallow a bumper to the memory of the immortal Wolfe."

"An honest proposal, my gallant host, and such a one as a soldier will never decline," returned the captain, who roused himself with the occasion. "God bless them all, say I, in echo, and if this gracious queen of ours ends as famously as she has begun, 'twill be such a family of princes as no other army in Europe can brag of around a mess-table."

"Ay, ay, there is some consolation in that thought, in the midst of this dire rebellion of my countrymen. But I'll vex myself no more with the unpleasant recollections; the arms of my sovereign will soon purge that wicked land of the foul stain."

"Of that there can be no doubt," said Borroughcliffe, whose thoughts still continued a little obscured by the sparkling Madeira that had long lain ripening under a Carolinian sun; "these Yankees fly before his majesty's regulars, like so many dirty clowns in a London mob before a charge of the horse-guards."

"Pardon me, Captain Borroughcliffe," said his host, elevating his person to more than its usually erect attitude; "they may be misguided, deluded, and betrayed, but the comparison is unjust. Give them arms and give them discipline, and he who gets an inch of their land from them, plentiful as it is, will find a bloody day on which to take possession."

"The veriest coward in Christendom would fight in a country where wine brews itself into such a cordial as this," returned the cool soldier; "I am a living proof that you mistook my meaning; for had not those loose-flapped gentlemen they call Vermontese and Hampshire-granters (God grant them his blessing for the deed!) finished two thirds of my company, I should not have been at this day under your roof, a recruiting instead of a marching officer; neither should I have been bound up in a covenant, like the law of Moses, could Burgoyne have made head against their long-legged marchings and counter-marchings. Sir, I drink their healths, with all my heart; and, with such a bottle of golden sunshine before me, rather than displease so good a friend, I will go through Gates's whole army, regiment by regiment, company by company, or, if you insist on the same, even man by man."

"On no account would I tax your politeness so far," returned the Colonel, abundantly mollified by this ample concession; "I stand too much your debtor, Captain Borroughcliffe, for so freely volunteering to defend my house against the attacks of my piratical, rebellious, and misguided countrymen, to think of requiring such a concession."

"Harder duty might be performed, and no favours asked, my respectable host," returned the soldier. "Country quarters are apt to be dull, and the liquor is commonly execrable; but in such a dwelling as this a man can rock himself in the very cradle of contentment. And yet there is one subject of complaint, that I should disgrace my regiment did I not speak of, for it is incumbent on me, both as a man and a soldier, to be no longer silent."

"Name it, sir, freely, and its cause shall be as freely redressed," said the host, in some amazement.

"Here we three sit, from morning to night," continued the soldier, "bachelors all, well provisioned and better liquored, I grant you, but like so many well fed anchorites, while two of the loveliest damsels in the island pine in solitude within a hundred feet of us, without tasting the homage of our sighs. This I will maintain is a reproach both to your character, Colonel Howard, as an old soldier, and to mine as a young one. As to our friend Coke on top of Littleton here, I leave him to the quiddities of the law to plead his own cause."

The brow of the host contracted for a moment, and the sallow cheek of Dillon, who had sat during the

dialogue in a sullen silence, appeared to grow even livid; but gradually the open brow of the veteran resumed its frank expression, and the lips of the other relaxed into a jesuitical sort of a smile, that was totally disregarded by the captain, who amused himself with sipping his wine, while he waited for an answer, as if he analyzed each drop that crossed his palate.

After an embarrassing pause of a moment, Colonel Howard broke the silence.

"There is reason in Borroughcliffe's hint, for such I take it to be—"

"I meant it for a plain, matter-of-fact complaint," interrupted the soldier.

"And you have cause for it," continued the colonel. "It is unreasonable, Christopher, that the ladies should allow their dread of these piratical countrymen of ours to exclude us from their society, though prudence may require that they remain secluded in their apartments. We owe the respect to Captain Borroughcliffe, that at least we admit him to the sight of the coffee-urn in an evening."

"That is precisely my meaning," said the captain; "as for dining with them, why, I am well provided for here, but there is no one knows how to set hot water a hissing in so professional a manner as a woman. So forward, my dear and honoured colonel, and lay your injunctions on them, that they command your humble servant and Mr. Coke unto Littleton to advance and give the countersign of gallantry."

Dillon contracted his disagreeable features into something that was intended for a satirical smile, before he spoke as follows:

"Both the veteran Colonel Howard and the gallant Captain Borroughcliffe may find it easier to overcome the enemies of his majesty in the field than to shake a woman's caprice. Not a day has passed, these three weeks, that I have not sent my inquiries to the door of Miss Howard, as became her father's kinsman, with a wish to soften her apprehensions of the pirates; but little has she deigned me in reply, more than such thanks as her sex and breeding could not well dispense with."

"Well, you have been as fortunate as myself, and why you should be more so, I see no reason," cried the soldier, throwing a glance of cool contempt at the other; "fear whitens the cheek, and ladies best love to be seen where the roses flourish rather than the lilies."

"A woman is never so interesting, Captain Borroughcliffe," said the gallant host, "as when she appears to lean on man for support; and he who does not feel himself honoured by the trust is a disgrace to his species."

"Bravo! my honoured sir, a worthy sentiment, and spoken like a true soldier; but I have heard much of the loveliness of the ladies of the Abbey, since I have been in my present quarters, and I feel a strong desire to witness beauty encircled by such loyalty as could induce them to flee their native country, rather than to devote their charms to the rude keeping of the rebels."

The colonel looked grave, and for a moment fierce; but the expression of his displeasure soon passed away in a smile of forced gayety, and, as he cheerfully rose from his seat, he cried—

"You shall be admitted this very night, and this instant, Captain Borroughcliffe. We owe it, sir, to your services here, as well as in the field, and those forward girls shall be humoured no longer. Nay, it is nearly two weeks since I have seen my ward myself, nor have I laid my eyes on my niece but twice in all that time. Christopher, I leave the captain under your good care, while I go seek admission into the cloisters; we call that part of the building the cloisters, because it holds our nuns, sir! You will pardon my early absence from the table, Captain Borroughcliffe."

"I beg it may not be mentioned; you leave an excellent representative behind you, sir," cried the soldier, taking in the lank figure of Mr. Dillon in a sweeping glance, that terminated with a settled gaze on his decanter. "Make my devoirs to the recluses, my dear colonel, and say all that your own excellent wit shall suggest as an apology for my impatience. Mr. Dillon, I meet you in a bumper to their healths and in their honour."

The challenge was coldly accepted, and while these gentlemen still held their glasses to their lips, Colonel Howard left the apartment, bowing low, and uttering a thousand excuses to his guest, as he proceeded, and even offering a very unnecessary apology of the same effect to his habitual inmate, Mr. Dillon.

"Is fear so very powerful within these old walls?" said the soldier, when the door closed behind their host, "that your ladies deem it necessary to conceal themselves before even an enemy is known to have landed?"

Dillon coldly replied—

"The name of Paul Jones is terrific to all on this coast, I believe, nor are the ladies of St. Ruth singular in their apprehensions, sir."

"Ah! the pirate has bought himself a desperate name, since the affair of Flamborough Head. But let him look to't, if he trusts himself in another Whitehaven expedition, while there is a detachment of the —th in the neighbourhood, though the men should be nothing better than recruits."

"Our last accounts leave him safe in the court of Louis," returned his companion; "but there are men as desperate as himself, who sail the ocean under the rebel flag, and from one or two of them we have had much reason to apprehend the vengeance of disappointed men. It is they that we hope are lost in this gale."

"Hum! I hope they were dastards, then, or your hopes are a little unchristian, and—"

He would have proceeded, but the door opened, and his orderly entered, and announced, with military precision, that a sentinel had detained three men, who were passing along the highway, near the Abbey, and who, by their dress, appeared to be seamen.

"Well, let them pass," cried the captain; "what, have we nothing to do better than to stop passengers, like footpads, on the king's highway! give them of your canteens, and let the rascals pass. Your orders were to give the alarm, if any hostile party landed on the coast, not to detain peaceable subjects on their lawful business."

"I beg your honour's pardon," returned the sergeant; "but these men seemed lurking about the grounds for no good, and as they kept carefully aloof from the place where our sentinel was posted, until to-night, Downing thought it looked suspiciously, and detained them."

"Downing is a fool, and it may go hard with him for his officiousness. What have you done with the men?"

"I took them to the guard-room in the east wing, your honour."

"Then feed them; and harkye, sirrah! liquor them well, that we hear no complaints, and let them go."

"Yes, sir, yes, your honour shall be obeyed; but there is a straight, soldierly looking fellow among them, that I think might be persuaded to enlist, if he were detained till morning. I doubt, sir, by his walk, but he has served already."

"Ha! what say you!" cried the captain, pricking up his ears, like a hound who hears a well-known cry, "served, think ye, already?"

"There are signs about him, your honour, to that effect. An old soldier is seldom deceived in such a thing, and considering his disguise, for it can be no other, and the place where we took him, there is no danger of a have-us corpses, until he is tied to us by the laws of the kingdom."

"Peace, you knave!" said Borroughcliffe, rising, and making a devious route towards the door; "you speak in the presence of my lord chief justice that is to be, and should not talk lightly of the laws. But still you say reason; give me your arm, sergeant, and lead the way to the east wing; my eyesight is good for nothing in such a dark night. A soldier should always visit his guard before the tattoo beats."

After emulating the courtesy of their host, Captain Borroughcliffe retired on this patriotic errand, leaning on his subordinate in a style of most familiar condescension. Dillon continued at the table, endeavouring to express the rancorous feelings of his breast by a satirical smile of contempt, that was necessarily lost on all but himself, as a large mirror threw back the image of his morose and unpleasant features.

But we must precede the veteran colonel in his visit to the "cloisters."

CHAPTER X.

"—And kindness like their own
Inspired those eyes affectionate and glad,
That seemed to love whate'er they looked upon;
Whether with Hebe's mirth her features shone,
Or if a shade more pleasing them o'ercast—
Yet so becomingly th' expression past,
That each succeeding look was lovelier than the last."

— Gertrude of Wyoming

The western wing of St. Ruth house, or abbey, as the building was indiscriminately called, retained but few vestiges of the uses to which it had been originally devoted. The upper apartments were small and numerous, extending on either side of a long, low, and dark gallery, and might have been the dormitories of the sisterhood who were said to have once inhabited that portion of the edifice; but the ground-floor had been modernized, as it was then called, about a century before, and retained just enough of its ancient character to blend the venerable with what was thought comfortable in the commencement of the reign of the third George. As this wing had been appropriated to the mistress of the mansion, ever since the building had changed its spiritual character for one of a more carnal nature, Colonel Howard continued the arrangement, when he became the temporary possessor of St. Ruth's, until, in the course of events, the apartments which had been set apart for the accommodation and convenience of his niece, were eventually converted into her prison. But as the severity of the old veteran was as often marked by an exhibition of his virtues as of his foibles, the confinement and his displeasure constituted the sole subjects of complaint that were given to the young lady. That our readers may be better qualified to judge of the nature of their imprisonment, we shall transport them, without further circumlocution, into the presence of the two females, whom they must be already prepared to receive.

The withdrawing-room of St. Ruth's was an apartment which, tradition said, had formerly been the refectory of the little bevy of fair sinners who sought a refuge within its walls from the temptations of the world. Their number was not large, nor their entertainments very splendid, or this limited space could not have contained them. The room, however, was of fair dimensions, and an air of peculiar comfort, mingled with chastened luxury, was thrown around it, by the voluminous folds of the blue damask curtains that nearly concealed the sides where the deep windows were placed, and by the dark leathern hangings, richly stamped with cunning devices in gold, that ornamented the two others. Massive couches in carved mahogany, with chairs of a similar material and fashion, all covered by the same rich fabric that composed the curtains, together with a Turkey carpet, over the shaggy surface of which all the colours of the rainbow were scattered in bright confusion, united to relieve the gloomy splendour of the enormous mantel, deep, heavy cornices, and the complicated carvings of the massive wood-work which cumbered the walls. A brisk fire of wood was burning on the hearth, in compliment to the wilful prejudice of Miss Plowden, who had maintained, in her most vivacious manner, that seacoal was "only tolerable for blacksmiths and Englishmen." In addition to the cheerful blaze from the hearth, two waxen lights, in candlesticks of massive silver, were lending their aid to enliven the apartment. One of these was casting its rays brightly along the confused colours of the carpet on which it stood, flickering before the active movements of the form that played around it with light and animated inflexions. The posture of this young lady was infantile in grace, and, with one ignorant of her motives, her employment would have been obnoxious to the same construction. Divers small, square pieces of silk, strongly contrasted to each other in colour, lay on every side of her, and were changed, by her nimble hands, into as many different combinations, as if she were humouring the fancies of her sex, or consulting the shades of her own dark, but rich complexion, in the shop of a mercer. The dark satin dress of this young female served to display her small figure in its true proportions, while her dancing eyes of jet-black shamed the dies of the Italian manufacturer by their superior radiancy. A few ribands of pink, disposed about her person with an air partly studied, and yet carelessly coquettish, seemed rather to reflect than lend the rich bloom that mantled around her laughing countenance, leaving to the eye no cause to regret that she was not fairer.

Another female figure, clad in virgin white, was reclining on the end of a distant couch. The seclusion in which they lived might have rendered this female a little careless of her appearance, or, what was more probable, the comb had been found unequal to its burthen, for her tresses, which rivalled the hue and gloss of the raven, had burst from their confinement, and, dropping over her shoulder, fell along her dress in rich profusion, finally resting on the damask of the couch, in dark folds, like glittering silk. A small hand, which seemed to blush at its own naked beauties, supported her head, imbedded in the volumes of her hair, like the fairest alabaster set in the deepest ebony. Beneath the dark profusion of her curls, which, notwithstanding the sweeping train that fell about her person, covered the summit of her head, lay a low, spotless forehead of dazzling whiteness, that was relieved by two arches so slightly and truly drawn that they appeared to have been produced by the nicest touches of art. The fallen lids and long silken lashes concealed the eyes, that rested on the floor, as if their mistress mused in melancholy. The remainder of the features of this maiden were of a kind that is most difficult to describe, being neither regular nor perfect in their several parts, yet harmonizing and composing a whole, that formed an exquisite picture of female delicacy and loveliness. There might or there might not have been a tinge of slight red in her cheeks, but it varied with each emotion of her bosom, even as she mused in quiet, now seeming to steal insidiously over her glowing temples, and then leaving on her face an almost startling paleness. Her stature, as she reclined, seemed above the medium height of womanhood, and her figure was rather delicate than full, though the little foot that rested on the damask cushion before her, displayed a rounded outline that any of her sex might envy.

"Oh! I'm as expert as if I were signal officer to the lord high admiral of this realm!" exclaimed the laughing female on the floor, clapping her hands together in girlish exultation. "I dolog, Cecilia, for an opportunity to exhibit my skill."

While her cousin was speaking, Miss Howard raised her head, with a faint smile, and as she turned her eyes towards the other, a spectator might have been disappointed, but could not have been displeased, by the unexpected change the action produced in the expression of her countenance. Instead of the piercing black eyes that the deep colour of her tresses would lead him to expect, he would have beheld two large, mild, blue orbs, that seemed to float in a liquid so pure as to be nearly invisible, and which were more remarkable for their tenderness and persuasion, than for the vivid flashes that darted from the quick glances of her companion.

"The success of your mad excursion to the seaside, my cousin, has bewildered your brain," returned Cecilia; "but I know not how to conquer your disease, unless we prescribe salt-water for the remedy, as in some other cases of madness."

"Ah! I am afraid your nostrum would be useless," cried Katherine; "it has failed to wash out the disorder from the sedate Mr. Richard Barnstable, who has had the regimen administered to him through many a hard gale, but who continues as fair a candidate for bedlam as ever. Would you think it, Cicely, the crazy—one urged me, in the ten minutes' conversation we held together on the cliffs, to accept of his schooner as a shower-bath!"

"I can think that your hardihood might encourage him to expect much, but surely he could not have been serious in such a proposal!"

"Oh! to do the wretch justice, he did say something of a chaplain to consecrate the measure, but there was boundless impudence in the thought. I have not, nor shall I forget it, or forgive him for it, these six and twenty years. What a fine time he must have had of it, in his little Ariel, among the monstrous waves we saw tumbling in upon the shore to-day, coz! I hope they will wash his impudence out of him! I do think the man cannot have had a dry thread about him, from sun to sun. I must believe it is a punishment for his boldness, and, be certain, I shall tell him of it. I will form half a dozen signals, this instant, to joke at his moist condition, in very revenge."

Pleased with her own thoughts, and buoyant with the secret hope that her adventurous undertaking would be finally crowned with complete success, the gay girl shook her black locks, in infinite mirth, and tossed the mimic flags gayly around her person, as she was busied in forming new combinations, in order to amuse herself with her lover's disastrous situation. But the features of her cousin clouded with the thoughts that were excited by her remarks, and she replied, in a tone that bore some little of the accents of reproach—

"Katherine! Katherine! can you jest when there is so much to apprehend! Forget you what Alice Dunscombe told us of the gale, this morning! and that she spoke of two vessels, a ship and a schooner, that had been seen venturing with fearful temerity within the shoals, only six miles from the Abbey, and that unless God in his gracious providence had been kind to them, there was but little doubt that their fate would be a sad one! Can you,

that know so well who and what these daring mariners are, be merry about the selfsame winds that cause their danger?"

The laughing maiden was recalled to her recollection by this remonstrance, and every trace of mirth vanished from her countenance, leaving a momentary death-like paleness crossing her face, as she clasped her hands before her, and fastened her keen eyes vacantly on the splendid pieces of silk that now lay unheeded around her. At this critical moment the door of the room slowly opened, and Colonel Howard entered the apartment with an air that displayed a droll mixture of stern indignation, with a chivalric and habitual respect to the sex.

"I solicit your pardon, young ladies, for the interruption," he said; "I trust, however, that an old man's presence can never be entirely unexpected in the drawing-room of his wards."

As he bowed, the colonel seated himself on the end of the couch, opposite to where his niece had been reclining, for Miss Howard had risen at his entrance, and continued standing until her uncle had comfortably disposed of himself. Throwing a glance, which was not entirely free from self-commendation, around the comfortable apartment, the veteran proceeded, in the same tone as before—

"You are not without the means of making any guest welcome, nor do I see the necessity of such constant seclusion from the eyes of the world as you thus rigidly practise."

Cecilia looked timidly at her uncle, with momentary surprise, before she returned any answer to his remark.

"We certainly owe much to your kind attention, dear sir," she at length uttered; "but is our retirement altogether voluntary?"

"How can it be otherwise! are you not mistress of this mansion, madam! In selecting the residence where yours, and, permit me to add, my ancestors, so long dwelt, in credit and honour, I have surely been less governed by any natural pride that I might well have entertained on such a subject, than by a desire to consult your comfort and happiness. Every thing appears to my aged eyes as if we ought not to be ashamed to receive our friends within these walls. The cloisters of St. Ruth, Miss Howard, are not entirely bare, neither are their tenants wholly unworthy to be seen."

"Open, then, its portals, sir, and your niece will endeavour to do proper credit to the hospitality of its master."

"That was spoken like Harry Howard's daughter, frankly and generously!" cried the old soldier, insensibly edging himself nearer to his niece. "If my brother had devoted himself to the camp, instead of the sea, Cecilia, he would have made one of the bravest and ablest generals in his majesty's service—poor Harry! he might have been living at this very day, and at this moment leading the victorious troops of his sovereign through the revolted colonies in triumph. But he is gone, Cicely, and has left you behind him, as his dear representative, to perpetuate our family, and to possess what little has been left to us from the ravages of the times."

"Surely, dear sir," said Cecilia, taking his hand, which had unconsciously approached her person, and pressing it to her lips, "we have no cause to complain of our lot in respect to fortune, though it may cause us bitter regret that so few of us are left to enjoy it."

"No, no, no," said Katherine, in a low, hurried voice; "Alice Dunscombe is and must be wrong; providence would never abandon brave men to so cruel a fate!"

"Alice Dunscombe is here to atone for her error, if she has fallen into one," said a quiet, subdued voice, in which the accents of a provincial dialect, however, were slightly perceptible, and which, in its low tones, wanted that silvery clearness that gave so much feminine sweetness to the words of Miss Howard, and which even rung melodiously in the ordinarily vivacious strains of her cousin.

The surprise created by these sudden interruptions caused a total suspension of the discourse. Katherine Plowden, who had continued kneeling, in the attitude before described, arose, and as she looked about her in momentary confusion, the blood again mantled her face with the fresh and joyous springs of life. The other speaker advanced steadily into the middle of the room, and after returning, with studied civility, the low bow of Colonel Howard, seated herself in silence on the opposite couch. The manner of her entrance, her reception, and her attire, sufficiently denoted that the presence of this female was neither unusual nor unwelcome. She was dressed with marked simplicity, though with a studied neatness, that more than compensated for the absence of ornaments. Her age might not have much exceeded thirty, but there was an adoption of customs in her attire that indicated she was not unwilling to be thought older. Her fair flaxen hair was closely confined by a dark bandeau, such as was worn in a nation farther north by virgins only, over which a few curls strayed, in a manner that showed the will of their mistress alone restrained their luxuriance. Her light complexion had lost much of its

brilliancy, but enough still remained to assert its original beauty and clearness. To this description might be added, fine, mellow blue eyes, beautifully white, though large teeth, a regular set of features, and a person that was clad in a dark lead-coloured silk, which fitted her full, but gracefully moulded form, with the closest exactness.

Colonel Howard paused a moment, after this lady was seated, and then turned himself to Katherine; with an air that became stiff and constrained by attempting to seem extremely easy, he said—

"You no sooner summon Miss Alice, but she appears, Miss Plowden—ready and (I am bold to say, Miss Alice) able to defend herself against all charges that her worst enemies can allege against her."

"I have no charges to make against Miss Dunscombe," said Katherine, pettishly, "nor do I wish to have dissensions created between me and my friends, even by Colonel Howard."

"Colonel Howard will studiously avoid such offences in future," said the veteran, bowing; and turning stiffly to the others, he continued—"I was just conversing with my niece, as you entered, Miss Alice, on the subject of her immuring herself like one of the veriest nuns who ever inhabited these cloisters. I tell her, madam, that neither her years, nor my fortune, nor, indeed, her own, for the child of Harry Howard was not left pennyless, require that we should live as if the doors of the world were closed against us, or there was no other entrance to St. Ruth's but through those antiquated windows. Miss Plowden, I feel it to be my duty to inquire why those pieces of silk are provided in such an unusual abundance, and in so extraordinary a shape?"

"To make a gala dress for the ball you are about to give, sir," said Katherine, promptly, and with a saucy smile, that was only checked by the reproachful glance of her cousin. "You have taste in a lady's attire, Colonel Howard; will not this bright yellow form a charming relief to my brown face, while this white and black relieve one another, and this pink contrasts so sweetly with black eyes. Will not the whole form a turban fit for an empress to wear?"

As the arch maiden prattled on in this unmeaning manner, her rapid fingers entwined the flags in a confused maze, which she threw over her head in a form not unlike the ornament for which she intimated it was intended. The veteran was by far too polite to dispute a lady's taste, and he renewed the dialogue, with his slightly awakened suspicions completely quieted by her dexterity and artifice. But although it was not difficult to deceive Colonel Howard in matters of female dress, the case was very different with Alice Dunscombe. This lady gazed, with a steady eye and reproving countenance, on the fantastical turban, until Katherine threw herself by her side, and endeavoured to lead her attention to other subjects, by her playful motions and whispered questions.

"I was observing, Miss Alice," continued the colonel, "that although the times had certainly inflicted some loss on my estate, yet we were not so much reduced, as to be unable to receive our friends in a manner that would not disgrace the descendants of the ancient possessors of St. Ruth. Cecilia, here, my brother Harry's daughter, is a young lady that any uncle might be proud to exhibit, and I would have her, madam, show your English dames, that we rear no unworthy specimens of the parent stock on the other side of the Atlantic."

"You have only to declare your pleasure, my good uncle," said Miss Howard, "and it shall be executed."

"Tell us how we can oblige you, sir," continued Katherine, "and if it be in any manner that will relieve the tedium of this dull residence, I promise you at least one cheerful assistant to your scheme."

"You speak fair," cried the colonel, "and like two discreet and worthy girls! Well, then, our first step shall be to send a message to Dillon and the captain, and invite them to attend your coffee. I see the hour approaches."

Cecilia made no reply, but looked distressed, and dropped her mild eyes to the carpet; but Miss Plowden took it upon herself to answer.

"Nay, sir, that would be for them to take steps in the matter; as your proposal was that the first step should be ours, suppose we all adjourn to your part of the house, and do the honours of the tea-table in your drawing-room, instead of our own. I understand, sir, that you have had an apartment fitted up for that purpose, in some style; a woman's taste might aid your designs, however."

"Miss Plowden, I believe I intimated to you, some time since," said the displeased colonel, "that so long as certain suspicious vessels were known to hover on this coast, I should desire that you and Miss Howard would confine yourselves to this wing."

"Do not say that we confine ourselves," said Katherine, "but let it be spoken in plain English, that you confine us here."

"Am I a gaoler, madam, that you apply such epithets to my conduct! Miss Alice must form strange

conclusions of our manners, if she receive her impressions from your very singular remarks. I—"

"All measures adopted from a dread of the ship and schooner that ran within the Devil's Grip, yester-eve, may be dispensed with now," interrupted Miss Dunscombe, in a melancholy, reflecting tone. "There are few living, who know the dangerous paths that can conduct even the smallest craft in safety from the land, with daylight and fair winds; but when darkness and adverse gales oppose them, the chance for safety lies wholly in God's kindness."

"There is truly much reason to believe they are lost," returned the veteran, in a voice in which no exultation was apparent.

"They are not lost!" exclaimed Katherine, with startling energy, leaving her seat, and walking across the room to join her cousin, with an air that seemed to elevate her little figure to the other's height. "They are skilful and they are brave, and what gallant sailors can do, will they do, and do it successfully; besides, in whose behalf would a just Providence sooner exercise its merciful power, than to protect the daring children of an oppressed country, while contending against tyranny and countless wrongs?"

The conciliating disposition of the colonel deserted him, as he listened. His own black eyes sparkled with a vividness unusual for his years, and his courtesy barely permitted the lady to conclude, ere he broke forth.

"What sin, madam, what damning crime, would sooner call down the just wrath of Heaven on the transgressors, than the act of foul rebellion? It was this crime, madam, that deluged England in blood in the reign of the first Charles; it is this crime that has dyed more fields red than all the rest of man's offences united; it has been visited on our race, as a condign punishment, from the days of the deservedly devoted Absalom, down to the present time; in short, it lost heaven for ever to some of the most glorious of its angels, and there is much reason to believe that it is the one unpardonable sin, named in the holy gospels."

"I know not that you have authority for believing it to be the heavy enormity that you mention, Colonel Howard," said Miss Dunscombe, anticipating the spirited reply of Katherine, and willing to avert it; she hesitated an instant, and then drawing a heavy, shivering sigh, she continued, in a voice that grew softer as she spoke— "'tis indeed a crime of magnitude, and one that throws the common backslidings of our lives, speaking by comparison, into the sunshine of his favour. Many there are, who sever the dearest ties of this life, by madly rushing into its sinful vortex, for I fain think the heart grows hard with the sight of human calamity, and becomes callous to the miseries its owner inflicts; especially where we act the wrongs on our own kith and kin, regardless who or how many that are dear to us suffer by our evil deeds. It is, besides, Colonel Howard, a dangerous temptation, to one little practised in the great world, to find himself suddenly elevated into the seat of power; and if it do not lead to the commission of great crimes, it surely prepares the way to it, by hardening the heart."

"I hear you patiently, Miss Alice," said Katherine, dancing her little foot, in affected coolness, "for you neither know of whom nor to whom you speak. But Colonel Howard has not that apology. Peace, Cecilia, for I must speak! Believe them not, dear girl; there is not a wet hair on their heads. For you, Colonel Howard, who must recollect that the sister's son of the mothers of both your niece and myself is on board that frigate, there is an appearance of cruelty in using such language."

"I pity the boy! from my soul I pity him!" exclaimed the veteran; "he is a child, and has followed the current that is sweeping our unhappy colonies down the tide of destruction. But there are others in that vessel, who have no excuse of ignorance to offer. There is a son of my old acquaintance, and the bosom friend of my brother Harry, Cecilia's father, dashing Hugh Griffith, as we called him. The urchins left home together, and were rated on board one of his majesty's vessels on the same day. Poor Harry lived to carry a broad pennant in the service, and Hugh died in command of a frigate. This boy, too! he was nurtured on board his father's vessel, and learned, from his majesty's discipline, how to turn his arms against his king. There is something shockingly unnatural in that circumstance, Miss Alice; 'tis like the child inflicting a blow on the parent. 'Tis such men as these, with Washington at their head, who maintain the bold front this rebellion wears."

"There are men, who have never worn the servile livery of Britain, sir, whose names are as fondly cherished in America as any that she boasts of," said Katherine, proudly; "ay, sir, and those who would gladly oppose the bravest officers in the British fleet."

"I contend not against your misguided reason," said Colonel Howard, rising with cool respect. "A young lady who ventures to compare rebels with gallant gentlemen engaged in their duty to their prince, cannot but be subjected to the imputation of possessing a misguided reason. No man—I speak not of women, who cannot be

supposed so well versed in human nature—but no man, who has reached the time of life that entitles him to be called by that name, can consort with these disorganizers, who would destroy every thing that is sacred—these levellers, who would pull down the great, to exalt the little—these jacobites, who—who—"

"Nay, sir, if you are at a loss for opprobrious epithets," said Katherine, with provoking coolness, "call on Mr. Christopher Dillon for assistance; he waits your pleasure at the door."

Colonel Howard turned in amazement, forgetting his angry declamations at this unexpected intelligence, and beheld in reality the sombre visage of his kinsman, who stood holding the door in his hand, apparently as much surprised at finding himself in the presence of the ladies, as they themselves could be at his unusual visit.

CHAPTER XI.

"Poithee, Kate, let's stand aside, and see the end of this controversy."

— Shakspeare

During the warm discussions of the preceding chapter, Miss Howard had bowed her pale face to the arm of the couch, and sate an unwilling and distressed listener to the controversy; but now that another, and one whom she thought an unauthorized intruder on her privacy, was announced, she asserted the dignity of her sex as proudly, though with something more of discretion, than her cousin could possibly have done. Rising from her seat, she inquired, with cool but delicate reserve—

"To what are we indebted for so unexpected a visit from Mr. Dillon? Surely he must know that we are prohibited going to the part of the dwelling where he resides, and I trust Colonel Howard will tell him that common justice requires we should be permitted to be private."

The gentleman replied, in a manner in which malignant anger was sufficiently mingled with calculating humility—

"Miss Howard will think better of my intrusion, when she knows that I come on business of importance to her uncle."

"Ah! that may alter the case, Kit; but the ladies must have the respect that is due to their sex. I forgot, somehow, to have myself announced; but that Borroughcliffe leads me deeper into my Madeira than I have been accustomed to go, since the time when my poor brother Harry, with his worthy friend, Hugh Griffith—the devil seize Hugh Griffith, and all his race—your pardon, Miss Alice. What is your business with me, Mr. Dillon?"

"I bear a message from Captain Borroughcliffe. You may remember that, according to your suggestions, the sentinels were to be changed every night, sir."

"Ay! ay! we practised that in our campaign against Montcalm; 'twas necessary to avoid the murders of their Indians, who were sure, Miss Alice, to shoot down a man at his post, if he were placed two nights running in the same place."

"Well, sir, your prudent precautions have not been thrown away," continued Dillon, moving farther into the apartment, as if he felt himself becoming a more welcome guest as he proceeded; "the consequences are, that we have already made three prisoners."

"Truly it has been a most politic scheme!" exclaimed Katherine Plowden, with infinite contempt. "I suppose, as Mr. Christopher Dillon applauds it so highly, that it has some communion with the law! and that the redoubtable garrison of St. Ruth are about to reap the high glory of being most successful thief-takers!"

The sallow face of Dillon actually became livid as he replied, and his whole frame shook with the rage that he vainly endeavoured to suppress.

"There may be a closer communion with the law, and its ministers, perhaps, than Miss Plowden can desire," he said; "for rebellion seldom finds favour in any Christian code."

"Rebellion!" exclaimed the colonel; "and what has this detention of three vagabonds to do with rebellion, Kit? Has the damnable poison found its way across the Atlantic?—your pardon, Miss Alice—but this is a subject on which you can feel with me; I have heard your sentiments on the allegiance due to our anointed sovereign. Speak, Mr. Dillon, are we surrounded by another set of demons! if so, we must give ourselves to the work, and rally round our prince; for this island is the main pillar of his throne."

"I cannot say that there is any appearance, at present, of an intention to rise in this island," said Dillon, with demure gravity; "though the riots in London warrant any precautionary measures on the part of his majesty's ministers, even to a suspension of the habeas corpus. But you have had your suspicions concerning two certain vessels that have been threatening the coast, for several days past, in a most piratical manner?"

The little foot of Katherine played rapidly on the splendid carpet, but she contented herself with bestowing a glance of the most sovereign contempt on the speaker, as if she disdained any further reply. With the colonel, however, this was touching a theme that lay nearest his heart, and he answered, in a manner worthy of the importance of the subject—

"You speak like a sensible man, and a loyal subject, Mr. Dillon. The habeas corpus, Miss Alice, was obtained

in the reign of King John, along with magna charta, for the security of the throne, by his majesty's barons; some of my own blood were of the number, which alone would be a pledge that the dignity of the crown was properly consulted. As to our piratical countrymen, Christopher, there is much reason to think that the vengeance of an offended Providence has already reached them. Those who know the coast well, tell me that without a better pilot than an enemy would be likely to procure, it would be impossible for any vessels to escape the shoals among which they entered, on a dark night, and with an adverse gale; the morning has arrived, and they are not to be seen!"

"But be they friends or be they enemies, sir," continued Dillon, respectfully, "there is much reason to think that we have now in the Abbey those who can tell us something of their true character; for the men we have detained carry with them the appearance of having just landed, and wear not only the dress but the air of seamen."

"Of seamen!" echoed Katherine, a deadly paleness chasing from her cheeks the bloom which indignation had heightened.

"Of seamen, Miss Plowden," repeated Dillon, with malignant satisfaction, but concealing it under an air of submissive respect.

"I thank you, sir, for so gentle a term," replied the young lady, recollecting herself, and recovering her presence of mind in the same instant; "the imagination of Mr. Dillon is so apt to conjure the worst, that he is entitled to our praise for so far humouring our weaknesses, as not to alarm us with the apprehensions of their being pirates."

"Nay, madam, they may yet deserve that name," returned the other, coolly; "but my education has instructed me to hear the testimony before I pronounce sentence."

"Ah! that the boy has found in his Coke upon Littleton," cried the colonel; "the law is a salutary corrective to human infirmities, Miss Alicé, and, among other things, it teaches patience to a hasty temperament. But for this cursed, unnatural rebellion, madam, the young man would, at this moment, have been diffusing its blessings from a judicial chair, in one of the colonies, ay! and I pledge myself, to all alike, black and white, red and yellow, with such proper distinctions as nature has made between the officer and the private. Keep a good heart, kinsman; we shall yet find a time! the royal arms have many hands, and things look better at the last advices. But, come, we will proceed to the guard-room, and put these stragglers to the question; runaways, I'll venture to predict, from one of his majesty's cruisers, or, perhaps, honest subjects engaged in supplying the service with men. Come, Kit, come, let us go, and—"

"Are we, then, to lose the company of Colonel Howard so soon?" said Katherine, advancing to her guardian, with an air of blandishment and pleasantry. "I know that he too soon forgets the hasty language of our little disputes, to part in anger, if, indeed, he will even quit us till he has tasted of our coffee."

The veteran turned to the speaker of this unexpected address, and listened with profound attention. When she had done, he replied, with a good deal of courtesy, if not of softness in his tones—

"Ah! provoking one! you know me too well to doubt my forgiveness; but duty must be attended to, though even a young lady's smiles tempt me to remain. Yes, yes, child, you, too, are the daughter of a very brave and worthy seaman; but you carry your attachment to that profession too far, Miss Plowden—you do, indeed you do."

Katherine might have faintly blushed, but the slight smile which mingled with the expression of her shame gave to her countenance a look of additional archness, and she laid her hand lightly on the sleeve of her guardian, to detain him, as she replied—

"Yet why leave us, Colonel Howard? It is long since we have seen you in the cloisters, and you know you come as a father; tarry, and you may yet add confessor to the title."

"I know thy sins already, girl," said the worthy colonel, unconsciously yielding to her gentle efforts to lead him back to his seat; "they are, deadly rebellion in your heart to your prince, a most inveterate propensity to salt-water, and a great disrespect to the advice and wishes of an old fellow whom your father's will and the laws have made the guardian of your person and fortune."

"Nay, say not the last, dear sir," cried Katherine; "for there is not a syllable you have ever said to me, on that foolish subject, that I have forgotten. Will you resume your seat again? Cecilia, Colonel Howard consents to take his coffee with us."

"But you forget the three men, honest Kit, there, and our respectable guest, Captain Borroughcliffe."

"Let honest Kit stay there, if he please; you may send a request to Captain Borroughcliffe to join our party; I

have a woman's curiosity to see the soldier; and as for the three men—" she paused, and affected to muse a moment, when she continued, as if stricken by an obvious thought— "Yes, and the men can be brought in, and examined here; who knows but they may have been wrecked in the gale, and need our pity and assistance, rather than deserve your suspicions."

"There is a solemn warning in Miss Plowden's conjecture, that should come home to the breasts of all who live on this wild coast," said Alice Dunscombe; "I have known many a sad wreck among the hidden shoals, and when the wind has blown but a gentle gale, compared to last night's tempest. The wars, and the uncertainties of the times, together with man's own wicked passions, have made great havoc with those who knew well the windings of the channels among the "Ripples." Some there were who could pass, as I have often heard, within a fearful distance of the "Devil's-Grip," the darkest night that ever shadowed England; but all are now gone, of that daring set, either by the hand of death, or, what is even as mournful, by unnatural banishment from the land of their fathers."

"This war has then probably drawn off most of them, for your recollections must be quite recent, Miss Alice," said the veteran; "as many of them were engaged in the business of robbing his majesty's revenue, the country is in some measure requited for their former depredations, by their present services, and at the same time it is happily rid of their presence. Ah! madam, ours is a glorious constitution, where things are so nicely balanced, that, as in that of a healthy, vigorous man, the baser parts are purified in the course of things, by its own wholesome struggles."

The pale features of Alice Dunscombe became slightly tinged with red, as the colonel proceeded, nor did the faint glow entirely leave her pallid face, until she had said—

"There might have been some who knew not how to respect the laws of the land, for such are never wanting; but there were others, who, however guilty they might be in many respects, need not charge themselves with that mean crime, and yet who could find the passages that lie hid from common eyes, beneath the rude waves, as well as you could find the way through the halls and galleries of the Abbey, with a noonday sun shining upon its vanes and high chimneys."

"Is it your pleasure, Colonel Howard, that we examine the three men, and ascertain whether they belong to the number of these gifted pilots?" said Christopher Dillon, who was growing uneasy at his awkward situation, and who hardly deemed it necessary to conceal the look of contempt which he cast at the mild Alice, while he spoke; "perhaps we may gather information enough from them, to draw a chart of the coast, that may gain us credit with my lords of the Admiralty."

This unprovoked attack on their unresisting and unoffending guest, brought the rich blood to the very temples of Miss Howard, who rose, and addressed herself to her kinsman, with a manner that could not easily be mistaken, any more than it could be condemned—

"If Mr. Dillon will comply with the wishes of Colonel Howard, as my cousin has expressed them, we shall not, at least, have to accuse ourselves of unnecessarily detaining men who probably are more unfortunate than guilty."

When she concluded, Cecilia walked across the apartment, and took a seat by the side of Alice Dunscombe, with whom she began to converse, in a low, soothing tone of voice. Mr. Dillon bowed with a deprecating humility, and having ascertained that Colonel Howard chose to give an audience, where he sate, to the prisoners, he withdrew to execute his mission, secretly exulting at any change that promised to lead to a renewal of an intercourse that might terminate more to his advantage, than the lofty beauty whose favour he courted, was, at present, disposed to concede.

"Christopher is a worthy, serviceable, good fellow," said the colonel, when the door closed, "and I hope to live, yet, to see him clad in ermine; I would not be understood literally, but figuratively, for furs would but ill comport with the climate of the Carolinas. I trust I am to be consulted by his majesty's ministers when the new appointments shall be made for the subdued colonies, and he may safely rely on my good word being spoken in his favour. Would he not make an excellent and independent ornament of the bench, Miss Plowden?"

Katherine compressed her lips a little, as she replied—

"I must profit by his own discreet rules, and see testimony to that effect, before I decide, sir. But listen!" The young lady's colour changed rapidly, and her eyes became fixed in a sort of feverish gaze on the door. "He has at least been active; I hear the heavy tread of men already approaching."

"Ah! it is he certainly; justice ought always to be prompt as well as certain, to make it perfect; like a drum-head court-martial, which, by the way, is as summary a sort of government as heart could wish to live under. If his majesty's ministers could be persuaded to introduce into the revolted colonies—"

"Listen!" interrupted Katherine, in a voice which bespoke her deep anxiety; "they draw near!"

The sound of footsteps was in fact now so audible as to induce the colonel to suspend the delivery of his plan for governing the recovered provinces. The long, low gallery, which was paved with a stone flagging, soon brought the footsteps of the approaching party more distinctly to their ears, and a low tap at the door presently announced their arrival. Colonel Howard arose, with the air of one who was to sustain the principal character in the ensuing interview, and bade them enter. Cecilia and Alice Dunscombe merely cast careless looks at the opening door, indifferent to the scene; but the quick eye of Katherine embraced, at a glance, every figure in the group. Drawing a long, quivering breath, she fell back on the couch, and her eyes again lighted with their playful expression, as she hummed a low, rapid air, with a voice in which even the suppressed tones were liquid melody.

Dillon entered, preceding the soldier, whose gait had become more steady, and in whose rigid eye a thoughtful expression had taken the place of its former vacant gaze. In short, something had manifestly restored to him a more complete command of his mental powers, although he might not have been absolutely sobered. The rest of the party continued in the gallery, while Mr. Dillon presented the renovated captain to the colonel, when the latter did him the same kind office with the ladies.

"Miss Plowden," said the veteran, for she offered first in the circle, "this is my friend, Captain Borroughcliffe; he has long been ambitious of this honour, and I have no doubt his reception will be such as to leave him no cause to repent he has been at last successful."

Katherine smiled, and answered, with ambiguous emphasis—

"I know not how to thank him, sufficiently, for the care he has bestowed on our poor persons."

The soldier looked steadily at her, for a moment, with an eye that seemed to threaten a retaliation in kind, ere he replied—

"One of those smiles, madam, would be an ample compensation for services that are more real than such as exist only in intention."

Katherine bowed with more complacency than she usually bestowed on those who wore his dress, and they proceeded to the next.

"This is Miss Alice Dunscombe, Captain Borroughcliffe, daughter of a very worthy clergyman who was formerly the curate of this parish, and a lady who does us the pleasure of giving us a good deal of her society, though far less than we all wish for."

The captain returned the civil inclination of Alice, and the colonel proceeded.

"Miss Howard, allow me to present Captain Borroughcliffe, a gentleman who, having volunteered to defend St. Ruth in these critical times, merits all the favour of its mistress."

Cecilia gracefully rose, and received her guest with sweet complacency. The soldier made no reply to the customary compliments that she uttered, but stood an instant gazing at her speaking countenance, and then, laying his hand involuntarily on his breast, bowed nearly to his sword-hilt.

These formalities duly observed, the colonel declared his readiness to receive the prisoners. As the door was opened by Dillon, Katherine cast a cool and steady look at the strangers, and beheld the light glancing along the arms of the soldiers who guarded them. But the seamen entered alone; while the rattling of arms, and the heavy dash of the muskets on the stone pavement, announced that it was thought prudent to retain a force at hand, to watch these secret intruders on the grounds of the abbey.

CHAPTER XII.

"Food for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better."

— Falstaff

The three men, who now entered the apartment, appeared to be nothing daunted by the presence into which they were ushered, though clad in the coarse and weather-beaten vestments of seamen who had been exposed to recent and severe duty. They silently obeyed the direction of the soldier's finger, and took their stations in a distant corner of the room, like men who knew the deference due to rank, at the same time that the habits of their lives had long accustomed them to encounter the vicissitudes of the world. With this slight preparation, Colonel Howard began the business of examination.

"I trust ye are all good and loyal subjects," the veteran commenced, with a considerate respect for innocence, "but the times are such that even the most worthy characters become liable to suspicion; and, consequently, if our apprehensions of you should prove erroneous, you must overlook the mistake, and attribute it to the awful condition into which rebellion has plunged this empire. We have much reason to fear that some project is about to be undertaken on the coast by the enemy, as he has appeared, we know, with a frigate and schooner; and the audacity of the rebels is only equalled by their shameless and wicked disrespect for the rights of the sovereign."

While Colonel Howard was uttering his apologetic preamble, the prisoners fastened their eyes on him with much interest; but when he alluded to the apprehended attack, the gaze of two of them became more keenly attentive, and, when concluded, they exchanged furtive glances of deep meaning. No reply was made, however, and after a short pause, as if to allow time for his words to make a proper impression, the veteran continued—

"We have no evidence, I understand, that you are in the smallest degree connected with the enemies of this country; but as you have been found out of the king's highway, or, rather, on a by-path, which I must confess is frequently used by the people of the neighbourhood, but which is nevertheless nothing but a by-path, it becomes no more than what self-preservation requires of us, to ask you a few such questions as I trust will be satisfactorily answered. To use your own nautical phrases, 'from whence came ye, pray?' and 'whither are ye bound?'"

A low, deep voice replied—

"From Sunderland, last, and bound, over-land, to Whitehaven."

This simple and direct answer was hardly given, before the attention of the listeners was called to Alice Dunscombe, who uttered a faint shriek, and rose from her seat involuntarily, while her eyes seemed to roll fearfully, and perhaps a little wildly, round the room.

"Are you ill, Miss Alice?" said the sweet, soothing tones of Cecilia Howard; "you are, indeed you are; lean on me, that I may lead you to your apartment."

"Did you hear it, or was it only fancy!" she answered, her cheek blanched to the whiteness of death, and her whole frame shuddering as if in convulsions; "say, did you hear it too?"

"I have heard nothing but the voice of my uncle, who is standing near you, anxious, as we all are, for your recovery from this dreadful agitation."

Alice still gazed wildly from face to face. Her eye did not rest satisfied with dwelling on those who surrounded her, but surveyed, with a sort of frantic eagerness, the figures and appearance of the three men, who stood in humble patience, the silent and unmoved witnesses of this extraordinary scene. At length she veiled her eyes with both her hands, as if to shut out some horrid vision, and then removing them, she smiled languidly, as she signed for Cecilia to assist her from the room. To the polite and assiduous offers of the gentlemen, she returned no other thanks than those conveyed in her looks and gestures; but when the sentinels who paced the gallery were passed, and the ladies were alone, she breathed a long, shivering sigh, and found an utterance.

"'Twas like a voice from the silent grave!" she said, "but it could be no more than mockery. No, no, 'tis a just punishment for letting the image of the creature fill the place that should be occupied only with the Creator. Ah! Miss Howard, Miss Plowden, ye are both young—in the pride of your beauty and loveliness—but little do ye know, and less do ye dread, the temptations and errors of a sinful world."

"Her thoughts wander!" whispered Katherine, with anxious tenderness; "some awful calamity has affected her intellects!"

"Yes, it must be that my sinful thoughts have wandered, and conjured sounds that it would have been dreadful to have heard in truth, and within these walls," said Alice, more composedly, smiling with a ghastly expression, as she gazed on the two beautifully solicitous maidens who supported her yielding person. "But the moment of weakness is passed, and I am better; aid me to my room, and return, that you may not interrupt the reviving harmony between you and Colonel Howard. I am now better, nay, I am quite restored."

"Say not so, dear Miss Alice," returned Cecilia; "your face denies what your kindness to us induces you to utter; ill, very ill, you are, nor shall even your own commands induce me to leave you."

"Remain, then," said Miss Dunscombe, bestowing a look of grateful affection on her lovely supporter; "and while our Katherine returns to the drawing-room, to give the gentlemen their coffee, you shall continue with me, as my gentle nurse."

By this time they had gained the apartment, and Katherine, after assisting her cousin to place Alice on her bed, returned to do the honours of the drawing-room.

Colonel Howard ceased his examination of the prisoners at her entrance, to inquire, with courtly solicitude, after the invalid; and, when his questions were answered, he again proceeded, as follows—

"This is what the lads would call plain-sailing, Borroughcliffe; they are out of employment in Sunderland, and have acquaintances and relatives in Whitehaven, to whom they are going for assistance and labour. All very probable, and perfectly harmless."

"Nothing more so, my respectable host," returned the jocund soldier; "but it seemeth a grievous misfortune that a trio of such flesh and blood should need work wherewithal to exercise their thews and sinews, while so many of the vessels of his majesty's fleet navigate the ocean in quest of the enemies of old England."

"There is truth in that; much truth in your remark," cried the colonel. "What say you, my lads, will you fight the Frenchman and the Don, ay! and even my own rebellious and infatuated countrymen? Nay, by heaven, it is not a trifle that shall prevent his majesty from possessing the services of three such heroes. Here are five guineas a-piece for you the moment that you put foot on board the Alacrity cutter; and that can easily be done, as she lies at anchor this very night, only two short leagues to the south of this, in a small port, where she is riding out the gale as snugly as if she were in a corner of this room."

One of the men affected to gaze at the money with longing eyes, while he asked, as if weighing the terms of the engagement—

"Whether the Alacrity was called a good sea-boat, and was thought to give a comfortable birth to her crew?"

"Comfortable!" echoed Borroughcliffe; "for that matter, she is called the bravest cutter in the navy. You have seen much of the world, I dare say; did you ever see such a place as the marine arsenal at Carthage, in old Spain?"

"Indeed I have, sir," returned the seaman, in a cool, collected tone.

"Ah! you have! well, did you ever meet with a house in Paris that they call the Thuilleries? because it's a dog-kennel to the Alacrity."

"I have even fallen in with the place you mention, sir," returned the sailor; "and must own the birth quite good enough for such as I am, if it tallies with your description."

"The deuce take these blue-jackets," muttered Borroughcliffe, addressing himself unconsciously to Miss Plowden, near whom he happened to be at the time; "they run their tarry countenances into all the corners of the earth, and abridge a man most lamentably in his comparisons. Now, who the devil would have thought that fellow had ever put his sea-green eyes on the palace of King Louis!"

Katherine heeded not his speech, but sat eyeing the group of prisoners with a confused and wavering expression of countenance, while Colonel Howard renewed the discourse, by exclaiming—

"Come, come, Borroughcliffe, let us give the lads no tales for a recruit, but good, plain, honest English—God bless the language, and the land for which it was first made, too. There is no necessity to tell these men, if they are, what they seem to be, practical seamen, that a cutter of ten guns contains all the room and accommodation of a palace."

"Do you allow nothing for English oak and English comfort, mine host," said the immovable captain; "do you think, good sir, that I measure fitness and propriety by square and compass, as if I were planning Solomon's temple anew! All I mean to say is, that the Alacrity is a vessel of singular compactness and magical arrangement of room. Like the tent of that handsome brother of the fairy, in the Arabian Nights, she is big or she is little, as

occasion needeth; and now, hang me, if I don't think I have uttered more in her favour than her commander would say to help me to a recruit, though no lad in the three kingdoms should appear willing to try how a scarlet coat would suit his boorish figure."

"That time has not yet arrived, and God forbid that it ever should, while the monarch needs a soldier in the field to protect his rights. But what say ye, my men? you have heard the recommendation that Captain Borroughcliffe has given of the Alacrity, which is altogether true— after making some allowances for language. Will ye serve? shall I order you a cheering glass a man, and lay by the gold, till I hear from the cutter that you are enrolled under the banners of the best of kings?"

Katherine Plowden, who hardly seemed to breathe, so close and intent was the interest with which she regarded the seamen, fancied she observed lurking smiles on their faces; but if her conjecture were true, their disposition to be merry went no farther, and the one who had spoken hitherto, replied, in the same calm manner as before—

"You will excuse us, if we decline shipping in the cutter, sir; we are used to distant voyages and large vessels, whereas the Alacrity is kept at coast duty, and is not of a size to lay herself alongside of a Don or a Frenchman with a double row of teeth."

"If you prefer that sort of sport, you must to the right—about for Yarmouth; there you will find ships that will meet any thing that swims," said the colonel.

"Perhaps the gentlemen would prefer abandoning the cares and dangers of the ocean for a life of ease and gayety," said the captain. "The hand that has long dallied with a marlinspike may be easily made to feel a trigger, as gracefully as alady touches the keys of her piano. In short, there is and there is not a great resemblance between the life of a sailor and that of a soldier. There are no gales of wind, or short—allowances, or reefing topsails, or shipwrecks, among soldiers—and at the same time, there is just as much, or even more grog—drinking, jollifying, care—killing fun around a canteen and an open knapsack, as there is on the end of a mess—chest, with a full can and a Saturday night's breeze. I have crossed the ocean several times, and I must own that a ship, in good weather, is very much the same as a camp or comfortable barracks."

"We have no doubt that all you say is true, sir," observed the spokesman of the three; "but what to you may seem a hardship, to us is pleasure. We have faced too many a gale to mind a cap—full of wind, and should think ourselves always in the calm latitudes, in one of your barracks, where there is nothing to do but to eat our grub, and to march a little fore and aft a small piece of green earth. We hardly know one end of a musket from the other."

"No!" said Borroughcliffe, musing; and then advancing with a quick step towards them, he cried, in a spirited manner—"attention! right dress!"

The speaker, and the seaman next him, gazed at the captain in silent wonder; but the third individual of the party, who had drawn himself a little aside, as if willing to be unnoticed, or perhaps pondering on his condition, involuntarily started at this unexpected order, and erecting himself, threw his head to the right, as promptly as if he had been on a parade ground.

"Oho! ye are apt scholars, gentlemen, and ye can learn, I see," continued Borroughcliffe. "I feel it to be proper that I detain this man till to-morrow morning, Colonel Howard, and yet I would give them better quarters than the hard benches of the guard-room."

"Act your pleasure, Captain Borroughcliffe," returned the host, "so you do but your duty to our royal master. They shall not want for cheer, and they can have a room over the servants' offices in the south side of the Abbey."

"Three rooms, my colonel, three rooms must be provided, though I give up my own."

"There are several small empty apartments there, where blankets might be taken, and the men placed for safe keeping, if you deem it necessary; though, to me, they seem like good, loyal tars, whose greatest glory it would be to serve their prince, and whose principal pleasure would consist in getting alongside of a Don or a Monsieur."

"We shall discuss these matters anon," said Borroughcliffe, dryly. "I see Miss Plowden begins to look grave at our abusing her patience so long, and I know that cold coffee is, like withered love, but a tasteless sort of a beverage. Come, gentlemen, en avant! you have seen the Thuilleries, and must have heard a little French. Mr. Christopher Dillon, know you where these three small apartments are 'situate, lying, and beings,' as your parchments read."

"I do, sir," said the complying lawyer, "and shall take much pleasure in guiding you to them. I think your

decision that of a prudent and sagacious officer, and much doubt whether Durham Castle, or some other fortress, will be thought too big to hold them, ere long."

As this speech was uttered while the men were passing from the room, its effect on them was unnoticed; but Katherine Plowden, who was left for a few moments by herself, sat and pondered over what she had seen and heard, with thoughtfulfulness of manner that was not usual to her gay and buoyant spirits. The sounds of the retiring footsteps, however, gradually grew fainter, and the return of her guardian alone, recalled the recollection of the young lady to the duties of her situation.

While engaged in the little offices of the tea-table, Katherine threw many furtive glances at the veteran; but, although he seemed to be musing, there was nothing austere or suspicious in his frank, open countenance.

"There is much useless trouble taken with these wandering seamen, sir," said Katherine, at length; "it seems to be the particular province of Mr. Christopher Dillon, to make all that come in contact with him excessively uncomfortable."

"And what has Kit to do with the detention of the men?"

"What! why, has he not undertaken to stand godfather to their prisons?—by my woman's patience, I think, Colonel Howard, this business will gain a pretty addition to the names of St. Ruth. It is already called a house, an abbey, a place, and by some a castle; let Mr. Dillon have his way for a month, and it will add gaol to the number."

"Kit is not so happy as to possess the favour of Miss Plowden; but still Kit is a worthy fellow, and a good fellow, and a sensible fellow, ay! and what is of more value than all these put together, Miss Katherine, Mr. Christopher Dillon is a faithful and loyal subject to his prince. His mother was my cousin—german, madam, and I cannot say how soon I may call him my nephew. The Dillons are of good Irish extraction, and I believe that even Miss Plowden will admit that the Howards have some pretensions to a name."

"Ah! it is those very things called names that I most allude to," said Katherine, quickly. "But an hour since, you were indignant, my dear guardian, because you suspected that I insinuated you ought to write gaoler behind the name of Howard, and even now you submit to have the office palmed upon you."

"You forget, Miss Katherine Plowden, that it is the pleasure of one of his majesty's officers to detain these men."

"But I thought that the glorious British constitution, which you so often mention," interrupted the young lady, spiritedly, "gives liberty to all who touch these blessed shores; you know, sir, that out of twenty blacks that you brought with you, how few remain; the rest having fled on the wings of the spirit of British liberty!"

This was touching a festering sore in the colonel's feelings, and his provoking ward well knew the effect her observation was likely to produce. Her guardian did not break forth in a violent burst of rage, or furnish those manifestations of his ire that he was wont to do on less important subjects, but he arose, with all his dignity concentrated in a look, and, after making a violent effort to restrain his feelings within the bounds necessary to preserve the decorum of his exit, he ventured a reply.

"That the British constitution is glorious, madam, is most true. That this island is the sole refuge where liberty has been able to find a home, is also true. The tyranny and oppression of the Congress, which are grinding down the colonies to the powder of desolation and poverty, are not worthy of the sacred name. Rebellion pollutes all that it touches, madam. Although it often commences under the sanction of holy liberty, it ever terminates in despotism. The annals of the world, from the time of the Greeks and Romans down to the present day, abundantly prove it. There was that Julius Cæsar—he was one of your people's men, and he ended a tyrant. Oliver Cromwell was another—a rebel, a demagogue, and a tyrant. The gradations, madam, are as inevitable as from childhood to youth, and from youth to age. As for the little affair that you have been pleased to mention, of the—of the—of my private concerns, I can only say that the affairs of nations are not to be judged of by domestic incidents, any more than domestic occurrences are to be judged of by national politics." The colonel, like many a better logician, mistook his antithesis for argument, and paused a moment to admire his own eloquence; but the current of his thoughts, which always flowed in torrents on this subject, swept him along in its course, and he continued—"Yes, madam, here, and here alone is true liberty to be found. With this solemn asseveration, which is not lightly made, but which is the result of sixty years' experience, I leave you, Miss Plowden; let it be a subject of deep reflection with you, for I too well understand your treacherous feelings not to know that your political errors encourage you in your personal foibles; reflect, for your own sake, if you love not only your own happiness, but your respectability and standing in the world. As for the black hounds that you spoke of, they are a

set of rebellious, mutinous, ungrateful rascals; and if ever I meet one of the damned—"

The colonel had so far controlled his feelings, as to leave the presence of the lady before he broke out into the bitter invectives we have recorded, and Katherine stood a minute, pressing her forefinger on her lips, listening to his voice as it grumbled along the gallery, until the sounds were finally excluded by the closing of a distant door. The wilful girl then shook her dark locks, and a smile of arch mischief, blended with an expression of regret, in her countenance, as she spoke to herself, while with hurried hands she threw her tea-equipage aside in a confused pile—

"It was perhaps a cruel experiment, but it has succeeded. Though prisoners ourselves, we are at least left free for the remainder of this night. These mysterious sailors must be examined more closely. If the proud eye of Edward Griffith was not glaring under the black wig of one of them, I am no judge of features; and where has Master Barnstable concealed his charming visage! for neither of the others could be he. But now for Cecilia."

Her light form glided from the room, while she was yet speaking, and flitting along the dimly lighted passages, it disappeared in one of those turnings that led to the more secret apartments of the abbey.

CHAPTER XIII.

"How! Lucia, would'st thou have me sink away
In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love—"

— Cate

The reader must not imagine that the world stood still during the occurrence of the scenes we have related. By the time the three seamen were placed in as many different rooms, and a sentinel was stationed in the gallery common to them all, in such a manner as to keep an eye on his whole charge at once, the hour had run deep into the night. Captain Borroughcliffe obeyed a summons from the colonel, who made him an evasive apology for the change in their evening's amusement, and challenged his guest to a renewal of the attack on the Madeira. This was too grateful a theme to be lightly discussed by the captain, and the abbey clock had given forth as many of its mournful remonstrances as the division of the hours would permit, before they separated. In the mean time, Mr. Dillon became invisible; though a servant, when questioned by the host on the subject, announced, that "he believed Mr. Christopher had chosen to ride over to —, to be in readiness to join the hunt, on the morning, with the dawn." While the gentlemen were thus indulging themselves in the dining parlour, and laughing over the tales of other times and hard campaigns, two very different scenes occurred in other parts of the building.

When the quite of the abbey was only interrupted by the howling of the wind, or by the loud and prolonged laughs which echoed through the passages from the joyous pair, who were thus comfortably established by the side of the bottle, a door was gently opened on one of the galleries of the "cloisters," and Katherine Plowden issued from it, wrapped in a close mantle, and holding in her hand a chamber lamp, which threw its dim light faintly along the gloomy walls in front, leaving all behind her obscured in darkness. She was, however, soon followed by two other female figures, clad in the same manner, and provided with similar lights. When all were in the gallery, Katherine drew the door softly to, and proceeded in front to lead the way.

"Hist!" said the low, tremulous voice of Cecilia, "they are yet up in the other parts of the house; and if it be as you suspect, our visit would betray them, and prove the means of their certain destruction."

"Is the laugh of Colonel Howard in his cups so singular and unknown to your ear, Cecilia, that you know it not?" said Katherine with a little spirit; "or do you forget that on such occasions he seldom leaves himself ears to hear, or eyes to see with. But follow me; it is as I suspect—it must be as I suspect; and unless we do something to rescue them, they are lost, without they have laid a deeper scheme than is apparent."

"It is a dangerous road ye both journey," added the placid tones of Alice Dunscombe; "but ye are young, and ye are credulous."

"If you disapprove of our visit," said Cecilia, "it cannot be right, and we had better return."

"No, no, I have said naught to disapprove of your present errand. If God has put the lives of those in your custody whom ye have taught yourselves to look up to with love and reverence, such as woman is bound to yield to one man, he has done it for no idle purpose. Lead us to their doors, Katherine; let us relieve our doubts, at least."

The ardent girl did not wait for a second bidding, but she led them, with light and quick steps, along the gallery, until they reached its termination, where they descended to the basement floor, by a flight of narrow steps, and carefully opening a small door, they emerged into the open air. They now stood on a small plat of grass, which lay between the building and the ornamental garden, across which they moved rapidly, concealing their lights, and bending their shrinking forms before the shivering blasts that poured their fury upon them from the ocean. They soon reached a large but rough addition to the buildings, that concealed its plain architecture behind the more laboured and highly finished parts of the edifice, into which they entered through a massive door, that stood ajar, as if to admit them.

"Chloe has been true to my orders," whispered Katherine, as they passed out of the chilling air; "now, if all the servants are asleep, our chance to escape unnoticed amounts to certainty."

It became necessary to go through the servants' hall, which they effected unobserved, as it had but one occupant, an aged black man, who, being posted with his ear within two feet of abell, in this attitude had committed himself to a deep sleep. Gliding through this hall, they entered divers long and intricate passages, all of

which seemed as familiar to Katherine as they were unknown to her companions, until they reached another flight of steps, which they ascended. They were now near their goal, and stopped to examine whether any or what difficulties were likely to be opposed to their further progress.

"Now, indeed, our case seems hopeless," whispered Katherine, as they stood, concealed by the darkness, in one end of an extremely long, narrow passage; "here is the sentinel in the building, instead of being, as I had supposed, under the windows; what is to be done now?"

"Let us return," said Cecilia, in the same manner; "my influence with my uncle is great, even though he seems unkind to us at times. In the morning I will use it to persuade him to free them, on receiving their promise to abandon all such attempts in future."

"In the morning it will be too late," returned Katherine; "I saw that demon, Kit Dillon, mount his horse, under the pretence of riding to the great hunt of to-morrow, but I know his malicious eve too well to be deceived in his errand. He is silent that he may be sure, and if to-morrow come, and find Griffith within these walls, he will be condemned to a scaffold."

"Say no more," said Alice Dunscombe, with singular emotion; "some lucky circumstance may aid us with this sentinel."

As she spoke, she advanced; they had not proceeded far, before the stern voice of the soldier challenged the party.

"'Tis no time to hesitate," whispered Katherine; "we are the ladies of the abbey, looking to our domestic affairs," she continued, aloud, "and think it a little remarkable that we are to encounter armed men, while going through our own dwelling."

The soldier respectfully presented his musket, and replied—

"My orders are to guard the doors of these three rooms, ladies; we have prisoners in them, and as for any thing else, my duty will be to serve you all in my power."

"Prisoners!" exclaimed Katherine, in affected surprise; "does Captain Borroughcliffe make St. Ruth's Abbey a gaol! Of what offences are the poor men guilty?"

"I know not, my lady; but as they are sailors, I suppose they have run from his majesty's service."

"This is singular, truly! and why are they not sent to the county prison?"

"This must be examined into," said Cecilia, dropping the mantle from before her face. "As mistress of this house, I claim a right to know whom its walls contain; you will oblige me by opening the doors, for I see you have the keys suspended from your belt."

The sentinel hesitated. He was greatly awed by the presence and beauty of the speakers, but a still voice reminded him of his duty. A lucky thought, however, interposed to relieve him from his dilemma, and at the same time to comply with the request, or, rather, order of the lady. As he handed her the keys, he said—

"Here they are, my lady; my orders are to keep the prisoners in, not to keep any one out. When you are done with them, you will please to return them to me, if it be only to save a poor fellow's eyes, for unless the door is kept locked, I shall not dare to look about me for a moment."

Cecilia promised to return the keys, and she had applied one of them to a lock, with a trembling hand, when Alice Dunscombe arrested her arm, and addressed the soldier.

"Say you there are three? are they men in years?"

"No, my lady, all good, serviceable lads, who couldn't do better than to serve his majesty, or, as it may prove, worse than to run from their colours."

"But are their years and appearance similar? I ask, for I have a friend who has been guilty of some boyish tricks, and has tried the seas, I hear, among other foolish hazards."

"There is no boy here. In the far room on the left is a smart, soldier-looking chap, of about thirty, who the captain thinks has carried a musket before now; on him I am charged to keep a particular eye. Next to him is as pretty a looking youth as eyes could wish to see, and it makes one feel mournful to think what he must come to, if he has really deserted his ship. In the room near you, is a smaller, quiet little body, who might make a better preacher than a sailor or a soldier either, he has such a gentle way with him."

Alice covered her eyes with her hand a moment, and then recovering herself, proceeded—

"Gentleness may do more with the unfortunate men than fear; here is a guinea; withdraw to the far end of the passage, where you can watch them as well as here, while we enter, and endeavour to make them confess who and

what they really are."

The soldier took the money, and after looking about him in a little uncertainty, he at length complied, as it was obviously true they could only escape by passing him, near the flight of steps. When he was beyond hearing, Alice Dunscombe turned to her companions, and a slight glow appeared in feverish spots on her cheeks, as she addressed them.

"It would be idle to attempt to hide from you, that I expect to meet the individual whose voice I must have heard in reality to-night, instead of only imaginary sounds, as I vainly, if not wickedly supposed. I have many reasons for changing my opinion, the chief of which is that he is leagued with the rebellious Americans in this unnatural war. Nay, chide me not, Miss Plowden; you will remember that I found my being on this island. I come here on no vain or weak errand, Miss Howard, but to spare human blood." She paused, as if struggling to speak calmly. "But no one can witness the interview except our God."

"Go, then," said Katherine, secretly rejoicing at her determination, "while we inquire into the characters of the others."

Alice Dunscombe turned the key, and gently opening the door, she bade her companions to tap for her, as they returned, and then instantly disappeared in the apartment.

Cecilia and her cousin proceeded to the next door, which they opened in silence, and entered slowly into the room.

Katherine Plowden had so far examined into the arrangements of Colonel Howard, as to know that at the same time he had ordered blankets to be provided for the prisoners, he had not thought it necessary to administer any further to the accommodations of men who had apparently made their beds and pillows of planks for the greater part of their lives.

The ladies accordingly found the youthful sailor whom they sought, with his body rolled in the shaggy covering, extended at his length along the naked boards, and buried in a deep sleep. So timid were the steps of his visitors, and so noiseless was their entrance, that they approached even to his side, without disturbing his slumbers. The head of the prisoner lay rudely pillowed on a billet of wood, one hand protecting his face from its rough surface, and the other thrust into his bosom, where it rested, with a relaxed grasp, on the handle of a dirk. Although he slept, and that heavily, yet his rest was unnatural and perturbed. His breathing was hard and quick, and something like the low, rapid murmurings of a confused utterance mingled with his respiration. The moment had now arrived when the character of Cecilia Howard appeared to undergo an entire change. Hitherto she had been led by her cousin, whose activity and enterprise seemed to qualify her so well for the office of guide; but now she advanced before Katherine, and, extending her lamp in such a manner as to throw the light across the face of the sleeper, she bent to examine his countenance, with keen and anxious eyes.

"Am I right?" whispered her cousin.

"May God, in his infinite compassion, pity and protect him!" murmured Cecilia, her whole frame involuntarily shuddering, as the conviction that she beheld Griffith flashed across her mind. "Yes, Katherine, it is he, and presumptuous madness has driven him here. But time presses; he must be awakened, and his escape effected at every hazard."

"Nay, then, delay no longer, but rouse him from his sleep."

"Griffith! Edward Griffith!" said the soft tones of Cecilia, "Griffith, awake!"

"Your call is useless, for they sleep nightly among tempests and boisterous sounds," said Katherine; "but I have heard it said that the smallest touch will generally cause one of them to stir."

"Griffith!" repeated Cecilia, laying her fair hand timidly on his own.

The flash of the lightning is not more nimble than the leap that the young man made to his feet, which he no sooner gained, than his dirk gleamed in the light of the lamps, as he brandished it fiercely with one hand, while with the other he extended a pistol, in a menacing attitude, towards his disturbers.

"Stand back!" he exclaimed; "I am your prisoner only as a corpse!"

The fierceness of his front, and the glaring eyeballs, that rolled wildly around him, appalled Cecilia, who shrunk back in fear, dropping her mantle from her person, but still keeping her mild eyes fastened on his countenance with a confiding gaze, that contradicted her shrinking attitude, as she replied—

"Edward, it is I; Cecilia Howard, come to save you from destruction; you are known even through your ingenious disguise."

The pistol and the dirk fell together on the blanket of the young sailor, whose looks instantly lost their disturbed expression in a glow of pleasure.

"Fortune at length favours me!" he cried. "This is kind, Cecilia; more than I deserve, and much more than I expected. But you are not alone."

"'Tis my cousin Kate; to her piercing eyes you owe your detection, and she has kindly consented to accompany me, that we might urge you to—nay, that we might, if necessary, assist you to fly. For 'tis cruel folly, Griffith, thus to tempt your fate."

"Have I tempted it, then, in vain! Miss Plowden, to you I must appeal for an answer and a justification."

Katherine looked displeased, but after a moment's hesitation, she replied—

"Your servant, Mr. Griffith. I perceive that the erudite Captain Barnstable has not only succeeded in spelling through my scrawl, but he has also given it to all hands for perusal."

"Now you do both him and me injustice," said Griffith; "it surely was not treachery to show me a plan, in which I was to be a principal actor."

"Ah! doubtless your excuses are as obedient to your calls, as your men," returned the young lady; "but how comes it that the hero of the Ariel sends a deputy to perform a duty that is so peculiarly his own? is he wont to be second in rescues?"

"Heaven forbid that you should think so meanly of him, for a moment! We owe you much, Miss Plowden, but we may have other duties. You know that we serve our common country, and have a superior with us, whose beck is our law."

"Return, then, Mr. Griffith, while you may, to the service of our bleeding country," said Cecilia, "and, after the joint efforts of her brave children have expelled the intruders from her soil, let us hope there shall come a time when Katherine and myself may be restored to our native homes."

"Think you, Miss Howard, to how long a period the mighty arm of the British king may extend that time? We shall prevail; a nation fighting for its dearest rights must ever prevail; but 'tis not the work of a day, for a people, poor, scattered, and impoverished as we have been, to beat down a power like that of England; surely you forget that in bidding me to leave you with such expectations, Miss Howard, you doom me to an almost hopeless banishment!"

"We must trust to the will of God," said Cecilia; "if he ordain that America is to be free only after protracted sufferings, I can aid her but with my prayers; but you have an arm and an experience, Griffith, that might do her better service; waste not your usefulness, then, in visionary schemes for private happiness, but seize the moments as they offer, and return to your ship, if, indeed, it is yet in safety, and endeavour to forget this mad undertaking, and, for a time, the being who has led you to the adventure."

"This is a reception that I had not anticipated," returned Griffith; "for though accident, and not intention, has thrown me into your presence this evening, I did hope that when I again saw the frigate, it would be in your company, Cecilia."

"You cannot justly reproach me, Mr. Griffith, with your disappointment, for I have not uttered or authorized a syllable that could induce you or any one to believe that I would consent to quit my uncle."

"Miss Howard will not think me presumptuous, if I remind her that there was a time when she did not think me unworthy to be intrusted with her person and her happiness."

A rich bloom mantled on the face of Cecilia, as she replied—

"Nor do I now, Mr. Griffith; but you do well to remind me of my former weakness, for the recollection of its folly and imprudence only adds to my present strength."

"Nay," interrupted her eager lover, "if I intended a reproach, or harboured a boastful thought, spurn me from you for ever, as unworthy of your favour."

"I acquit you of both, much easier than I can acquit myself of the charge of weakness and folly," continued Cecilia; "but there are many things that have occurred, since we last met, to prevent a repetition of such inconsiderate rashness on my part. One of them is," she added, smiling sweetly, "that I have numbered twelve more months to my age, and a hundred to my experience. Another, and perhaps a more important one, is, that my uncle then continued among the friends of his youth, surrounded by those whose blood mingles with his own; but here he lives a stranger, and, though he finds some consolation in dwelling in a building where his ancestors have dwelt before him, yet he walks as an alien through its gloomy passages, and would find the empty honour but a

miserable compensation for the kindness and affection of one whom he has loved and cherished from her infancy."

"And yet he is opposed to you in your private wishes, Cecilia, unless my besotted vanity has led me to believe what it would now be madness to learn was false; and in your opinions of public things, you are quite as widely separated. I should think there could be but little happiness dependant on a connexion where there is no one feeling entertained in common."

"There is, and an all-important one," said Miss Howard; "'tis our love. He is my kind, my affectionate, and, unless thwarted by some evil cause, my indulgent uncle and guardian—and I am his brother Harry's child. This tie is not easily to be severed, Mr. Griffith, though, as I do not wish to see you crazed, I shall not add that your besotted vanity has played you false; but, surely, Edward, it is possible to feel a double tie, and so to act as to discharge our duties to both. I never, never can or will consent to desert my uncle, a stranger as he is in the land whose rule he upholds so blindly. You know not this England, Griffith; she receives her children from the colonies with cold and haughty distrust, like a jealous step-mother, who is wary of the favours that she bestows on her factitious offspring."

"I know her in peace, and I know her in war," said the young sailor, proudly, "and can add, that she is a haughty friend, and a stubborn foe; but she grapples now with those who ask no more of her, than an open sea, and an enemy's favours. But this determination will be melancholy tidings for me to convey to Barnstable."

"Nay," said Cecilia, smiling, "I cannot vouch for others, who have no uncles, and who have an extra quantity of ill humour and spleen against this country, its people, and its laws, although profoundly ignorant of them all."

"Is Miss Howard tired of seeing me under the tiles of St. Ruth?" asked Katherine. "But hark! are there not footsteps approaching along the gallery?"

They listened, in breathless silence, and soon heard distinctly the approaching tread of more than one person. Voices were quite audible, and before they had time to consult on what was best to be done, the words of the speakers were distinctly heard at the door of their own apartment.

"Ay! he has a military air about him, Peters, that will make him a prize; come, open the door."

"This is not his room, your honour," said the alarmed soldier; "he quarters in the last room in the gallery."

"How know you that, fellow? come, produce the key, and open the way for me; I care not who sleeps here; there is no saying but I may enlist them all three."

A single moment of dreadful incertitude succeeded, when the sentinel was heard saying, in reply to this peremptory order—

"I thought your honour wanted to see the one with the black stock, and so left the rest of the keys at the other end of the passage; but—"

"But nothing, you loon; a sentinel should always carry his keys about him, like a gaoler; follow, then, and let me see the lad who dresses so well to the right."

As the heart of Katherine began to beat less vehemently, she said—

"'Tis Borroughcliffe, and too drunk to see that we have left the key in the door; but what is to be done? we have but a moment for consultation."

"As the day dawns," said Cecilia, quickly, "I shall send here, under the pretence of conveying you food, my own woman—"

"There is no need of risking any thing for my safety," interrupted Griffith; "I hardly think we shall be detained, and if we are, Barnstable is at hand, with a force that would scatter these recruits to the four winds of heaven."

"Ah! that would lead to bloodshed, and scenes of horror!" exclaimed Cecilia.

"Listen!" cried Katherine, "they approach again!"

A man now stopped, once more, at their door, which was opened softly, and the face of the sentinel was thrust into the apartment.

"Captain Borroughcliffe is on his rounds, and for fifty of your guineas, I would not leave you here another minute."

"But one word more," said Cecilia.

"Not a syllable, my lady, for my life," returned the man; "the lady from the next room waits for you, and, in mercy to a poor fellow, go back where you came from."

The appeal was unanswerable, and they complied, Cecilia saying, as they left the room—

"I shall send you food in the morning, young man, and directions how to take the remedy necessary to your safety."

In the passage they found Alice Dunscombe, with her face concealed in her mantle, and, it would seem by the heavy sighs that escaped from her, deeply agitated by the interview which she had just encountered.

But as the reader may have some curiosity to know what occurred to distress this unoffending lady so sensibly, we shall detain the narrative, to relate the substance of that which passed between her and the individual whom she sought.

CHAPTER XIV.

"As when a lion in his den
Hath heard the hunters' cries,
And rushes forth to meet his foes,
So did the Douglass rise—"

— percy

Alice Dunscombe did not find the second of the prisoners buried, like Griffith, in sleep, but he was seated on one of the old chairs that were in the apartment, with his back to the door, and apparently looking through the small window, on the dark and dreary scenery, over which the tempest was yet sweeping in its fury. Her approach was unheeded, until the light from her lamp glared across his eyes, when he started from his musing posture, and advanced to meet her. He was the first to speak.

"I expected this visit," he said, "when I found that you recognised my voice, and I felt a deep assurance in my breast, that Alice Dunscombe would never betray me."

His listener, though expecting this confirmation of her conjectures, was unable to make an immediate reply, but she sunk into the seat he had abandoned, and waited a few moments, as if to recover her powers.

"It was, then, no mysterious warning! no airy voice that mocked my ear; but a dread reality!" she at length said. "Why have you thus braved the indignation of the laws of your country? on what errand of fell mischief has your ruthless temper again urged you to embark?"

"This is strong and cruel language, coming from you to me, Alice Dunscombe," returned the stranger, with cool asperity; "and the time has been, when I should have been greeted, after a shorter absence, with milder terms."

"I deny it not; I cannot, if I would, conceal my infirmity from myself or you; I hardly wish it to continue unknown to the world. If I have once esteemed you—if I have plighted to you my troth, and, in my confiding folly, forgot my higher duties, God has amply punished me for the weakness, in your own evil deeds."

"Nay, let not our meeting be embittered with useless and provoking recriminations," said the other; "for we have much to say before you communicate the errand of mercy on which you have come hither. I know you too well, Alice, not to see that you perceive the peril in which I am placed, and am willing to venture something for my safety. Your mother—does she yet live?"

"She is gone in quest of my blessed father," said Alice, covering her pale face with her hands; "they have left me alone, truly, for he who was to have been all to me, was first false to his faith, and has since become unworthy of my confidence."

The stranger became singularly agitated, his usually quiet eye glancing hastily from the floor to the countenance of his companion, as he paced the room with hurried steps; at length he replied—

"There is much, perhaps, to be said in explanation, that you do not know. I left the country, because I found in it nothing but oppression and injustice, and I could not invite you to become the bride of a wanderer, without either name or fortune. But I have now the opportunity of proving my truth. You say you are alone; be so no longer, and try how far you were mistaken in believing that I should one day supply the place to you of both father and mother."

There is something soothing to a female ear in the offer of even protracted justice, and Alice spoke with less of acrimony in her tones, during the remainder of their conference, if not with less of severity in her language.

"You talk not like a man whose very life hangs but on a thread that the next minute may snap asunder. Whither would you lead me? is it to the tower at London!"

"Think not I have weakly exposed my person without a sufficient protection," returned the stranger, with cool indifference; "there are many gallant men who only wait my signal, to crush the paltry force of this officer like a worm beneath my feet."

"Then has the conjecture of Colonel Howard been true! and the manner in which the enemy's vessels have passed the shoals, is no longer a mystery! you have been their pilot!"

"I have."

"What! would ye pervert the knowledge gained in the spring-time of your guileless youth to the foul purpose of bringing desolation to the doors of those you once knew and respected! John! John! is the image of the maiden whom in her morning of beauty and simplicity I believe you did love, so faintly impressed, that it cannot soften your hard heart to the misery of those among whom she has been born, and who compose her little world."

"Not a hair of theirs shall be touched, not a thatch shall blaze, nor shall a sleepless night befall the vilest among them—and all for your sake, Alice! England comes to this contest with a seared conscience, and bloody hands, but all shall be forgotten for the present, when both opportunity and power offer, to make her feel our vengeance, even in her vitals. I came not on such an errand."

"What, then, has led you blindly into snares, where all your boasted aid would avail you nothing; for, should I call aloud your name, even here, in the dark and dreary passages of this obscure edifice, the cry would echo through the country, ere the morning, and a whole people would be found in arms to punish your audacity."

"My name has been sounded, and that in no gentle strains," returned the pilot, scornfully, "when a whole people have quailed at it; the craven, cowardly wretches, flying before the man they had wronged. I have lived to bear the banners of the new republic, proudly, in sight of the three kingdoms, when practised skill and equal arms have in vain struggled to pluck it down. Ay! Alice, the echoes of my guns are still roaring among your eastern hills, and would render my name more appalling than inviting to your sleeping yeomen."

"Boast not of the momentary success that the arm of God has yielded to your unhallowed efforts," said Alice; "for a day of severe and heavy retribution must follow; nor flatter yourself with the idle hope, that your name, terrible as ye have rendered it to the virtuous, is sufficient, of itself, to drive the thoughts of home, and country, and kin, from all who hear it. Nay, I know not that even now, in listening to you, I am not forgetting a solemn duty, which would teach me to proclaim your presence, that the land might know that her unnatural son is a dangerous burthen in her bosom."

The pilot turned quickly in his short walk; and, after reading her countenance, with the expression of one who felt his security, he said, in gentler tones—

"Would that be Alice Dunscombe! would that be like the mild, generous girl whom I knew in my youth! But, I repeat, the threat would fail to intimidate, even if you were capable of executing it. I have said that it is only to make the signal, to draw around me a force sufficient to scatter these dogs of soldiers to the four winds of heaven."

"Have you calculated your power justly, John?" said Alice, unconsciously betraying her deep interest in his safety. "Have you reckoned the probability of Mr. Dillon's arriving, accompanied by an armed band of horsemen, with the morning's sun? for it's no secret in the Abbey, that he is gone in quest of such assistance."

"Dillon!" exclaimed the pilot, starting; "who is he! and on what suspicion does he seek this addition to your guard?"

"Nay, John, look not at me, as if you would know the secrets of my heart. It was not I who prompted him to such a step; you cannot, for a moment, think that I would betray you! But too surely he has gone, and, as the night wears rapidly away, you should be using the hour of grace to effect your own security."

"Fear not for me, Alice," returned the pilot, proudly, while a faint smile struggled around his compressed lip; "and yet, I like not this movement, either. How call you his name? Dillon! is he a minion of King George?"

"He is, John, what you are not, a loyal subject of his sovereign lord the King, and, though a native of the revolted colonies, he has preserved his virtue uncontaminated amid the corruptions and temptations of the times."

"An American! and disloyal to the liberties of the human race! By Heaven, he had better not cross me; for if my arm reach him, it shall hold him forth as a spectacle of treason to the world."

"And has not the world enough of such a spectacle in yourself? Are ye not, even now, breathing your native air, though lurking through the mists of the island, with desperate intent against its peace and happiness?"

A dark and fierce expression of angry resentment flashed from the eyes of the pilot, and even his iron frame seemed to shake with emotion, as he answered—

"Call you his dastardly and selfish treason, aiming, as it does, to aggrandize a few, at the expense of millions, a parallel case to the generous ardour that impels a man to fight in the defence of sacred liberty? I might tell you that I am armed in the common cause of my fellow subjects and countrymen; that though an ocean divided us in distance, yet are we a people of the same blood, and children of the same parents, and that the hand which oppresses one, inflicts an injury on the other. But I disdain all such narrow apologies. I was born on this orb, and I

claim to be a citizen of it. A man with a soul, not to be limited by the arbitrary boundaries of tyrants and hirelings, but one who has the right as well as the inclination to grapple with oppression, in whosoever's name it is exercised, or in whatever hollow and specious shape it founds its claim to abuse our race."

"Ah! John, John, though this may sound like reason to rebellious ears, to mine it seemeth only as the ravings of insanity. It is in vain ye build up your new and disorganizing systems of rule, or rather misrule, which are opposed to all that the world has ever yet done, or will ever see done in peace and happiness. What avail your subtleties and false reasonings against the heart! It is the heart which tells us where our home is, and how to love it."

"You talk like a weak and prejudiced woman, Alice," said the pilot, more composedly; "and one who would shackle nations with the ties that bind the young and feeble of your own sex together."

"And by what holier or better bond can they be united!" said Alice. "Are not the relations of domestic life of God's establishing, and have not nations grown from families, as branches spread from the stem, till the tree overshadows the land! 'Tis an ancient and sacred tie that binds man to his nation, neither can it be severed without infamy."

The pilot smiled disdainfully, and throwing open the rough exterior of his dress, he drew forth, in succession, several articles, with a glowing pride lighting his countenance, as he offered them singly to her notice,

"See, Alice!" he said, "call you this infamy! This broad sheet of parchment is stamped with a seal of no mean importance, and it bears the royal name of the princely Louis also! And view this cross! decorated as it is with jewels, the gift of the same illustrious hand; it is not apt to be given to the children of infamy, neither is it wise or decorous to stigmatize a man who has not been thought unworthy to consort with princes and nobles, by the opprobrious name of the 'Scotch pirate.'"

"And have ye not earned the title, John, by ruthless deeds and bitter animosity! I could kiss the baubles ye show me, if they were a thousand times less splendid, had they been laid upon your breast by the hands of your lawful prince; but now they appear to my eyes only as indelible blots upon your attainted name. As to your associates, I have heard of them! and it seemeth that a queen might be better employed than encouraging by her smiles the disloyal subjects of other monarchs, though even her enemies. God only knows when his pleasure may suffer a spirit of disaffection to rise up among the people of her own nation, and then the thought that she has encouraged rebellion may prove both bitter and unwelcome."

"That the royal and lovely Antoinette has deigned to repay my services with a small portion of her gracious approbation, is not among the least of my boasts," returned the pilot, in affected humility, while secret pride was manifested even in his proud attitude. "But venture not a syllable in her dispraise, for you know not whom you censure. She is less distinguished by her illustrious birth and elevated station, than by her virtues and loveliness. She lives the first of her sex in Europe—the daughter of an emperor, the consort of the most powerful king, and the smiling and beloved patroness of a nation who worship at her feet. Her life is above all reproach, as it is above all earthly punishment, were she so lost as to merit it; and it has been the will of Providence to place her far beyond the reach of all human misfortunes."

"Has it placed her above human errors, John! punishment is the natural and inevitable consequence of sin, and unless she can say more than has ever fallen to the lot of humanity to say truly, she may yet be made to feel the chastening arm of One, to whose eyes all her pageantry and power are as vacant as the air she breathes—so insignificant must it seem when compared to his own just rule! But if you vaunt that you have been permitted to kiss the hem of the robes of the French queen, and have been the companion of high-born and flaunting ladies, clad in their richest array, can ye yet say to yourself, that amid them all ye have found one whose tongue has been bold to tell you the truth, or whose heart has sincerely joined in her false professions!"

"Certainly none have met me with the reproaches that I have this night received from Alice Dunscombe, after a separation of six long years," returned the pilot, reproachfully.

"If I have spoken to you the words of holy truth, John, let them not be the less welcome, because they are strangers to your ears. Oh! think that she who has thus dared to use the language of reproach to one whose name is terrible to all who live on the border of this island, is led to the rash act by no other motive than interest in your eternal welfare."

"Alice! Alice, you madden me with these foolish speeches! Am I a monster to frighten unprotected women and helpless children? What mean these epithets, as coupled with my name? Have you too lent a credulous ear to

the vile calumnies with which the policy of your rulers have ever attempted to destroy the fair fame of those who oppose them, and those chiefly who oppose them with success. My name may be terrible to the officers of the royal fleet, but where and how have I earned a claim to be considered formidable to the helpless and unoffending?"

Alice Dunscombe cast a furtive and timid glance at the pilot, which spoke even stronger than her words, as she replied—

"I know not that all which is said of you and your deeds is true. I have often prayed, in bitterness and sorrow, that a tenth part of that which is laid to your charge may not be heaped on your devoted head at the great and final account. But, John, I have known you long and well, and Heaven forbid, that, on this solemn occasion, which may be the last of our earthly interviews, I should be found wanting in christian duty, through a woman's weakness. I have often thought, when I have heard the gall of bitter reproach and envenomed language hurled against your name, that they who spoke so rashly, little understood the man they vituperated. But, though ye are at times, and I may say almost always, as mild and even as the smoothest sea over which ye have ever sailed, yet God has mingled in your nature a fearful mixture of fierce passions, which, roused, are more like the southern waters when troubled with the tornado. It is difficult for me to say, how far this evil spirit may lead a man, who has been goaded by fancied wrongs, to forget his country and home, and who is suddenly clothed with power to show his resentments."

The pilot listened with rooted attention, and his piercing eye seemed to reach to the seat of those thoughts which she but half expressed; still, he retained the entire command of himself, and answered more in sorrow than in anger—

"If any thing could convert me to your own peaceful and unresisting opinions, Alice, it would be the reflections that offer themselves at this conviction, that even you have been led, by the basetongues of my dastardly enemies, to doubt my honour and conduct. What is fame, when a man can be thus traduced to his nearest friends! But no more of these childish reflections! They are unworthy of myself, my office, and the sacred cause in which I have enlisted!"

"Nay, John, shake them not off," said Alice, with deep interest, unconsciously laying her hand on his arm; "they are as the dew to the parched herbage, and may freshen the feelings of your youth, and soften the heart that has grown hard, if hard it be, more by unnatural indulgence, than its own base inclinations."

"Alice Dunscombe," said the pilot, approaching her with solemn earnestness, "I have learnt much this night, though I came not in quest of such knowledge. You have taught me how powerful is the breath of the slanderer, and how frail is the tenure by which we hold our good names. Full twenty times have I met the hirelings of your prince in open battle, fighting ever manfully under that flag which was first raised to the breeze by my own hands, and which, I thank my God, I have never yet seen lowered an inch; but with no one act of cowardice or private wrong, in all that service, can I reproach myself; and yet, how am I rewarded! The tongue of the vile calumniator is keener than the sword of the warrior, and leaves a more indelible scar!"

"Never have ye uttered a truer sentiment, John, and God send that ye may encourage such thoughts to your own eternal advantage," said Alice, with engaging interest. "You say that you have risked your precious life in twenty combats, and observe how little of Heaven's favour is bestowed on the abettors of rebellion! They tell me that the world has never witnessed a more desperate and bloody struggle than this last, for which your name has been made to sound to the furthestmost ends of the isle."

"'Twill be known wherever naval combats are spoken of," interrupted the pilot, the melancholy which had begun to lower in his countenance, giving place to a look of proud exultation.

"And yet, its fancied glory cannot shield your name from wrong, nor are the rewards of the victor equal, in a temporal sense, to those which the vanquished has received. Know you that our gracious monarch, deeming your adversary's cause so sacred, has extended to him his royal favour?"

"Ay! he has dubbed him knight!" exclaimed the pilot, with a scornful and bitter laugh; "let him be again furnished with a ship, and me with another opportunity, and I promise him an earldom, if being again vanquished can constitute a claim!"

"Speak not so rashly, nor vaunt yourself of possessing a protecting power, that may desert you, John, when you most need it, and least expect the change," returned his companion; "the battle is not always to the strong, neither is the race to the swift."

"Forget you, my good Alice, that your words will admit of a double meaning? Has the battle been to the strong! Though you say not well in denying the race to the swift. Yes, yes, often and again have the dastards escaped me by their prudent speed! Alice Dunscombe, you know not a thousandth part of the torture that I have been made to feel, by high born miscreants, who envy the merit they cannot equal, and detract from the glory of deeds that they dare not attempt to emulate. How have I been cast upon the ocean like some unworthy vessel that is commissioned to do a desperate deed, and then to bury itself in the ruin it has made! How many malignant hearts have triumphed, as they beheld my canvass open, thinking that it was spread to hasten me to a gibbet, or to a tomb in the bosom of the ocean; but I have disappointed them!"

The eyes of the pilot no longer gazed with their piercing and settled meaning, but they flashed with a fierce and wild pleasure, as he continued, in a louder voice—

"Yes, bitterly have I disappointed them! Oh! the triumph over my fallen enemies has been tame, to this heartfelt exultation which places me immeasurably above those false and craven hypocrites! I begged, I implored, the Frenchmen, for the meanest of their craft, which possessed but the common qualities of a ship of war; I urged the policy and necessity of giving me such a force, for even then I promised to be found in harm's way; but, envy and jealousy robbed me of my just dues, and of more than half my glory. They call me pirate! If I have a claim to the name, it was furnished more by the paltry outfit of my friends, than by any acts towards my enemies!"

"And do not these recollections prompt you to return to your allegiance to your prince and native land, John?" said Alice, in a subdued voice.

"Away with the silly thought," interrupted the pilot, recalled to himself as if by a sudden conviction of the weakness he had betrayed; "it is ever thus where men are made conspicuous by their works—but to your visit—I have the power to rescue myself and companions from this paltry confinement, and yet I would not have it done with violence, for your sake.—Bring you the means of doing it in quiet?"

"When the morning arrives, you will be all conducted to the apartment where we first met. This will be done at the solicitation of Miss Howard, under the plea of compassion and justice, and with the professed object of inquiring into your situations. Her request will not be refused, and while your guard is stationed at the door, you will be shown, by another entrance through the private apartments of the wing, to a window, whence you can easily leap to the ground, where a thicket is at hand; afterwards we shall trust your safety to your own discretion?"

"And if this Dillon, of whom you have spoken, should suspect the truth, how will you answer to the law for aiding our escape?"

"I believe he little dreams who is among the prisoners," said Alice, musing, "though he may have detected the character of one of your companions. But it is private feeling, rather than public spirit, that urges him on."

"I have suspected something of this," returned the pilot, with a smile, that crossed those features where ungovernable passions had so lately been exhibited, with an effect, that might be likened to the last glimmering of an expiring conflagration, serving to render the surrounding ruin more obvious. "This young Griffith has led me from my direct path, with his idle imprudence, and it is right that his mistress should incur some risk. But with you, Alice, the case is different; here you are only a guest, and it is unnecessary that you should be known in the unfortunate affair. Should my name get abroad, this recreant American, this Col. Howard, will find all the favour he has purchased by his advocating the cause of tyranny, necessary to protect him from the displeasure of the ministry."

"I fear to trust so delicate a measure to the young discretion of my amiable friend," said Alice, shaking her head.

"Remember, that she has her attachment to plead in her excuse; but dare you say to the world that you still remember, with gentle feelings, the man whom you stigmatize with such opprobrious epithets!"

A slight colour gleamed over the pallid brow of Alice Dunscombe, as she uttered in a voice that was barely audible—

"There is no longer a reason why the world should know of such a weakness, though it did exist." And, as the faint glow passed away, leaving her face pale, nearly as the hue of death, her eyes kindled with unusual fire, and she added, "They can but take my life, John, and that I am ready to lay down in your service!"

"Alice!" exclaimed the softened pilot, "my kind, my gentle Alice!"—

The knock of the sentinel at the door, was heard at this critical moment. Without waiting for a reply to his summons, the man entered the apartment, and, in hurried language, declared the urgent necessity that existed for

the lady to retire. A few brief remonstrances were uttered by both Alice and the pilot, who wished to comprehend more clearly each other's intentions relative to the intended escape; but the fear of personal punishment rendered the soldier obdurate, and a dread of exposure at length induced the lady to comply. She arose, and was leaving the apartment with lingering steps, when the pilot, touching her hand, whispered to her impressively—

"Alice, we meet again before I leave this island for ever."

"We meet in the morning, John," she returned, in the same tone of voice, "in the apartments of Miss Howard."

He dropped her hand, and she glided from the room, when the impatient sentinel closed the door, and silently turned the key on his prisoner. The pilot remained in a listening attitude, until the light footsteps of the retiring pair were no longer audible, when he paced his confined apartment with perturbed steps, occasionally pausing to look out at the driving clouds, and the groaning oaks that were trembling and rocking their broad arms in the fitful gusts of the gale. In a few minutes the tempest in his own passions had gradually subsided to the desperate and still calmness that made him the man he was; when he again seated himself where Alice had found him, and began to muse on the events of the times, from which, the transition to projecting schemes of daring enterprise and mighty consequences, was but the usual employment of his active and restless mind.

CHAPTER XV.

"Sir And. I have no exquisite reason for't, but I've reason good enough."

— Twelfth Night

The countenance of Captain Borroughcliffe, when the sentinel admitted him to the apartment that he had selected, was in that state of doubtful illumination, when looks of peculiar cunning blend so nicely with the stare of vacancy, that the human face is rendered not unlike an April day, now smiling and inviting, and at the next moment clouded and dreary. It was quite apparent that the soldier had an object for his unexpected visit, by the importance of his air, and the solemnity of the manner with which he entered on the business. He waved his hand for the sentinel to retire, with lofty dignity, and continued balancing his body, during the closing of the door, and while a sound continued audible to his confused faculties, with his eyes fixed in the direction of the noise, with that certain sort of wise look, that in many men supplies the place of something better. When the captain felt himself secure from interruption, he moved round with quick military precision, in order to face the man of whom he was in quest. Griffith had been sleeping, though uneasily, and with watchfulness; and the pilot was calmly waiting a visit which it seems he had anticipated; but their associate, who was no other than Captain Manual, of the marines, was discovered in a very different condition. Though the weather was cool, and the night tempestuous, he had thrown aside his peajacket, and much of his disguise, and was sitting ruefully on his blanket, wiping, with one hand, the large drops of sweat from his forehead, and occasionally grasping his throat with the other, with a kind of convulsed, mechanical movement. He stared wildly at his visiter, though his entrance produced no other alteration in these pursuits, than a more diligent application of his handkerchief, and a more frequent grasping of his naked neck, as if he were willing to ascertain by actual experiment, what degree of pressure the part was able to sustain, without exceeding a given quantity of inconvenience.

"Comrade, I greet ye!" said Borroughcliffe, staggering to the side of his prisoner, where he seated himself with an entire absence of ceremony; "Comrade, I greet ye! Is the kingdom in danger, that gentlemen traverse the island in the uniform of the regiment of incognitus, incognitii, 'torum—dammee, how I forget my Latin! Say, my fine fellow, are you one of these 'torums?"

Manual breathed a little hard, which, considering the manner he had been using his throat, was a thing to be expected; but, swallowing his apprehensions, he answered with more spirit than his situation rendered prudent, or the occasion demanded.

"Say what you will of me, and treat me as you please, I defy any man to call me tory with truth."

"You are no 'torum! Well, then, the war office has got up a new dress! Your regiment must have earned their facings in storming some water battery, or perhaps it has done duty as marines. Am I right?"

"I'll not deny it," said Manual, more stoutly; "I have served as a marine for two years, though taken from the line of"—

"The army," said Borroughcliffe, interrupting a most damning confession of which "state line" the other had belonged to. "I kept a dog watch myself, once, on board the fleet of my Lord Howe; but it is a service that I do not envy any man. Our afternoon parades were dreadfully unsteady, for it's a time, you know, when a man wants solid ground to stand on. However, I purchased my company with some prize money that fell in my way, and I always remember the marine service with gratitude. But this is dry work. I have put a bottle of sparkling Madeira in my pocket, with a couple of glasses, which we will discuss, while we talk over more important matters. Thrust your hand into my right pocket; I have been used to dress to the front so long, that it comes mighty awkward to me to make this backward motion, as if it were into a cartridge box."

Manual, who knew not how to construe the manner or language of the other, perceived at once a good deal of plain English in this request, and he dislodged one of Colonel Howard's dusty looking bottles, with a dexterity that denoted the earnestness of his purpose. Borroughcliffe had made a suitable provision of glasses, and extracting the cork in a certain scientific manner, he tendered to his companion a bumper of the liquor, before another syllable was uttered by either of the expectants. The gentlemen concluded their draughts with a couple of smacks, that sounded not unlike the pistols of two practised duellists, though certainly a much less alarming noise; when the entertainer renewed the discourse.

"I like one of your musty-looking bottles, that is covered with dust and cobwebs, with a good southern tan on it," he said. "Such liquor does not abide in the stomach, but it gets into the heart at once, and becomes blood in the beating of a pulse. But how soon I knew you! That sort of knowledge is the freemasonry of our craft. I knew you to be the man you are, the moment I laid eyes on you in what we call our guard-room; but I thought I would humour the old soldier who lives here, by letting him have the formula of an examination, as a sort of deference to his age and former rank. But I knew you the instant I saw you. I have seen you before!"

The theory of Borroughcliffe, in relation to the incorporation of wine with the blood, might have been true in the case of the marine, whose whole frame appeared to undergo a kind of magical change by the experiment of drinking, which, the reader will understand, was diligently persevered in, while a drop remained in the bottle. The perspiration no longer rolled from his brow, neither did his throat manifest that uneasiness which had rendered such constant external applications necessary; but he settled down into an air of cool and collected curiosity and interest, which, in some measure, was the necessary concomitant of his situation.

"We may have met before, as I have been much in service, and yet I know not where you could have seen me," said Manual. "Were you ever a prisoner of war?"

"Hum! not exactly such an unfortunate devil; but a sort of conventional non-combatant. I shared the hardships, the glory, the equivocal victories, (where we killed and drove countless numbers of rebels—who were not,) and, wo is me! the capitulation of Burgoyne. But let that pass—which was more than the Yankees would allow us to do. You know not where I could have seen you? I have seen you on parade, in the field, in battle and out of battle, in camp, in barracks, in short, every where but in a drawing-room. No, no; I have never seen you before this night in a drawing-room!"

Manual stared in a good deal of wonder, and some uneasiness, at these confident assertions, which promised to put his life in no little jeopardy; and it is to be supposed that the peculiar sensation about the throat was revived, as he made a heavy draught before he said—

"You will swear to this—Can you call me by name?"

"I will swear to it in any court in Christendom," said the dogmatical soldier; "and your name is—is—Fugleman."

"If it is, I'll be damn'd!" exclaimed the other, with exulting precipitation.

"Swear not!" said Borroughcliffe, with a solemn air; "for what mattereth an empty name! Call thyself by what appellation thou wilt, I know thee. Soldier is written on thy martial front; thy knee bendeth not; nay, I even doubt if the rebellious member bow in prayer."—

"Come, sir," interrupted Manual, a little sternly; "no more of this trifling, but declare your will at once. Rebellious member, indeed! These fellows will call the skies of America rebellious heavens shortly!"

"I like thy spirit, lad," returned the undisturbed Borroughcliffe; "it sits as gracefully on a soldier, as his sash and gorget; but it is lost on an old campaigner. I marvel, however, that thou takest such umbrage at my slight attack on thy orthodoxy. I fear the fortress must be weak, where the outworks are defended with such a waste of unnecessary courage."

"I know not why or wherefore you have paid me this visit, Captain Borroughcliffe," said Manual, with a laudable discretion, which prompted him to reconnoitre the other's views a little, before he laid himself more open; "if captain be your rank, and Borroughcliffe be your name. But this I do know, that if it be only to mock me in my present situation, it is neither soldier-like nor manly; and it is what, in other circumstances, might be attended by some hazard."

"Hum!" said the other, with his immovable coolness; "I see you set the wine down as nothing, though the king drinks not as good; for the plain reason that the sun of England cannot find its way through the walls of Windsor Castle, as easily as the sun of Carolina can warm a garret covered with cedar shingles. But I like your spirit more and more. So draw yourself up in battle array, and let us have another charge at this black bottle, when I shall lay before your military eyes a plan of the whole campaign."

Manual first bestowed an inquiring glance at his companion, when, discovering no other expression than foolish cunning, which was fast yielding before the encroaching footsteps of stupid inebriety, he quietly placed himself in the desired position. The wine was drunk, when Borroughcliffe proceeded to open his communication more unreservedly.

"You are a soldier, and I am a soldier. That you are a soldier, my orderly could tell; for the dog has both seen a

campaign, and smelt villanous salt–petre, when compounded according to a wicked invention; but it required the officer to detect the officer. Privates do not wear such linen as this, which seemeth to me an unreasonably cool attire for the season; nor velvet stocks, with silver buckles; nor is there often the odorous flavour of sweet–scented pomatum to be discovered around their greasy locks. In short, thou art both soldier and officer."

"I confess it," said Manual; "I hold the rank of captain, and shall expect the treatment of one."

"I think I have furnished you with wine fit for a general," returned Borroughcliffe; "but have your way. Now, it would be apparent to men, whose faculties had not been rendered clear by such cordials as this dwelling aboundeth with, that when you officers journey through the island, clad in the uniform incognitorum, which, in your case, means the marine corps, that something is in the wind of more than usual moment. Soldiers owe their allegiance to their prince, and next to him, to war, women, and wine. Of war, there is none in the realm; of women, plenty; but wine, I regret to say, that is, good wine, grows both scarce and dear. Do I speak to the purpose, comrade?"

"Proceed," said Manual, whose eyes were not less attentive than his ears, in a hope to discover whether his true character were understood.

"En avant! in plain English, forward march! Well then, the difficulty lies between women and wine; which, when the former are pretty, and the latter rich, is a very agreeable sort of an alternative. That it is not wine of which you are in quest, I must believe, my comrade captain, or you would not go on the adventure in such shabby attire. You will excuse me, but who would think of putting any thing better than their port before a man in a pair of tarred trowsers. No! no! Hollands, green–and–yellow Hollands, is a potation good enough to set before one of thy present bearing."

"And yet I have met with him who has treated me to the choicest of the south–side Madeira?"

"Know you the very side from which the precious fluid comes! That looks more in favour of the wine. But, after all, woman, dear, capricious woman, who one moment fancies she sees a hero in regimentals, and the next, a saint in a cassock; and who always sees something admirable in a suitor, whether he be clad in tow or velvet—woman is at the bottom of this mysterious masquerading. Am I right, comrade?"

By this time, Manual had discovered that he was safe, and he returned to the conversation with a revival of all his ready wits, which had been strangely paralyzed by his previous disorder in the region of the throat. First bestowing a wicked wink on his companion, and a look that would have outdone the wisest aspect of Solomon, he replied—

"Ah! woman has much to answer for!"

"I knew it," exclaimed Borroughcliffe; "and this confession only confirms me in the good opinion I have always entertained of myself. If his majesty has any particular wish to close this American business, let him have a certain convention burnt, and a nameless person promoted, and we shall see! But, answer as you love truth; is it a business of holy matrimony, or a mere dalliance with the sweets of Cupid?"

"Of honest wedlock," said Manual, with an air as serious as if Hymen already held him in his fetters.

"'Tis honest! Is there money?"

"Is there money?" repeated Manual, with a sort of contemptuous echo. "Would a soldier part with his liberty, but with his life, unless the chains were made of gold?"

"That's the true military doctrine!" cried the other; "faith, you have some discretion in your amphibious corps, I find! But why this disguise, are the 'seniors grave,' as well as 'potent and reverend?' Why this disguise, I again ask?"

"Why this disguise!" repeated Manual, coolly; "Is there any such thing as love in your regiment without disguise? With us it is a regular symptom of the disease."

"A most just and discreet description of the passion, my amphibious comrade!" said the English officer; "and yet the symptoms in your case are attended by some very malignant tokens. Does your mistress love tar?"

"No; but she loveth me; and, of course, whatever attire I choose to appear in."

"Still discreet and sagacious! and yet only a most palpable feint to avoid my direct attack. You have heard of such a place as Gretna Green, a little to the north of this, I dare say, my aquatic comrade. Am I right?"

"Gretna Green!" said Manual, a little embarrassed by his ignorance; "some parade ground, I suppose?"

"Ay, for those who suffer under the fire of Master Cupid. A parade ground! well, there is some artful simplicity in that! But all will not do with an old campaigner. It is a difficult thing to impose on an old soldier, my

marine friend. Now listen and answer; and you shall see what it is to possess a discernment—therefore deny nothing. You are in love?"

"I deny nothing," said Manual, comprehending at once that this was his safest course.

"Your mistress is willing, and the money is ready, but the old people say, halt!"

"I am still mute."

"'Tis prudent. You say march—Gretna Green is the object; and your flight is to be by water?"

"Unless I can make my escape by water, I shall never make it," said Manual, with another sympathetic movement with his hand to his throat.

"Keep mute; you need tell me nothing. I can see into a mystery that is as deep as a well, to night. Your companions are hirelings; perhaps your shipmates; or men to pilot you on this expedition?"

"One is my shipmate, and the other is our pilot," said Manual, with more truth than usual.

"You are well provided. One thing more, and I shall become mute in my turn. Does she whom you seek lie in this house?"

"She does not; she lies but a short distance from this place; and I should be a happy fellow, could I but once more put—"

"Eyes on her. Now listen, and you shall have your wish. You possess the ability to march yet, which, considering the lateness of the hour, is no trifling privilege; open that window—is it possible to descend from it?"

Manual eagerly complied, but he turned from the place in disappointment.

"It would be certain death to attempt the leap. The devil only could escape from it."

"So I should think," returned Borroughcliffe dryly. "You must be content to pass for that respectable gentleman for the rest of your days, in St. Ruth's Abbey. For through that identical hole must you wing your flight on the pinions of love."

"But how! The thing is impossible."

"In imagination only. There is some stir; a good deal of foolish apprehension; and a great excess of idle curiosity, among certain of the tenants of this house on your account. They fear the rebels, who, we all know, have not soldiers enough to do their work neatly at home, and who of course would never think of sending any here. You wish to be snug—I wish to serve a brother in distress. Through that window you must be supposed to fly—no matter how; while by following me you can pass the sentinel, and retire peaceably, like any other mortal, on your own two stout legs."

This was a result that exceeded all that Manual had anticipated from their amicable but droll dialogue; and the hint was hardly given, before he threw on the garments that agitation had before rendered such encumbrances, and in less time than we have taken to relate it, the marine was completely equipped for his departure. In the mean time, Captain Borroughcliffe raised himself to an extremely erect posture, which he maintained, with the inflexibility of a rigid martinet. When he found himself established on his feet, the soldier intimated to his prisoner that he was ready to proceed. The door was instantly opened by Manual, and together they entered the gallery.

"Who comes there?" cried the sentinel, with a vigilance and vigour that he intended should compensate for his previous neglect of duty.

"Walk straight, that he may see you," said Borroughcliffe, with much philosophy.

"Who goes there!" repeated the sentinel, throwing his musket to a poise, with a rattling sound that echoed along the naked walls.

"Walk crooked," added Borroughcliffe, "that if he fire he may miss."

"We shall be shot at, with this folly," muttered Manual. "We are friends, and your officer is one of us."

"Stand friends—advance officer and give the countersign," cried the sentinel.

"That is much easier said than done," returned his captain; "forward! Mr. Amphibious, you can walk like a postman—move to the front, and proclaim the magical word, 'loyalty;' 'tis a standing countersign, ready furnished to my hands by mine host, the colonel; your road is then clear before you—but hark—"

Manual made an eager step forward, when, recollecting himself, he turned, and added—

"My assistants, the seamen! I can do nothing without them."

"Lo! the keys are in the doors, ready for my admission," said the Englishman; "turn them and bring out your forces."

Quick as thought, Manual was in the room of Griffith, to whom he briefly communicated the situation of things, when he re-appeared in the passage, and then proceeded on a similar errand to the room of the pilot.

"Follow, and behave as usual," he whispered; "say not a word, but trust all to me."

The pilot arose, and obeyed these instructions without asking a question, with the most admirable coolness.

"I am now ready to proceed," said Manual, when they had joined Borroughcliffe.

During the short time occupied in these arrangements, the sentinel and his captain had stood looking at each other, with great military exactitude. The former ambitious of manifesting his watchfulness; the latter awaiting the return of the marine. The captain now beckoned to Manual to advance and give the countersign.

"Loyalty," whispered Manual, when he approached the sentinel. But the soldier had been allowed time to reflect; and as he well understood the situation of his officer, he hesitated to allow the prisoner to pass. After a moment's pause, he said—

"Advance friends." At this summons, the whole party moved to the point of his bayonet; when the man continued, "The prisoners have the countersign, Captain Borroughcliffe, but I dare not let them pass."

"Why not?" asked the captain; "am I not here, sirrah; do you not know me?"

"Yes, sir, I know your honour, and respect your honour; but I was posted here by my sergeant, and ordered not to let these men pass out on any account."

"That's what I call good discipline," said Borroughcliffe, with an exulting laugh; "I knew the lad would not mind me any more than that he would obey the orders of that lamp. Here are no slaves of the lamp, my amphibious comrade; drill ye your marines in this consummate style to niceties?"

"What means this trifling?" said the pilot, sternly.

"Ah! I thought I should turn the laugh on you," cried Manual, affecting to join in the mirth; "we know all these things well, and we practise them in our corps; but though the sentinel cannot know you, the sergeant will; so let him be called, and orders be given through him to the man on post, that we may pass out."

"Your throat grows uneasy, I see," said Borroughcliffe; "you crave another bottle of the generous fluid. Well, it shall be done. Sentinel, you can throw up yon window, and give a call to the sergeant."

"The outcry will ruin us," said the pilot, in a whisper to Griffith.

"Follow me," said the young sailor. The sentinel was turning to execute the orders of his captain, as Griffith spoke; when springing forward, in an instant he wrenched the musket from his hands; a heavy blow with its butt, felled the astonished soldier to the floor; then, poisoning his weapon, Griffith exclaimed—

"Forward! we can clear our own way now!"

"On!" said the pilot, leaping lightly over the prostrate soldier, a dagger gleaming in one hand, and a pistol presented in the other.

Manual was by his side in an instant, armed in a similar manner; and the three rushed together from the building, without meeting any one to oppose their flight.

Borroughcliffe was utterly unable to follow; and so astounded was he by this sudden violence, that several minutes passed before he was restored to the use of his speech, a faculty which seldom deserted him. The man had recovered his senses and his feet, however; and the two stood gazing at each other in mute condolence. At length the sentinel broke the silence—

"Shall I give the alarm, your honour?"

"I rather think not, Peters. I wonder if there be any such thing as gratitude or good breeding in the marine corps!"

"I hope your honour will remember that I did my duty, and that I was disarmed while executing your orders."

"I can remember nothing about it, Peters, except that it is rascally treatment, and such as I shall yet make this amphibious, aquatic gentleman answer for. But, lock the door—look as if nothing had happened, and—"

"Ah! your honour, that is not so easily done as your honour may please to think. I have not any doubt but there is the print of the breech of a musket stamped on my back and shoulders, as plainly to be seen as that light."

"Then look as you please; but hold your peace, sirrah. Here is a crown to buy a plaster. I heard the dog throw away your musket on the stairs—go seek it, and return to your post; and when you are relieved, act as if nothing had happened. I take the responsibility on myself."

The man obeyed, and when he was once more armed, Borroughcliffe, a good deal sobered by the surprise, made the best of his way to his own apartment, muttering threats and execrations against the "corps of marines,

and the whole race," as he called them, "of aquatic amphibii."

CHAPTER XVI.

"Away! away! the covey's fled the cover;
Put forth the dogs, and let the falcon fly—
I'll spend some leisure in the keen pursuit,
Nor longer waste my hours in sluggish quiet."

The soldier passed the remainder of the night in the heavy sleep of a bacchanalian, and awoke late on the following morning, only when aroused by the entrance of his servant. When the customary summons had induced the captain to unclothe his eye-lids, he arose in his bed, and after performing the usual operation of a diligent friction on his organs of vision, he turned sternly to his man, and remarked, with an ill-humour that seemed to implicate the innocent servant in the fault which his master condemned—

"I thought, sirrah, that I ordered Sergeant Drill not to let a drum-stick touch a sheep-skin while we quartered in the dwelling of this hospitable old colonel! Does the fellow despise my commands; or does he think the roll of a drum, echoing through the crooked passages of St. Ruth, a melody that is fit to disturb the slumbers of its inmates!"

"I believe, sir," returned the man, "it was the wish of Colonel Howard himself, that on this occasion the sergeant should turn out the guard by the roll of the drum."

"The devil it was! I see the old fellow loves to tickle the drum of his own ear now and then, with familiar sounds; but have you had a muster of the cattle from the farm-yard too, as well as a parade of the guard? I hear the trampling of feet, as if the old abbey were a second ark, and all the beasts of the field were coming aboard of us!"

"'Tis nothing but the party of dragoons from —, who are wheeling into the court-yard, sir, where the colonel has gone out to receive them."

"Court-yard! light dragoons!" repeated Borroughcliffe, in amazement; "and has it come to this, that twenty stout fellows of the—th are not enough to guard such a rookery as this old abbey, against the ghosts and north-east storms, but we must have horse to reinforce us. Hum! I suppose some of these booted gentlemen have heard of this South-Carolina Madeira."

"Oh, no, Sir!" cried his man, "it is only the party that Mr. Dillon went to seek last evening, after you saw fit, sir, to put the three pirates in irons."

"Pirates in irons!" said Borroughcliffe, again passing his hands over his eyes, though in a more reflecting manner than before; "ha! oh! I remember to have put three suspicious looking rascals in the black-hole, or some such place; but what can Mr. Dillon, or the light dragoons, have to do with these fellows?"

"That we do not know, sir; but it is said below, sir, as some suspicions had fallen on their being conspirators and rebels from the colonies, and that they were great officers and Tories in disguise; some said that one was General Washington, and others, that it was only three members of the Yankee parliament, come over to get our good old English fashions, to set themselves up with."

"Washington! Members of Congress! Go— go, simpleton, and learn how many these troopers muster, and what halt they make; but stay, place my clothes near me. Now, do as I bid you; and if the dragoon officer inquire for me, make my respects, and tell him I shall be with him soon. Go, fellow; go."

When the man left the room, the captain, while he proceeded with the business of the toilet, occasionally gave utterance to the thoughts that crowded on his recollection, after the manner of a soliloquy.

"Ay! my commission to a half-pay ensigncy, that some of these lazy fellows, who must have a four-legged beast to carry them to the wars, have heard of the 'south side.' South side! I believe I must put an advertisement in the London Gazette, calling that amphibious soldier to an account. If he be a true man, he will not hide himself under his incognito, but will give me a meeting. If that should fail, damme, I'll ride across to Yarmouth, and call out the first of the mongrel breed that I fall in with. 'Sdeath! was ever such an insult practised on a gentleman, and a soldier, before! Would that I only knew his name! Why, if the tale should get abroad, I shall be the standing joke of the mess-table, until some greater fool than myself can be found. It would cost me at least six duels to get rid of it. No, no; not a trigger will I pull in my own regiment about the silly affair; but I'll have a crack at some

marine in very revenge; for that is no more than reasonable. That Peters! if the scoundrel should dare whisper any thing of the manner in which he was stamped with the breech of themusket! I can't flog him for it, but if I don't make it up to him, the first time he gives me a chance, I am ignorant of the true art of balancing regimental accounts."

By the time the recruiting officer had concluded this soliloquy, which affords a very fair exposition of the current of his thoughts, he was prepared to meet the new comers, and he accordingly descended to the court-yard, as in duty bound, to receive them in his proper person. Borroughcliffe encountered his host, in earnest conversation with a young man in a cavalry uniform, in the principal entrance of the abbey, and was greeted by the former with—

"A good morning to you, my worthy guard and protector! here is rare news for your loyal ears. It seems that our prisoners are enemies to the king in disguise; and Cornet Fitzgerald— Captain Borroughcliffe, of the —th, permit me to make you acquainted with Mr. Fitzgerald, of the —th Light Dragoons." While the soldiers exchanged their salutations, the old man continued—"The cornet has been kind enough to lead down a detachment of his troop, to escort the rogues up to London, or some other place, where they will find enough good and loyal officers to form a court martial, that can authorize their execution as spies. Christopher Dillon, my worthy kinsman, Kit, saw into their real characters, at a glance, while you and I, like two unsuspecting boys, thought the rascals would have made fit men to serve the king. But Kit has an eye and a head that few enjoy like him, and I would that he might receive his dues at the English bar."

"It is to be desired, sir," said Borroughcliffe, with a grave aspect, that was produced chiefly by his effort to give effect to his sarcasm, but a little, also, by the recollection of the occurrences that were yet to be explained; "but what reason has Mr. Christopher Dillon to believe that the three seamen are more or less than they seem?"

"I know not what; but a good and sufficient reason, I will venture my life," cried the colonel; "Kit is a lad for reasons, which you know is the foundation of his profession, and knows how to deliver them manfully in the proper place; but you know, gentlemen, that the members of the bar cannot assume the open and bold front that becomes a soldier, without often endangering the cause in which they are concerned. No, no, trust me, Kit has his reasons, and in good time will he deliver them."

"I hope, then," said the captain, carelessly, "that it may be found that we have had a proper watch on our charge, Colonel Howard; I think you told me the windows were too high for an escape in that direction, for I had no sentinel outside of the building."

"Fear nothing, my worthy friend," cried his host; "unless your men have slept, instead of watching, we have them safe; but, as it will be necessary to convey them away before any of the civil authority can lay hands on them, let us proceed to the rear, and unkennel the dogs. A party of the horse might proceed with them to—, while we are breaking our fasts. It would be no wise thing to let the civilians deal with them, for they seldom have a true idea of the nature of the crime."

"Pardon me, sir," said the young officer of horse; "I was led to believe, by Mr. Dillon, that we might meet with a party of the enemy in some little force, and that I should find a pleasanter duty than that of a constable; besides, sir, the laws of the realm guaranty to the subject a trial by his peers, and it is more than I dare do to carry the men to the barracks, without first taking them before a magistrate."

"Ay! you speak of loyal and dutiful subjects," said the colonel; "and, as respects them, doubtless, you are right; but such privileges are withheld from enemies and traitors."

"It must be first proved that they are such, before they can receive the treatment or the punishment that they merit," returned the young man, a little positively, who felt the more confidence, because he had only left the Temple the year before. "If I take charge of the men at all, it will be only to transfer them safely to the civil authority."

"Let us go, and see the prisoners," cried Borroughcliffe, with a view to terminate a discussion that was likely to wax warm, and which he knew to be useless; "perhaps they may quietly enrol themselves under the banners of our sovereign, when all other interference, save that of wholesome discipline, will become unnecessary."

"Nay, if they are of a rank in life to render such a step probable," returned the cornet, "I am well content that the matter should be thus settled. I trust, however, that Captain Borroughcliffe will consider that the —th light dragoons has some merit in this affair, and that we are far short of our numbers in the second squadron."

"We shall not be difficult at a compromise," returned the captain; "there is one a piece for us, and a toss of a

guinea shall determine who has the third man. Sergeant! follow, to deliver over your prisoners, and relieve your sentry."

As they proceeded, in compliance with this arrangement, to the building in the rear, Colonel Howard, who made one of the party, observed—

"I dispute not the penetration of Captain Borroughcliffe, but I understand Mr. Christopher Dillon that there is reason to believe one of these men, at least, to be of a class altogether above that of a common soldier, in which case your plans may fall to the ground."

"And who does he deem the gentleman to be?" asked Borroughcliffe—"A Bourbon in disguise, or a secret representative of the rebel congress?"

"Nay, nay; he said nothing more; my kinsman Kit keeps a close mouth, whenever Dame Justice is about to balance her scales. There are men who may be said to have been born to be soldiers; of which number I should call the Earl Cornwallis, who makes such head against the rebels in the two Carolinas; others seem to be intended by nature for divines, and saints on earth, such as their Graces of York and Canterbury; while another class appear as if it were impossible for them to behold things, unless with discriminating, impartial, and disinterested eyes; to which, I should say, belong my Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, and my kinsman, Mr. Christopher Dillon. I trust, gentlemen, that when the royal arms have crushed this rebellion, that his majesty's ministers will see the propriety of extending the dignity of the peerage to the colonies, as a means of reward to the loyal, and a measure of policy, to prevent future disaffection; in which case, I hope to see my kinsman decorated with the ermine of justice, bordering the mantle of a peer."

"Your expectations, my excellent sir, are right reasonable, as I doubt not your kinsman will become, at some future day, that which he is not at present, unhappily for his deserts, right honourable," said Borroughcliffe. "But be of good heart, sir, from what I have seen of his merits, I doubt not that the law will yet have its revenge in due season, and that we shall be properly edified and instructed how to attain elevation in life, by the future exaltation of Mr. Christopher Dillon; though by what title he is to be then known, I am at a loss to say."

Colonel Howard was too much occupied with his own ex parte views of the war and things in general, to observe the shrewd looks that were exchanged between the soldiers; but he answered with perfect simplicity—

"I have reflected much on that point; and have come to the opinion, that as he has a small estate on that river, he should cause his first barony to be known by the title of 'Pedee.'"

"Barony!" echoed Borroughcliffe; "I trust the new nobles of a new world will disdain the old worn out distinctions of a hackneyed universe—eschew all baronies, mine host, and cast earldoms and dukedoms to the shades. The immortal Locke has unlocked his fertile mind to furnish you with appellations suited to the originality of your condition, and the nature of your country. Ah! here comes the Cacique of Pedee, in his proper person!"

As Borroughcliffe spoke, they were ascending the flight of stone steps which led to the upper apartments, where the prisoners were still supposed to be confined; and, at the same moment, the sullen, gloomy features of Dillon were seen as he advanced along the lower passage, with an expression of malicious exultation hovering above his dark brow, that denoted his secret satisfaction. As the hours had passed away, the period had come round when the man who had been present at the escape of Griffith and his friends, was again posted to perform the duty of sentinel. As this soldier well knew the situation of his trust, he was very coolly adjusted, with his back against the wall, endeavouring to compensate himself for his disturbed slumbers during the night, when the sounds of the approaching footsteps warned him to assume the appearance of watchfulness.

"How now, fellow!" cried Borroughcliffe; "what have you to say of your charge?"

"I believe the men sleep, your honour; for I have heard no noises from the rooms since I relieved the last sentinel."

"The lads are weary, and are right to catch what sleep they can in their comfortable quarters," returned the captain. "Stand to your arms, sirrah! and throw back your shoulders; and do not move like a crab, or a train-band corporal; do you not see an officer of horse coming up? Would you disgrace your regiment!"

"Ah! your honour, Heaven only knows whether I shall ever get my shoulders even again."

"Buy another plaster," said Borroughcliffe, slipping a shilling into his hand; "observe, you know nothing but your duty."

"Which is, your honour—"

"To mind me and be silent. But here comes the sergeant with his guard, he will relieve you."

The rest of the party had stopped at the other end of the gallery, to allow the few files of soldiers, who were led by the orderly, to pass them, when they all moved toward the prisons in a body. The sentinel was relieved in due military style; when Dillon placed his hand on one of the doors, and said, with a malicious sneer,

"Open here first, Mr. Sergeant; this cage holds the man we most want."

"Softly, softly, my Lord Chief Justice, and most puissant Cacique," said the captain; "the hour has not yet come to empanel a jury of fat yeomen, and no man must interfere with my boys but myself."

"The rebuke is harsh, I must observe, Captain Borroughcliffe," said the colonel; "but I pardon it because it is military. No, no, Kit; these nice points must be left to martial usages. Be not impatient, my cousin; I doubt not the hour will come, when you shall hold the scales of justice, and satisfy your loyal longings on many a traitor. Zounds! I could almost turn executioner myself in such a cause!"

"I can curb my impatience, sir," returned Dillon, with hypocritical meekness, and great self-command, though his eyes were gleaming with savage exultation. "I beg pardon of Captain Borroughcliffe, if, in my desire to render the civil authority superior to the military, I have trespassed on your customs."

"You see, Borroughcliffe!" exclaimed the colonel, exultingly, "the lad is ruled by an instinct in all matters of law and justice. I hold it to be impossible that a man thus endowed can ever become a disloyal subject. But our breakfast waits, and Mr. Fitzgerald has breathed his horse this cool morning; let us proceed to the examination."

Borroughcliffe motioned to the sergeant to open the door, when the whole party entered the vacant room.

"Your prisoner has escaped!" cried the cornet, after a single moment employed in making sure of the fact.

"Never! it must not, shall not be," cried Dillon, quivering with rage, as he glanced his eyes furiously around the apartment; "here has been treachery! and foul treason to the king!"

"By whom committed, Mr. Christopher Dillon?" said Borroughcliffe, knitting his brow, and speaking in a suppressed tone; "dare you, or any man living, charge treason to the—th?"

A very different feeling from rage appeared now to increase the shivering propensities of the future judge, who at once perceived it was necessary to moderate his passion, and he returned, as it were by magic, to his former plausible and insinuating manner, as he replied—

"Colonel Howard will understand the cause of my warm feelings, when I tell him, that this very room contained, last night, that disgrace to his name and country, as well as traitor to his king, Edward Griffith, of the rebel navy."

"What!" exclaimed the colonel, starting, "has that recreant youth dared to pollute the threshold of St. Ruth with his footstep! but you dream, Kit; there would be too much hardihood in the act."

"It appears not, sir," returned the other; "for though in this very apartment he most certainly was, he is here no longer. And yet from this window, though open, escape would seem to be impossible, even with much assistance."

"If I thought that the contumelious boy had dared to be guilty of such an act of gross impudence," cried the colonel, "I should be tempted to resume my arms, in my old age, to punish his effrontery. What! it is not enough that he entered my dwelling in the colony, availing himself of the distraction of the times, with an intent to rob me of my choicest jewel, ay! gentlemen, even of my brother Harry's daughter—but that he must also invade this hallowed island, with a like purpose, thus thrusting his treason, as it were, into the presence of his abused prince! No, no, Kit, thy loyalty misleads thee; he has never dared to do the deed!"

"Listen, sir, and you shall be convinced," returned the pliant Christopher. "I do not wonder at your unbelief; but as good testimony is the soul of justice, I cannot resist its influence. You know, that two vessels, corresponding in appearance to the two rebel cruisers that annoyed us so much in the Carolinas, have been seen on the coast for several days, which induced us to beg the protection of Captain Borroughcliffe. Three men are found, the day succeeding that on which we hear that these vessels came within the shoals, stealing through the grounds of St. Ruth, in sailors' attire. They are arrested, and in the voice of one of them, sir, I immediately detected that of the traitor Griffith. He was disguised, it is true, and cunningly so; but when a man has devoted his whole life to the business of investigating truth," he added, with an air of much modesty, "it is difficult to palm any disguise on his senses."

Colonel Howard was strongly impressed with the probability of these conjectures, and the closing appeal confirmed him immediately in his kinsman's opinion, while Borroughcliffe listened, with deep interest, to the speakers, and more than once bit his lip with vexation. When Dillon concluded, the soldier exclaimed—

"I'll swear there was a man among them, who has been used to the drill."

"Nothing more probable, my worthy friend," said Dillon; "for as the landing was never made without some evil purpose, rely on it, he came not unguarded or unprotected. I dare say, the three were all officers, and one of them might have been of the marines. That they had assistance is certain, and it was because I felt assured they had a force secreted at hand, that I went in quest of the reinforcement."

There was so much plausibility, and, in fact, so much truth, in all this, that conviction was unwillingly admitted by Borroughcliffe, who walked aside, a moment, to conceal the confusion which, in spite of his ordinary inflexibility of countenance, he felt was manifesting itself in his rubric visage, while he muttered—

"The amphibious dog! he was a soldier, but a traitor and an enemy. No doubt he will have a marvellous satisfaction in delighting the rebellious ears of his messmates, by rehearsing the manner in which he poured cold water down the back of one Borroughcliffe, of the —th, who was amusing him, at the same time, by pouring good, rich south-side Madeira down his own rebellious throat. I have a good mind to exchange my scarlet coat for a blue jacket, on purpose to meet the sly rascal on the other element, where we can discuss this matter over again. Well, sergeant, do you find the other two?"

"They are gone together, your honour," returned the orderly, who just then re-entered from an examination of the other apartments; "and unless the evil one helped them off, it's a mysterious business to me."

"Colonel Howard," said Borroughcliffe, gravely, "your precious south-side cordial must be banished from the board, regularly with the cloth, until I have my revenge; for satisfaction of this insult is mine to claim, and I seek it this instant. Go, Drill; detail a guard for the protection of the house, and feed the rest of your command, then beat the general, and we will take the field. Ay! my worthy veteran host, for the first time since the days of the unlucky Charles Stuart, there shall be a campaign in the heart of England."

"Ah! rebellion, rebellion! accursed, unnatural, unholy rebellion, caused the calamity then and now!" exclaimed the colonel.

"Had I not better take a hasty refreshment for my men and their horses?" asked the cornet; "and then make a sweep for a few miles along the coast? It may be my luck to encounter the fugitives, or some part of their force."

"You have anticipated my very thoughts," returned Borroughcliffe. "The Cacique of Pedee may close the gates of St. Ruth, and, by barring the windows, and arming the servants, he can make a very good defence against an attack, should they think proper to assail our fortress; after he has repulsed them, leave it to me to cut off their retreat."

Dillon but little relished this proposal; for he thought an attempt to storm the abbey would be the most probable course adopted by Griffith, in order to rescue his mistress; and the jurist had none of the spirit of a soldier in his composition. In truth, it was this deficiency that had induced him to depart in person, the preceding night, in quest of the reinforcement, instead of sending an express on the errand. But the necessity of devising an excuse for a change in this dangerous arrangement, was obviated by Colonel Howard, who exclaimed, as soon as Borroughcliffe concluded his plan—

"To me, Captain Borroughcliffe, belongs of right, the duty of defending St. Ruth, and it shall be no boy's play to force my works; but Kit would rather try his chance in the open field, I know. Come, let us to our breakfast, and then he shall mount, and act as guide to the horse, along the difficult passes of the seashore."

"To breakfast then let it be," cried the captain; "I distrust not my new commander of the fortress; and in the field the Cacique for ever! We follow you, my worthy host."

This arrangement was hastily executed in all its parts. The gentlemen swallowed their meal in the manner of men who ate only to sustain nature, and as a duty; after which the whole house became a scene of bustling activity. The troops were mustered and paraded; Borroughcliffe, setting apart a guard for the building, placed himself at the head of the remainder of his little party, and they moved out of the court-yard in open order, and at quick time. Dillon joyfully beheld himself mounted on one of the best of Colonel Howard's hunters, where he knew that he had the control, in a great measure, of his own destiny; his bosom throbbing with a powerful desire to destroy Griffith, while he entertained a lively wish to effect his object without incurring any personal risk. At his side was the young cornet, seated with practised grace in his saddle, who, after giving time for the party of foot soldiers to clear the premises, glanced his eye along the few files he led, and then gave the word to move. The little division of horse wheeled briskly into open column, and the officer, touching his cap to Colonel Howard, they dashed through the gateway together, and pursued their route towards the seaside, at a hand gallop.

The veteran lingered a few minutes, while the clattering of hoofs was to be heard, or the gleam of arms was visible, to hear and gaze at sounds and sights that he still loved; after which, he proceeded, in person, and not without a secret enjoyment of the excitement, to barricado the doors and windows, with an undaunted determination of making, in case of need, a stout defence.

St. Ruth lay but a short two miles from the ocean; to which numerous roads led, through the grounds of the abbey, which extended to the shore. Along one of these paths, Dillon conducted his party, until, after a few minutes of hard riding, they approached the cliffs, when, posting his troopers under cover of a little copse, the cornet rode in advance, with his guide, to the verge of the perpendicular rocks, whose bases were washed by the foam that was still capped in white sheets from the surges of the subsiding sea.

The gale had broken, before the escape of the prisoners, and as the power of the eastern tempest had gradually diminished, a light current from the south, that blew directly along the land, prevailed; and, though the ocean still rolled in fearful billows, their surfaces were smooth, and they were becoming, at each moment, less precipitous, and more regular. The eyes of the horse-men were cast in vain over the immense expanse of water, that was glistening brightly under the rays of the sun, which had just risen from its bosom, in quest of some object or distant sail, that might confirm their suspicions, or relieve their doubts. But every thing of that description appeared to have avoided the dangerous navigation, during the violence of the late tempest, and Dillon was withdrawing his eyes in disappointment, from the vacant view, when, as they fell towards the shore, he beheld that which caused him to exclaim—

"There they go! and, by Heaven, they will escape!"

The cornet looked in the direction of the other's finger, when he beheld, at a short distance from the land, and apparently immediately under his feet, a little boat, that looked like a dark shell upon the water, rising and sinking amid the waves, as if the men it obviously contained, were resting on their oars in idle expectation.

"'Tis they!" continued Dillon; "or, what is more probable, it is their boat waiting to convey them to their vessel; no common business would induce seamen to lie in this careless manner, within such a narrow distance of the surf."

"And what is to be done? They cannot be made to feel horse where they are; nor would the muskets of the foot touch them. A light three pounder would do its work handsomely on them!"

The strong desire which Dillon entertained to intercept, or rather to destroy the party, rendered him prompt at expedients. After a moment of musing, he replied—

"The runaways must yet be on the land; and by scouring the coast, and posting men at proper places, their retreat can easily be prevented; in the mean time I will ride under the spur to— bay, where one of his majesty's cutters now lies at anchor—It is but half an hour of hard riding, and I can be on board of her. The wind blows directly in her favour, and if we can once bring her down behind that headland, we shall infallibly cut off or sink these midnight depredators."

"Off, then!" cried the cornet, whose young blood was boiling for a skirmish; "you will at least drive them to the shore, where I can deal with them."

The words were hardly uttered, before Dillon was out of sight, after galloping furiously along the cliffs, and turning short into a thick wood, that lay in his route. The loyalty of this gentleman was altogether of a calculating nature, and was intimately connected with what he considered his fealty to himself. He believed that the possession of Miss Howard's person and fortune were advantages that would much more than counterbalance any elevation that he was likely to obtain by the revolution of affairs in his native colony. He considered Griffith as the only natural obstacle to his success, and he urged his horse forward with a desperate determination to work the ruin of the young sailor, before another sun had set. When a man labours in an evil cause, with such feelings, and with such incentives, he seldom slights or neglects his work; and Mr. Dillon, accordingly, was on board the *Alacrity*, several minutes short of the time in which he had promised to perform the distance.

The plain old seaman, who commanded the cutter, listened to his tale with cautious ears; and examined into the state of the weather, and other matters, connected with his duty, with the slow and deliberative decision of one who had never done much to acquire a confidence in himself, and who had been but niggardly rewarded for the little he had actually performed.

As Dillon was urgent, however, and the day seemed propitious, he at length decided to act as he was desired, and the cutter was accordingly gotten under way.

A crew of something less than fifty men, moved with no little of their commander's deliberation; but as the little vessel rounded the point behind which she had been anchored, her guns were cleared, and the usual preparations were completed for immediate and actual service.

Dillon, sorely against his will, was compelled to continue on board, in order to point out the place where the unsuspecting boatmen were expected to be entrapped. Every thing being ready, when they had gained a safe distance from the land, the *Alacrity* was kept away before the wind, and glided along the shore, with a swift and easy progress, that promised a speedy execution of the business in which her commander had embarked.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Pol.

Very like a whale."

— Shakspeare

Notwithstanding the object of their expedition was of a public nature, the feelings which had induced both Griffith and Barnstable to accompany the pilot, with so much willingness, it will easily be seen, were entirely personal. The short intercourse that he had maintained with his associates, enabled the mysterious leader of their party to understand the characters of his two principal officers so thoroughly, as to induce him, when he landed, with the purpose of reconnoitring to ascertain whether the objects of his pursuit still held their determination to assemble at the appointed hour, to choose Griffith and Manual as his only associates, leaving Barnstable in command of his own vessel, to await their return, and to cover their retreat. A good deal of argument, and some little of the authority of his superior officer, was necessary to make Barnstable quietly acquiesce in this arrangement; but as his good sense told him that nothing should be unnecessarily hazarded, until the moment to strike the final blow had arrived, he became gradually more resigned, taking care, however, to caution Griffith to reconnoitre the abbey at the same time they were reconnoitring — house. It was the strong desire of the latter to comply with this injunction, which carried them a little out of their proper path, and led to the consequences that we have partly related. The evening of that day was the time when the pilot intended to complete his enterprise, thinking to entrap his game while enjoying the festivities that usually succeeded their sports, and an early hour in the morning was appointed when Barnstable should appear at the nearest point to the abbey, to take off his countrymen, in order that they might be as little as possible subjected to the gaze of their enemies, by daylight. If they failed to arrive at the appointed time, his instructions were, to return to his schooner, which lay snugly embayed in a secret and retired haven, that but few ever approached, either by land or water.

While the young cornet still continued gazing at the whale-boat, (for it was the party from the schooner that he saw,) the hour had expired for the appearance of Griffith and his companions, and Barnstable reluctantly determined to comply with the letter of his instructions, and to leave them to their own sagacity and skill to regain the Ariel. The boat had been suffered to ride in the edge of the surf, since the appearance of the sun, and the eyes of her crew were kept anxiously fixed on the cliffs, though in vain, to discover the signal that was to call them to the place of landing. After looking at his watch for the twentieth time, and as often casting glances of uneasy dissatisfaction towards the shore, the lieutenant exclaimed—

"A charming prospect, this, Master Coffin, but rather too much poetry in it for your taste; I believe you relish no land that is of a harder consistency than mud!"

"I was born on the waters, sir," returned the cockswain, from his snug abode, where he was disposed with his usual economy of room, "and it's according to all things for a man to love his natyve soil. I'll not deny, Captain Barnstable, but I would rather drop my anchor on a bottom that won't broom a keel, but, at the same time, I harbour no great malice against dry land."

"I shall never forgive it, myself, if any accident has befallen Griffith, in this excursion," rejoined the lieutenant; "his pilot may be a better man on the water than on terra firma, long Tom."

The cockswain turned his solemn visage, with an extraordinary meaning, towards his commander, before he replied—

"For as long a time as I've followed the waters, sir, and that has been ever since I've drawn my rations, seeing that I was born while the boat was crossing Nantucket shoals, I've never known a pilot come off in greater need, than the one we fell in with, when we made that stretch or two on the land, in the dog-watch of yesterday."

"Ay! the fellow has played his part like a man; the occasion was great, and it seems that he was quite equal to his work."

"The frigate's people tell me, sir, that he handled the ship like a top," continued the cockswain; "but she is a ship that is a natural inimy of the bottom!"

"Can you say as much for this boat, Master Coffin?" cried Barnstable; "keep her out of the surf, or you'll have us rolling in upon the beach, presently, like an empty water-cask; you must remember that we cannot all wade,

like yourself, in two-fathom-water."

The cockswain cast a cool glance at the crests of foam that were breaking over the tops of the billows, within a few yards of where their boat was riding, and called aloud to his men—

"Pull a stroke or two; away with her into dark water."

The drop of the oars resembled the movements of a nice machine, and the light boat skimmed along the water like a duck, that approaches to the very brink of some imminent danger, and then avoids it, at the most critical moment, apparently without an effort. While this necessary movement was making, Barnstable arose, and surveyed the cliffs, with keen eyes, and then turning once more in disappointment from his search, he said—

"Pull more from the land, and let her run down, at an easy stroke, to the schooner. Keep a look-out at the cliffs, boys; it is possible that they are stowed in some of the holes in the rocks, for it's no daylight business they are on."

The order was promptly obeyed, and they had glided along for near a mile, in this manner, in the most profound silence, when suddenly the stillness was broken by a heavy rush of air, and a dash of the water, seemingly at no great distance from them.

"By heaven, Tom," cried Barnstable, starting, "there is the blow of a whale."

"Ay, ay, sir," returned the cockswain, with undisturbed composure; "here is his spout, not half a mile to seaward; the easterly gale has driven the creature to leeward, and he begins to find himself in shoal water. He's been sleeping, while he should have been working to windward!"

"The fellow takes it coolly, too! he's in no hurry to get an offing!"

"I rather conclude, sir," said the cockswain rolling over his tobacco in his mouth, very composedly, while his little sunken eyes began to twinkle with pleasure at the sight, "the gentleman has lost his reckoning, and don't know which way to head, to take himself back into blue water."

"'Tis a fin-back!" exclaimed the lieutenant; "he will soon make head-way, and be off."

"No, sir, 'tis a right whale," answered Tom; "I saw his spout; he threw up a pair of as pretty rainbows as a Christian would wish to look at. He's a raal oil-butt, that fellow!"

Barnstable laughed, turned himself away from the tempting sight, and tried to look at the cliffs; and then unconsciously bent his longing eyes again on the sluggish animal, who was throwing his huge carcass, at times, for many feet from the water, in idle gambols. The temptation for sport, and the recollection of his early habits, at length prevailed over his anxiety in behalf of his friends, and the young officer inquired of his cockswain—

"Is there any whale-line in the boat, to make fast to that harpoon which you bear about with you in fair weather or foul?"

"I never trust the boat from the schooner without part of a shot, sir," returned the cockswain; "there is something natral in the sight of a tub to my old eyes."

Barnstable looked at his watch, and again at the cliffs, when he exclaimed, in joyous tones—

"Give strong way, my hearties! There seems nothing better to be done; let us have a stroke of a harpoon at that impudent rascal."

The men shouted spontaneously, and the old cockswain suffered his solemn visage to relax into a small laugh, while the whale-boat sprung forward like a courser for the goal. During the few minutes they were pulling towards their game, long Tom arose from his crouching attitude in the stern-sheets, and transferred his huge frame to the bows of the boat, where he made such preparations to strike the whale as the occasion required. The tub, containing about half of a whale-line, was placed at the feet of Barnstable, who had been preparing an oar to steer with, in place of the rudder, which was unshipped, in order that, if necessary, the boat might be whirled round, when not advancing.

Their approach was utterly unnoticed by the monster of the deep, who continued to amuse himself with throwing the water, in two circular spouts, high into the air, occasionally flourishing the broad flukes of his tail with a graceful but terrific force, until the hardy seamen were within a few hundred feet of him, when he suddenly cast his head downward, and, without an apparent effort, reared his immense body for many feet above the water, waving his tail violently, and producing a whizzing noise, that sounded like the rushing of winds.

The cockswain stood erect, poising his harpoon, ready for the blow; but when he beheld the creature assume this formidable attitude, he waved his hand to his commander, who instantly signed to his men to cease rowing. In this situation the sportsmen rested a few moments, while the whale struck several blows on the water, in rapid

succession, the noise of which re-echoed along the cliffs, like the hollow reports of so many cannon. After this wanton exhibition of his terrible strength, the monster sunk again into his native element, and slowly disappeared from the eyes of his pursuers.

"Which way did he head, Tom?" cried Barnstable, the moment the whale was out of sight.

"Pretty much up and down, sir," returned the cockswain, whose eye was gradually brightening with the excitement of the sport; "he'll soon run his nose against the bottom, if he stands long on that course, and will be glad to get another snuff of pure air; send her a few fathoms to starboard, sir, and I promise we shall not be out of his track."

The conjecture of the experienced old seaman proved true, for, in a few minutes, the water broke near them, and another spout was cast into the air, when the huge animal rushed, for half his length, in the same direction, and fell on the sea, with a turbulence and foam equal to that which is produced by the launching of a vessel, for the first time, into its proper element. After this evolution, the whale rolled heavily, and seemed to rest from further efforts.

His slightest movements were closely watched by Barnstable and his cockswain, and when he was in a state of comparative rest, the former gave a signal to his crew, to ply their oars once more. A few long and vigorous strokes sent the boat directly up to the broadside of the whale, with its bows pointing towards one of the fins, which was, at times, as the animal yielded sluggishly to the action of the waves, exposed to view. The cockswain poised his harpoon, with much precision, and then darted it from him with a violence that buried the iron in the blubber of their foe. The instant the blow was made, long Tom shouted, with singular earnestness—

"Starn all!"

"Stern all!" echoed Barnstable; when the obedient seamen, by united efforts, forced the boat in a backward direction, beyond the reach of any blow from their formidable antagonist. The alarmed animal, however, meditated no such resistance; ignorant of his own power, and of the insignificance of his enemies, he sought refuge in flight. One moment of stupid surprise succeeded the entrance of the iron, when he cast his huge tail into the air, with a violence that threw the sea around him into increased commotion, and then disappeared, with the quickness of lightning, amid a cloud of foam.

"Snub him!" shouted Barnstable; "hold on, Tom; he rises already."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the composed cockswain, seizing the line, which was running out of the boat with a velocity that rendered such a manœuvre rather hazardous, and causing it to yield more gradually round the large loggerhead that was placed in the bows of the boat for that purpose. Presently the line stretched forward, and, rising to the surface, with tremulous vibrations, it indicated the direction in which the animal might be expected to re-appear. Barnstable had cast the bows of the boat towards that point, before the terrified and wounded victim rose once more to the surface, whose time was, however, no longer wasted in his sports, but who cast the waters aside, as he forced his way, with prodigious velocity, along their surface. The boat was dragged violently in his wake, and cut through the billows with a terrific rapidity, that, at moments, appeared to bury the slight fabric in the ocean. When long Tom beheld his victim throwing his spouts on high again, he pointed with exultation to the jetting fluid, which was streaked with the deep red of blood, and cried—

"Ay! I've touched the fellow's life! it must be more than two foot of blubber that stops my iron from reaching the life of any whale that ever sculled the ocean!"

"I believe you have saved yourself the trouble of using the bayonet you have rigged for alance," said his commander, who entered into the sport with all the ardour of one whose youth had been chiefly passed in such pursuits; "feel your line, Master Coffin; can we haul alongside of our enemy? I like not the course he is steering, as he tows us from the schooner."

"'Tis the creater's way, sir," said the cockswain; "you know they need the air in their nostrils, when they run, the same as a man; but lay hold, boys, and let us haul up to him."

The seamen now seized the whale-line, and slowly drew their boat to within a few feet of the tail of the fish, whose progress became sensibly less rapid, as he grew weak with the loss of blood. In a few minutes he stopped running, and appeared to roll uneasily on the water, as if suffering the agony of death.

"Shall we pull in, and finish him, Tom?" cried Barnstable; "a few sets from your bayonet would do it."

The cockswain stood examining his game, with cool discretion, and replied to this interrogatory—

"No, sir, no—he's going into his flurry; there's no occasion for disgracing ourselves by using a soldier's

weapon in taking a whale. Starn off, sir, starn off! the creator's in his flurry!"

The warning of the prudent cockswain was promptly obeyed, and the boat cautiously drew off to a distance, leaving to the animal a clear space, while under its dying agonies. From a state of perfect rest, the terrible monster threw its tail on high, as when in sport, but its blows were trebled in rapidity and violence, till all was hid from view by a pyramid of foam, that was deeply died with blood. The roarings of the fish were like the bellowings of a herd of bulls, and to one who was ignorant of the fact, it would have appeared as if a thousand monsters were engaged in deadly combat, behind the bloody mist that obstructed the view. Gradually, these effects subsided, and when the discoloured water again settled down to the long and regular swell of the ocean, the fish was seen, exhausted, and yielding passively to its fate. As life departed, the enormous black mass rolled to one side, and when the white and glistening skin of the belly became apparent, the seamen well knew that their victory was achieved.

"What's to be done now," said Barnstable, as he stood and gazed with a diminished excitement at their victim; "he will yield no food, and his carcass will probably drift to land, and furnish our enemies with the oil."

"If I had but that creator in Boston Bay," said the cockswain, "it would prove the making of me; but such is my luck for ever! Pull up, at any rate, and let me get my harpoon and line—the English shall never get them while old Tom Coffin can blow."

"Don't speak too fast," said the strokesman of the boat; "whether he gets your iron or not, here he comes in chase!"

"What mean you, fellow?" cried Barnstable.

"Captain Barnstable can look for himself," returned the seaman, "and tell whether I speak truth."

The young sailor turned, and saw the Alacrity, bearing down before the wind, with all her sails set, as she rounded a headland, but a short half league to windward of the place where the boat lay.

"Pass that glass to me," said the captain with steady composure. "This promises us work in one of two ways; if she be armed, it has become our turn to run; if not, we are strong enough to carry her."

A very brief survey made the experienced officer acquainted with the true character of the vessel in sight; and, replacing the glass with much coolness, he said,

"That fellow shows long arms, and ten teeth, beside King George's pennant from his top—mast—head. Now, my lads, you are to pull for your lives; for whatever may be the notions of Master Coffin on the subject of his harpoon, I have no inclination to have my arms pinioned by John Bull, though his majesty himself put on the irons."

The men well understood the manner and meaning of their commander; and, throwing aside their coats, they applied themselves in earnest to their task. For half an hour a profound silence reigned in the boat, which made an amazing progress. But many circumstances conspired to aid the cutter; she had a fine breeze, with smooth water, and a strong tide in her favour; and, at the expiration of the time we have mentioned, it was but too apparent that the distance between the pursued and pursuers was lessened nearly half. Barnstable preserved his steady countenance, but there was an expression of care gathering around his dark brow, which indicated that he saw the increasing danger of their situation.

"That fellow has long legs, Master Coffin," he said, in a cheerful tone; "your whale—line must go overboard, and the fifth oar must be handled by your delicate hands."

Tom arose from his seat, and proceeding forward, he cast the tub and its contents together into the sea, when he seated himself at the bow oar, and bent his athletic frame with amazing vigour to the task.

"Ah! there is much of your philosophy in that stroke, long Tom," cried his commander; "keep it up, boys, and if we gain nothing else, we shall at least gain time for deliberation. Come, Master Coffin, what think you; we have three resources before us, let us hear which is your choice: first, we can turn and fight and be sunk; secondly, we can pull to the land, and endeavour to make good our retreat to the schooner in that manner; and, thirdly, we can head to the shore, and possibly by running under the guns of that fellow, get the wind of him, and keep the air in our nostrils, after the manner of the whale. Damn the whale! but for the tow the black rascal gave us, we should have been out of sight of this rover!"

"If we fight," said Tom, with quite as much composure as his commander manifested, "we shall be taken or sunk; if we land, sir, I shall be taken for one man, as I never could make any headway on dry ground; and if we try to get the wind of him by pulling under the cliffs, we shall be cut off by a parcel of lubbers that I can see

running along their edges, hoping, I dare say, that they shall be able to get a skulking shot at a boat's crew of honest seafaring men."

"You speak with as much truth as philosophy, Tom," said Barnstable, who saw his slender hopes of success curtailed, by the open appearance of the horse and foot on the cliffs. "These Englishmen have not slept the last night, and I fear Griffith and Manual will fare but badly. That fellow brings a cap full of wind down with him—'tis just his play, and he walks like a race-horse. Ha! he begins to be in earnest!"

While Barnstable was speaking, a column of white smoke was seen issuing from the bows of the cutter, and as the report of a cannon was wafted to their ears, the shot was seen skipping from wave to wave, tossing the water in spray, and flying to a considerable distance beyond them. The seamen cast cursory glances in the direction of the passing ball, but it produced no manifest effect in either their conduct or appearance. The cockswain, who scanned its range with an eye of more practice than the rest, observed, "That's a lively piece for its metal, and it speaks with a good clear voice; but if they hear it aboard the Ariel, the man who fired it will be sorry it wasn't born dumb."

"You are the prince of philosophers, Master Coffin!" cried Barnstable; "there is some hope in that; let the Englishman talk away, and my life on it, the Ariels don't believe it is thunder; hand me a musket—I'll draw another shot."

The piece was given to Barnstable, who discharged it several times, as if to taunt their enemies, and the scheme was completely successful. Goaded by the insults, the cutter discharged gun after gun at the little boat, throwing the shot frequently so near as to wet her crew with the spray, but without injuring them in the least. The failure of these attempts to injure them, excited the mirth of the reckless seamen, instead of creating any alarm; and whenever a shot came nearer than common, the cockswain would utter some such expression as—

"A ground swell, a long shot, and a small object, make a clean target;" or, "A man must squint straight to hit a boat."

As, notwithstanding their unsuccessful gunnery, the cutter was constantly gaining on the whale-boat, there was a prospect of a speedy termination of the chase, when the report of a cannon was thrown back like an echo from one of the Englishman's discharges, and Barnstable and his companions had the pleasure of seeing the Ariel stretching slowly out of the little bay where she had passed the night, with the smoke of the gun of defiance curling above her taper masts.

A loud and simultaneous shout of rapture was given by the lieutenant and all his boat's-crew, at this cheering sight, while the cutter took in all her light sails, and, as she hauled up on a wind, she fired a whole broadside at the successful fugitives. Many stands of grape, with several round shot, flew by the boat, and fell upon the water, near them, raising a cloud of foam, but without doing any injury.

"She dies in a flurry," said Tom, casting his eyes at the little vortex into which the boat was then entering.

"If her commander be a true man," cried Barnstable, "he'll not leave us on so short an acquaintance. Give way, my souls! give way! I would see more of this loquacious cruiser."

The temptation for exertion was great, and it was not disregarded by the men; in a few minutes the whale-boat reached the schooner, when the crew of the latter received their commander and his companions with shouts and cheers that rung across the waters, and reached the ears of the disappointed spectators on the verge of the cliffs.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Thus guided, on their course they bore,
Until they near'd the mainland shore;
When frequent on the hollow blast
Wild shouts of merriment were cast."

— Lord of the Isles

The joyful shouts and hearty cheers of the Ariel's crew continued for some time after her commander had reached her deck. Barnstable answered the congratulations of his officers by cordial shakes of the hand, and after waiting for the ebullition of delight among the seamen to subside a little, he beckoned with an air of authority for silence.

"I thank you, my lads, for your good will," he said, when all were gathered around him in deep attention; "they have given us a tough chase, and if you had left us another mile to go, we had been lost. That fellow is a King's cutter, and though his disposition to run to leeward is a good deal mollified, yet he shows signs of fight. At any rate, he is stripping off some of his clothes, which looks as if he were game. Luckily for us, Captain Manual has taken all his marines ashore with him, (though what he has done with them or himself, is a mystery,) or we should have had our decks lumbered with live cattle; but, as it is, we have a good working breeze, tolerably smooth water, and a dead match! There is a sort of national obligation on us to whip that fellow, and, therefore, without more words about the matter, let us turn to and do it, that we may get our breakfasts."

To this specimen of marine eloquence, the crew cheered as usual; the young men burning for the combat, and the few old sailors who belonged to the schooner, shaking their heads with infinite satisfaction, and swearing by sundry strange oaths, that their captain "could talk, when there was need of such thing, like the best Dictionary that ever was launched."

During this short harangue, and the subsequent comments, the Ariel had been kept, under a cloud of canvass, as near to the wind as she could lie, and as this was her best sailing, she had stretched swiftly out from the land, to a distance whence the cliffs, and the soldiers who were spread along their summits, became plainly visible. Barnstable turned his glass repeatedly, from the cutter to the shore, as different feelings predominated in his breast, before he again spoke.

"If Mr. Griffith is stowed away among those rocks," he at length said, "he shall see as pretty an argument discussed, in as few words, as he ever listened to, provided the gentlemen in yonder cutter have not changed their minds as to the road they intend to journey—what think you, Mr. Merry?"

"I wish with all my heart and soul, sir," returned the fearless boy, "that Mr. Griffith was safe aboard us; it seems the country is alarmed, and God knows what will happen if he is taken! as to the fellow to windward, he'll find it easier to deal with the Ariel's boat, than with her mother; but he carries a broad sail, I question if he means to show play."

"Never doubt him, boy," said Barnstable, "he is working off the shore, like a man of sense, and besides, he has his spectacles on, trying to make out what tribe of Yankee Indians we belong to. You'll see him come to the wind presently, and send a few pieces of iron down this way, by the way of letting us know where to find him. Much as I like your first lieutenant, Mr. Merry, I would rather leave him on the land this day, than see him on my decks. I want no fighting captain to work this boat for me! but tell the drummer, sir, to beat to quarters."

The boy, who was staggering under the weight of his melodious instrument, had been expecting this command, and, without waiting for the midshipman to communicate the order, he commenced that short rub-a-dub air, that will at any time rouse a thousand men from the deepest sleep, and cause them to fly to their means of offence, with a common soul. The crew of the Ariel had been collected in groups, studying the appearance of the enemy, cracking their jokes, and waiting only for this usual order to repair to the guns; and at the first tap of the drum, they spread with steadiness to the different parts of the little vessel, where their various duties called them. The cannon were surrounded by small parties of vigorous and athletic young men; the few marines were drawn up in array with muskets; the officers appeared in their boarding caps, with pistols stuck in their belts and naked sabres in their hands. Barnstable paced his little quarter-deck with a firm tread, dangling a

speaking trumpet, by its lanyard, on his fore-finger, or occasionally applying the glass to his eye, which, when not in use, was placed under one arm, while his sword was resting against the foot of the mainmast; a pair of heavy ship's pistols were thrust in his belt also; and piles of muskets, boarding-pikes, and naked sabres, were placed on different parts of the deck. The laugh of the seamen was heard no longer; and those who spoke, uttered their thoughts only in low and indistinct whispers.

The English cutter held her way from the land, until she got an offing of more than two miles, when she reduced her sails to a yet smaller number, and heaving into the wind, she fired a gun in a direction opposite to that which pointed to the Ariel.

"Now I would wager a quintal of codfish, Master Coffin," said Barnstable, "against the best cask of porter that was ever brewed in England, that fellow believes a Yankee schooner can fly in the wind's eye! If he wishes to speak to us, why don't he give his cutter a little sheet, and come down."

The cockswain had made his arrangements for the combat, with much more method and philosophy than any other man in the vessel. When the drum beat to quarters, he threw aside his jacket, vest, and shirt, with as little hesitation as if he stood under an American sun, and with all the discretion of a man who had engaged in an undertaking that required the free use of his utmost powers. As he was known to be a privileged individual in the Ariel, and one whose opinions, in all matters of seamanship, were regarded as oracles by the crew, and were listened to by his commander with no little demonstration of respect, the question excited no surprise. He was standing at the breech of his long gun, with his brawny arms folded on a breast that had been turned to the colour of blood by long exposure, his grizzled locks fluttering in the breeze, and his tall form towering far above the heads of all near him.

"He hugs the wind, sir, as if it was his sweet-heart," was his answer; "but he'll let go his hold, soon; and if he don't, we can find a way to make him fall to leeward."

"Keep a good full!" cried the commander, in a stern voice, "and let the vessel go through the water. That fellow walks well, long Tom; but we are too much for him on a bowline; though, if he continue to draw ahead in this manner, it will be night before we can get alongside him."

"Ay, ay, sir," returned the cockswain; "them cutters carries a press of canvass, when they seem to have but little; their gaffs are all the same as young booms, and spread a broad head to their mainsails. But it's no hard matter to knock a few cloths out of their bolt-ropes, when she will both drop astern and to leeward."

"I believe there is good sense in your scheme, this time," said Barnstable, "for I am anxious about the frigate's people—though I hate a noisy chase; speak to him, Tom, and let us see if he will answer."

"Ay, ay, sir," cried the cockswain, sinking his body in such a manner as to let his head fall to a level with the cannon that he controlled, when, after divers orders, and sundry movements, to govern the direction of the piece, he applied a match, with a rapid motion, to the priming. An immense body of white smoke rushed from the muzzle of the cannon, followed by a sheet of vivid fire, until, losing its power, it yielded to the wind, and, as it rose from the water, spread like a cloud, and, passing through the masts of the schooner, was driven far to leeward, and soon blended in the mists which were swiftly scudding before the fresh breezes of the ocean.

Although many curious eyes were watching this beautiful sight from the cliffs, there was too little of novelty in the exhibition to attract a single look, of the crew of the schooner, from the more important examination of the effect of the shot on their enemy. Barnstable sprang lightly on a gun, and watched the instant when the ball would strike, with keen interest, while long Tom threw himself aside from the line of the smoke, with a similar intention; holding one of his long arms extended towards his namesake, with a finger on the vent, and supporting his frame by placing the hand of the other on the deck, as his eyes glanced through an opposite port-hole, in an attitude that most men might have despaired of imitating with success.

"There go the chips!" cried Barnstable. "Bravo! Master Coffin, you never planted iron in the ribs of an Englishman with more judgment; let him have another piece of it, and if he like the sport, we'll play a game of long bowls with him!"

"Ay, ay, sir," returned the cockswain, who, the instant he witnessed the effects of his shot, had returned to superintend the reloading of his gun; "if he holds on half an hour longer, I'll dub him down to our own size, when we can close, and make an even fight of it."

The drum of the Englishman was now, for the first time, heard, rattling across the waters, and echoing the call to quarters, that had already proceeded from the Ariel.

"Ah! you have sent him to his guns!" said Barnstable; "we shall now hear more of it; wake him up, Tom—wake him up."

"We shall start him an end, or put him to sleep altogether, shortly," said the deliberate cockswain, who never allowed himself to be at all hurried, even by his commander. "My shot are pretty much like a shoal of porpoises, and commonly sail in each others' wake. Stand by—heave her breech forward—so; get out of that, you damned young reprobate, and let my harpoon alone."

"What are you at, there, Master Coffin?" cried Barnstable; "are you tongue-tied?"

"Here's one of the boys skylarking with my harpoon in the lee scuppers, and by—and—by, when I shall want it most, there'll be a no—man's—land to hunt for it in."

"Never mind the boy, Tom; send him aft here, to me, and I'll polish his behaviour; give the Englishman some more iron."

"I want the little villain to pass up my cartridges," returned the angry old seaman; "but if you'll be so good, sir, as to hit him a crack or two, now and then, as he goes by you to the magazine, the monkey will learn his manners, and the schooner's work will be all the better done for it. A young herring-faced monkey! to meddle with a tool ye don't know the use of. If your parents had spent more of their money on your education, and less on your outfit, you'd ha' been a gentleman to what ye are now."

"Hurrah! Tom, hurrah!" cried Barnstable, a little impatiently; "is your namesake never to open his throat again!"

"Ay, ay, sir; all ready," grumbled the cockswain, "depress a little; so—so; a damn'd young baboon—behav'd curmudgeon; overhaul that forward fall more; stand by with your match—but I'll pay him! fire." This was the actual commencement of the fight; for as the shot of Tom Coffin travelled, as he had intimated, very much in the same direction, their enemy found the sport becoming too hot to be endured in silence; and the report of the second gun from the Ariel, was instantly followed by that of the whole broadside of the Alacrity. The shot of the cutter flew in a very good direction, but her guns were too light to give them efficiency at that distance, and as one or two were heard to strike against the bends of the schooner, and fall back, innocuously, into the water, the cockswain, whose good humour became gradually restored, as the combat thickened, remarked, with his customary apathy—

"Them count for no more than love taps—does the Englishman think that we are firing salutes!"

"Stir him up, Tom! every blow you give him will help to open his eyes," cried Barnstable, rubbing his hands with glee, as he witnessed the success of his efforts to close.

Thus far the cockswain and his crew had the fight, on the part of the Ariel, altogether to themselves, the men who were stationed at the smaller and shorter guns, standing in perfect idleness by their sides; but in ten or fifteen minutes the commander of the Alacrity, who had been staggered by the weight of the shot that had struck him, found that it was no longer in his power to retreat, if he wished it; when he decided on the only course that was left for a brave man to pursue, and steered, boldly, in such a direction as would soonest bring him in contact with his enemy, without exposing his vessel to be raked by his fire. Barnstable watched each movement of his foe with eagle eyes, and when the vessels had got within a lessened distance, he gave the order for a general fire to be opened. The action now grew warm and spirited on both sides. The power of the wind was counteracted by the constant explosion of the cannon; and instead of driving rapidly to leeward, a white canopy of curling smoke hung above the Ariel, or rested on the water, lingering in her wake, so as to mark the path by which she was approaching to a closer and still deadlier struggle. The shouts of the young sailors, as they handled their instruments of death, became more animated and fierce, while the cockswain pursued his occupation with the silence and skill of one who laboured in a regular vocation. Barnstable was unusually composed and quiet, maintaining the grave deportment of a commander on whom rested the fortunes of the contest, at the same time that his dark eyes were dancing with the fire of suppressed animation.

"Give it them!" he occasionally cried, in a voice that might be heard amid the bellowing of the cannon; "never mind their cordage, my lads; drive home their bolts, and make your marks below their ridge ropes."

In the mean time, the Englishman played a manful game. He had suffered a heavy loss by the distant cannonade, which no metal he possessed could retort upon his enemy; but he struggled nobly to repair the error in judgment with which he had begun the contest. The two vessels gradually drew nigher to each other, until they both entered into the common cloud, created by their fire, which thickened and spread around them in such a

manner as to conceal their dark hulls from the gaze of the curious and interested spectators on the cliffs. The heavy reports of the cannon were now mingled with the rattling of muskets and pistols, and, streaks of fire might be seen, glancing like flashes of lightning through the white cloud, which enshrouded the combatants, and many minutes of painful uncertainty followed, before the deeply interested soldiers, who were gazing at the scene, discovered on whose banners victory had alighted.

We shall follow the combatants into their misty wreath, and display to the reader the events as they occurred.

The fire of the Ariel was much the most quick and deadly, both because she had suffered less, and her men were less exhausted; and the cutter stood desperately on to decide the combat, after grappling, hand to hand. Barnstable anticipated her intention, and well understood her commander's reason for adopting this course, but he was not a man to calculate coolly his advantages, when pride and daring invited him to a more severe trial. Accordingly, he met the enemy half-way, and, as the vessels rushed together, the stern of the schooner was secured to the bows of the cutter, by the joint efforts of both parties. The voice of the English commander was now plainly to be heard, in the uproar, calling to his men to follow him.

"Away there, boarders! repel boarders on the starboard quarter!" shouted Barnstable through his trumpet.

This was the last order that the gallant young sailor gave with this instrument, for, as he spoke, he cast it from him, and seizing his sabre, flew to the spot where the enemy was about to make his most desperate effort. The shouts, execrations, and tauntings of the combatants, now succeeded to the roar of the cannon, which could be used no longer with effect, though the fight was still maintained with spirited discharges of the small arms.

"Sweep him from his decks!" cried the English commander, as he appeared on his own bulwarks, surrounded by a dozen of his bravest men; "drive the rebellious dogs into the sea!"

"Away there, marines!" retorted Barnstable, firing his pistol at the advancing enemy; "leave not a man of them to sup his grog again."

The tremendous and close volley that succeeded this order, nearly accomplished the command of Barnstable to the letter, and the commander of the Alacrity, perceiving that he stood alone, reluctantly fell back on the deck of his own vessel, in order to bring on his men once more.

"Board her! gray beards and boys, idlers and all!" shouted Barnstable, springing in advance of his crew—a powerful arm arrested the movement of the dauntless seaman, and before he had time to recover himself, he was drawn violently back to his own vessel, by the irresistible grasp of his cockswain.

"The fellow's in his flurry," said Tom, "and it wouldn't be wise to go within reach of his flukes; but I'll just step ahead and give him a set with my harpoon."

Without waiting for a reply, the cockswain reared his tall frame on the bulwarks, and was in the attitude of stepping on board of his enemy, when a sea separated the vessels, and he fell with a heavy dash of the waters into the ocean. As twenty muskets and pistols were discharged at the instant he appeared, the crew of the Ariel supposed his fall to be occasioned by his wounds, and were rendered doubly fierce by the sight, and the cry of their commander to—

"Revenge long Tom! board her; long Tom or death!"

They threw themselves forward in irresistible numbers, and forced a passage, with much blood-shed, to the fore-castle of the Alacrity. The Englishman was overpowered, but still remained undaunted—he rallied his crew, and bore up most gallantly to the fray. Thrusts of pikes, and blows of sabres were becoming close and deadly, while muskets and pistols were constantly discharged by those who were kept at a distance by the pressure of the throng of closer combatants.

Barnstable led his men, in advance, and became a mark of peculiar vengeance to his enemies, as they slowly yielded before his vigorous assaults. Chance had placed the two commanders on opposite sides of the cutter's deck, and the victory seemed to incline towards either party, wherever these daring officers directed the struggle in person. But the Englishman, perceiving that the ground he maintained in person was lost elsewhere, made an effort to restore the battle by changing his position, followed by one or two of his best men. A marine, who preceded him, levelled his musket within a few feet of the head of the American commander, and was about to fire, when Merry glided among the combatants, and passed his dirk into the body of the man, who fell at the blow; shaking his piece, with horrid imprecations, the wounded soldier prepared to deal his vengeance on his youthful assailant, when the fearless boy leaped within its muzzle, and buried his own keen weapon in his heart.

"Hurrah!" shouted the unconscious Barnstable, from the edge of the quarter-deck, where, attended by a few

men, he was driving all before him. "Revenge—long Tom and victory!"

"We have them!" exclaimed the Englishman; "handle your pikes! we have them between two fires."

The battle would probably have terminated very differently from what previous circumstances had indicated, had not a wild looking figure appeared in the cutter's channels at that moment, issuing from the sea, and gaining the deck at the same instant. It was long Tom, with his iron visage rendered fierce by his previous discomfiture, and his grizzled locks drenched with the briny element, from which he had risen, looking like Neptune with his trident. Without speaking, he poised his harpoon, and with a powerful effort, pinned the unfortunate Englishman to the mast of his own vessel.

"Starn all!" cried Tom, by a sort of instinct, when the blow was struck; and catching up the musket of the fallen marine, he dealt out terrible and fatal blows with its butt, on all who approached him, utterly disregarding the use of the bayonet on its muzzle. The unfortunate commander of the *Alacrity* brandished his sword with frantic gestures, while his eyes rolled in horrid wildness, when he writhed for an instant in his passing agonies, and then, as his head dropped lifeless upon his gored breast, he hung against the spar, a spectacle of dismay to his crew. A few of the Englishmen stood, chained to the spot in silent horror at the sight, but most of them fled to their lower deck, or hastened to conceal themselves in the secret parts of the vessel, leaving to the Americans the undisputed possession of the *Alacrity*.

Two thirds of the cutter's crew suffered either in life or limbs, by this short struggle; nor was the victory obtained by Barnstable without paying the price of several valuable lives. The first burst of conquest was not, however, the moment to appreciate the sacrifice, and loud and reiterated shouts, proclaimed the exultation of the conquerors. As the flush of victory subsided, however, recollection returned, and Barnstable issued such orders as humanity and his duty rendered necessary. While the vessels were separating, and the bodies of the dead and wounded were removing, the conqueror paced the deck of his prize, as if lost in deep reflection. He passed his hand, frequently, across his blackened and blood-stained brow, while his eyes would rise to examine the vast canopy of smoke that was hovering above the vessels, like a dense fog exhaling from the ocean. The result of his deliberations was soon announced to his crew.

"Haul down all your flags," he cried; "set the Englishman's colours again, and show the enemy's jack above our own ensign in the *Ariel*."

The appearance of the whole channel—fleet within half gun shot, would not have occasioned more astonishment among the victors, than this extraordinary mandate. The wondering seamen suspended their several employments, to gaze at the singular change that was making in the flags, those symbols that were viewed with a sort of reverence, but none presumed to comment openly on the procedure, except long Tom, who stood on the quarter-deck of the prize, straightening the pliable iron of the harpoon which he had recovered, with as much care and diligence as if it were necessary to the maintenance of their conquest. Like the others, however, he suspended his employment, when he heard this order, and manifested no reluctance to express his dissatisfaction at the measure.

"If the Englishmen grumble at the fight, and think it not fair play," muttered the old cockswain, "let us try it over again, sir; as they are somewhat short of hands, they can send a boat to the land, and get off a gang of them lazy riptyles, the soldiers, who stand looking at us, like so many red lizzards crawling on a beach, and we'll give them another chance; but damme, if I see the use of whipping them, if this is to be the better-end of the matter."

"What's that you're grumbling there, like a dead north-easter, you horse mackerel!" said Barnstable; "where are our friends and countrymen who are on the land! are we to leave them to swing on gibbets or rot in dungeons!"

The cockswain listened with great earnestness, and when his commander had spoken, he struck the palm of his broad hand against his brawny thigh, with a report like a pistol, and answered,

"I see how it is, sir; you reckon the red coats have Mr. Griffith in tow. Just run the schooner into shoal water, Captain Barnstable, and drop an anchor, where we can get the long gun to bear on them, and give me the whale-boat and five or six men to back me—they must have long legs if they get an offing before I run them aboard!"

"Fool! do you think a boat's crew could contend with fifty armed soldiers!"

"Soldiers!" echoed Tom, whose spirits had been strongly excited by the conflict, snapping his finger with ineffable disdain, "that for all the soldiers that were ever rigged: one whale could kill a thousand of them! and

here stands the man that has kill'd his round hundred of whales!"

"Pshaw, you grampus, do you turn braggart in your old age!"

"It's no bragging, sir, to speak a log-book truth! but if Captain Barnstable thinks that old Tom Coffin carries a speaking trumpet for a figure head, let him pass the word forrard to man the boats."

"No, no, my old master at the marlingspike," said Barnstable, kindly, "I know thee too well, thou brother of Neptune! but, shall we not throw the bread-room dust in those Englishmen's eyes, by wearing their bunting awhile, till something may offer to help our captured countrymen."

The cockswain shook his head, and cogitated a moment, as if struck with sundry new ideas, when he answered—

"Ay, ay, sir; that's blue-water-philosophy: as deep as the sea! Let the riptyles clew up the corners of their mouths to their eye-brows, now! when they come to hear the ra'al yankee truth of the matter, they will sheet them down to their leather neckcloths!"

With this reflection the cockswain was much consoled, and the business of repairing damages and securing the prize, proceeded without further interruption on his part. The few prisoners who were unhurt, were rapidly transferred to the Ariel. While Barnstable was attending to this duty, an unusual bustle drew his eyes to one of the hatchways, where he beheld a couple of his marines dragging forward a gentleman, whose demeanour and appearance indicated the most abject terror. After examining the extraordinary appearance of this individual, for a moment, in silent amazement, the lieutenant exclaimed—

"Who have we here! some amateur in fights! an inquisitive, wonder-seeking non-combatant, who has volunteered to serve his king, and perhaps draw a picture, or write a book, to serve himself! Pray, sir, in what capacity did you serve in this vessel?"

The captive ventured a sidelong glance at his interrogator, in whom he expected to encounter Griffith, but perceiving that it was a face he did not know, he felt a revival of confidence that enabled him to reply—

"I came here by accident; being on board the cutter at the time her late commander determined to engage you. It was not in his power to land me, as I trust you will not hesitate to do; your conjecture of my being a non-combatant—"

"Is perfectly true," interrupted Barnstable; "it requires no spy-glass to read that name written on you from stem to stern; but for certain weighty reasons—"

He paused to turn at a signal given him by young Merry, who whispered eagerly in his ear—

"'Tis Mr. Dillon, kinsman of Colonel Howard; I've seen him often, sailing in the wake of my cousin Cicily."

"Dillon!" exclaimed Barnstable, rubbing his hands with pleasure; "what, Kit of that name! he with 'the Savannah face, eyes of black, and skin of the same colour;' he's grown a little whiter with fear; but he's a prize, at this moment, worth twenty Alacritys!"

These exclamations were made in a low voice, and at some little distance from the prisoner, whom he now approached, and addressed—

"Policy, and consequently duty, require that I should detain you for a short time, sir; but you shall have a sailor's welcome to whatever we possess, to lessen the weight of captivity."

Barnstable precluded any reply, by bowing to his captive, and turning away, to superintend the management of his vessels. In a short time it was announced that they were ready to make sail, when the Ariel and her prize were brought close to the wind, and commenced beating slowly along the land, as if intending to return to the bay whence the latter had sailed that morning. As they stretched into the shore, on the first tack, the soldiers on the cliffs rent the air with their shouts and acclamations, to which Barnstable, pointing to the assumed symbols that were fluttering in the breeze from his masts, directed his crew to respond in the most cordial manner. As the distance, and the want of boats, prevented any further communication, the soldiers, after gazing at the receding vessels for a time, disappeared from the cliffs, and were soon lost from the sight of the adventurous mariners. Hour after hour was consumed in the tedious navigation, against an adverse tide, and the short day was drawing to a close, before they approached the mouth of their destined haven. As they made one of their numerous stretches, to and from the land, the cutter, in which Barnstable continued, passed the victim of their morning's sport, riding on the water, the waves curling over his huge carcass as on some rounded rock, and already surrounded by the sharks, who were preying on his defenceless body.

"See! Master Coffin," cried the lieutenant, pointing out the object to his cockswain, as they glided by it, "the

shovel-nosed gentlemen are regaling daintily; you have neglected the christian's duty of burying your dead."

The old seaman cast a melancholy look at the dead whale, and replied,

"If I had the creatur in Boston Bay, or on the Sandy Point of Munny-Moy, 'twould be the making of me! But riches and honour are for the great and the larned, and there's nothing left for poor Tom Coffin to do, but to veer and haul on his own rolling-tackle, that he may ride out the rest of the gale of life, without springing any of his old spars."

"How now, long Tom!" cried his officer, "these rocks and cliffs will shipwreck you on the shoals of poetry yet; you grow sentimental!"

"Them rocks might wrack any vessel that struck them," said the literal cockswain; "and as for poetry, I wants none better than the good old song of Captain Kid; but it's enough to raise solemn thoughts in a Cape Poge Indian, to see an eighty barrel whale devoured by shirks—'tis an awful waste of property! I've seen the death of two hundred of the creaturs, though it seems to keep the rations of poor old long Tom as short as ever."

The cockswain walked aft, while the vessel was passing the whale, and seating himself on the taffrail, with his face resting gloomily on his bony hand, he fastened his eyes on the object of his solicitude, and continued to gaze at it with melancholy regret, until it was no longer to be seen glistening in the sunbeams, as it rolled its glittering side of white into the air, or the rays fell unreflected on the black and rougher coat of the back of the monster. In the mean time, the navigators diligently pursued their way for the haven we have mentioned, into which they steered with every appearance of the fearlessness of friends, and the exultation of conquerors.

A few eager and gratified spectators lined the edges of the small bay, and Barnstable concluded his arrangement for deceiving his enemy, by admonishing his crew, that they were now about to enter on a service that would require their utmost intrepidity and sagacity.

END OF VOL. I.