

vils, and I acted

with a perusal of I have navigated the sixtieth degree whose diminution caused exceeding what of ordinary capacity to the influence at Batavia, where Istrate with the among them; at stay only a port, within whose consecutively; robbery, imprisonment consequent the whole, and to my age, I have a liquor of any porter, ale, or than tea and coffee used tobacco not only with-ly, to the preservation is known to me those fevers, anxiety and exhaustion from sickness. nable the reader a seaman's possibly, after ped by the annoyance. He will per-merchant-ship, in navigator and and responsible-defined voy-anted when the ness, from the countries whither agencies which from the neces- decision, and hem. If he is where there is on, it may cause the contrary, he onfiding in the and the laws of the victim of ar- worthy and igno- tend his enter- tain ample com- ans the risk of by some hungry robber, termed addition to the storms, of rocks greater ones of

fatigue attendant

on the profession, the same individual would form opposite conclusions in different circumstances. The man who makes a winter's passage from Europe to America, and encounters the usual storms and severity of weather peculiar to that passage, will probably pronounce the seaman's life to be the hardest, the most dangerous, the most irksome, the most wearing to body and mind, of any one of the pursuits of man. On the contrary, he who sails from the United States to Calcutta, to China, or to South America, avoiding our winter's coast, may perform the voyage without experiencing a gale of greater severity than would require the sails to be reefed, a pleasing excitement when the necessity is of rare occurrence; and he would probably decide, that no profession is so easy, so pleasant, and so free from care, as the seaman's. These are the two extremes, between which, as may be supposed, there are gradations, which will tend to incline the scale one way or the other, according to circumstances.

The experience of more than twenty years passed in navigating to all parts of the world has led me to the conclusion, that though the hardships and privations of a seaman's life be greater than those of any other, there is a compensation in the very excitement of its dangers; in the opportunity it affords of visiting different countries, and viewing mankind in the various gradations between the most barbarous and the most refined; and in the ever-changing scenes which this occupation presents. And I can say, with truth, that I not only feel no regret for having chosen this profession rather than any other, but that if my life were to be passed over again, I should pursue the same course.

*Cambridge, United States,
1842.*

CHAPTER I.

Commercial education.—Mr. Derby, of Salem, the father of American commerce to India.—His liberality.—The author's desire to visit distant countries.—Resolves to gratify it.—His first voyage.—Its results.—Other voyages.—Appointed master of the *Enterprise*.—Voyage to the Isle of Bourbon.—Copper sheathing.—Return to Salem.—Voyage to Havre.—Disappointed hopes—the *Enterprise* sent home.—The author fits out a cutter on his own account.—His reasons for the adventure.—Anxiety of his friends.—Resolves to sail for the Isle of France.—Difficulty of procuring a crew.—Sails from Havre.—A gale.—Compelled to run ashore.—Narrow escape.—Excellent conduct of the people, who assist to get the vessel off.—Return to Havre to repair damage.—Desertion of the crew.—Fidelity of a negro.—Lateness of the season.—Despondency.

In the ordinary course of a commercial education, in New England, boys are transferred from

school to the merchant's desk at the age of fourteen or fifteen. When I had reached my fourteenth year, it was my good fortune to be received into the counting-house of Elias Hasket Derby, Esq., of Salem, a merchant, who may justly be termed the father of American commerce to India; one, whose enterprise and commercial sagacity were unequalled in his day, and, perhaps, have not been surpassed by any of his successors. To him our country is indebted for opening the valuable trade to Calcutta, before whose fortress his was the vessel to display the American flag; and, following up the business, he had reaped golden harvests before other merchants came in for a share of them. The first American ships seen at the Cape of Good Hope and at the Isle of France, belonged to him. His were the first American ships which carried cargoes of cotton from Bombay to China; and among the first ships which made a direct voyage to China and back, was one owned by him. He continued to prosecute a successful business, on an extensive scale, in those countries, until the day of his death. In the transaction of his affairs abroad, he was liberal; greatly beyond the practice in modern times, always desirous that every one, even the foremast-hand, should share the good fortune to which he pointed the way; and the long list of masters of ships, who have acquired ample fortunes in his employment, is a proof both of his discernment in selecting and of his generosity in paying them.

Without possessing a scientific knowledge of the construction and sparring of ships, Mr. Derby seemed to have an intuitive faculty in judging of models and proportions; and his experiments, in several instances, for the attainment of swiftness of sailing, were crowned with a success unsurpassed in our own or any other country. He built several ships for the India trade, immediately in the vicinity of the counting-house; which afforded me an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the building, sparring, and rigging of ships. The conversations, to which I listened, relating to the countries then newly visited by Americans, the excitement on the return of an adventure from them, and the great profits which were made, always manifest from the result of my own little adventures, tended to stimulate the desire in me of visiting those countries, and of sharing more largely in the advantages they presented. Consequently, after having passed four years in this course of instruction, I became impatient to begin that nautical career on which I had determined, as presenting the most sure and direct means of arriving at independence; and, in the summer of 1792, I embarked on my first voyage. It was one of only three months' duration; but it was sufficient to produce a most thorough disgust of the pursuit, from the severe suffering of sea-sickness; so that, if I had perceived, on my return, any prospect on shore equally promising, I should have