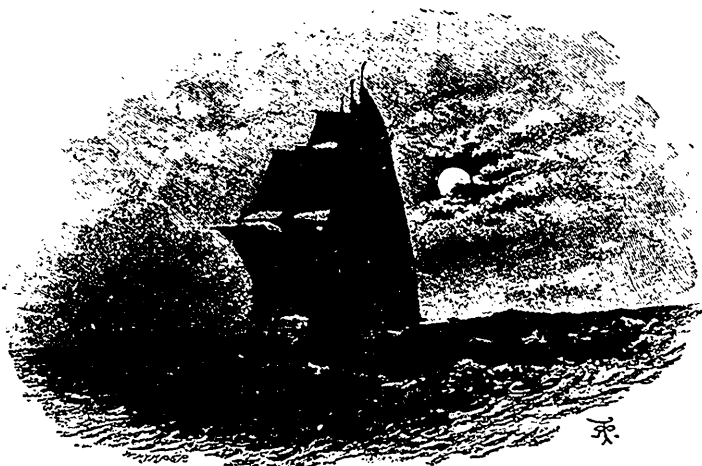


"THE LAST VOYAGE."

BY LADY BRASSEY.

IV



AT SET OF SUN.

Bombay, February 18th. We had another busy morning, making various arrangements for sea. Mabelle and I had only just sufficient time to reach Government House to be present at Lady Reay's *purdah* party, to which only ladies are admitted. The entertainment derives its name from the *purdah*, or curtain, behind which Mahomedan and Hindoo ladies are supposed to live, veiled from the sight of men. Lady Reay's visitors were all dressed in their best, and seemed full of delight at this pleasant incident in their monotonous life; but their ways of showing enjoyment were various and amusing. Some wanted only to look on; others were glad to talk to any English lady who could converse with them, while others again were much taken up with the sweetmeats and ices.

Several of these ladies asked me to allow them to go on board the yacht; and when the others found that I had promised to try to make arrangements to preserve the *purdah* properly, they all wanted to come. I found, therefore, there was nothing for it but to give a large party on the only vacant day left to us before our departure from Bombay.

Some of the dresses were quite gorgeous, and would take long