

on a spot where, many years before, I had made my first essay of the pleasures and penalties of a sailor's life. At that time I had, with a young and buoyant spirit, beheld its bosom covered with one of the mightiest navies that England, the mistress of the ocean, had ever gathered together to assert her rights. It was the expedition to the Scheldt. What a different scene was now presented to my observation ! With the exception of our light vessel, and two or three outward bound merchantmen, the vast road of the Downs was one tract of tenantless water.

With a fine steady breeze and fair weather we continued our progress down the channel. Soon the lofty white cliffs of England and the pale shores of France faded from our sight : Dover, Calais, Plymouth, the Land's End, the Scilly Isles, all passed in distant view, and each in turn was the object of the most intense interest. The fleet of fishing-boats near Plymouth and along the Cornish shores, the numerous