

ing them under the palms. Many of the largest and finest stones were a foot or two under water, and at these Lugard laboured. He had stripped to the waist, and once when he arose panting, and squared his broad, tattooed chest, as he drew in a deep breath, Haldane could not but admire the muscularity and gracefulness of his perfectly proportioned figure.

By this time the wind had become very light, but the warm, heavy rain had increased to such an extent that everything except the little islet was blotted from view, and the boom of the breakers on the reef had ceased simply owing to the continuous downpour having "flattened" the surf so much that instead of a fierce turmoil and seethe of flying spray and spume, there was now but a gentle swell, almost as placid and noiseless as the lapping of the tide upon the sandy shores of the inner side of the lagoon. Away to the westward, where the brig lay at anchor, the rain mist was as thick as a London fog, and Lugard had just told Haldane that he was afraid the *Palmyra* could not possibly find her way out of the reef in such weather, when Helen appeared on the bank above, and called to them to come and get something to eat.

"I have made quite a discovery," she cried to Haldane, as they walked back; "quite near where you left me, I saw some pieces of timber—wreckage, I suppose is the proper term—half-buried in the sand, and on one there is a thick brass plate with the name '*Cato*' on it."

Haldane was at once interested, told her that it was a relic and a memory of the gallant and ill-fated navigator Matthew Flinders, who, in the *Porpoise*, in 1804, had been cast away on Wreck Reef when sailing in company with the transport *Cato*.