

"Cowardly dogs," the young captain said, "they do not mean to fight until the whole of their consorts come up. However, we ought not to grumble, as every hour takes us so much nearer port."

He then ordered the men to lie down by the guns and get what sleep they could until the enemy opened fire. Jack and Graham, finding that there was nothing to be done, threw themselves into their hammocks, and slept till five o'clock in the morning. They were then aroused, and went on deck. The six French ships had now all come up, and were coming on in a body.

"Good morning, gentlemen," the young captain said gaily. "We have a fine morning for our amusement. I wish the wind would freshen a little more so as to take this lubberly old ship faster through the water."

At six o'clock the leading vessel of the French squadron opened fire, and at the signal her consorts all followed her example. Some of them were now almost abreast of the *Resolution*, and the iron shower tore through her sails and cut her rigging. She answered with a broadside from both sides, and the battle commenced in earnest.

In all the annals of British seamanship there is no more heroic story than that of the fight between the *Resolution* and the six French men-of-war. From six in the morning until half-past three in the afternoon she maintained the unequal contest, still keeping on under full sail towards her port, only yawing occasionally to pour a broadside into one or other of her foes. They were now running along the coast, and the peasants on the distant hills must have watched with