

so if you like to go botanizing or ruralizing to-morrow you may do so. The natives are quiet enough."

I thought it best to take the hint, and went after an early breakfast ruralizing the whole of the next day. I returned about four p. m.

The vessel shifted position before I got back and lay now some two miles farther down the roadstead, but a boat was in waiting for me, and soon placed me on the poop of the *Trident*. Everything seemed to be as usual, but it was evident something was in the wind, so I determined to keep my eyes open.

Here follows a description of the Captain and his right hand man, Dick the Catcher, which we omit as not very suitable for our columns. The amount of the description is that with a great deal of geniality of temper, and with an average amount of intelligence and character they were prepared to go through with the business in which they had embarked, and were to be hindered by no scruples, about rights of man or truth, or anything of that description, and the men, except the two newest hands, being on shares, all were deeply interested in procuring laborers for the Fiji market, and making the trip in a pecuniary point of view a success.

It was about four p. m. when I came on board, and found that some portion of the dinner—*park* and poultry—had been reserved for me, which I gratefully enough accepted, and after the usual brandy and water accompanying every such meal, the skipper proved communicative.

"Mr. ———," he said, boldly launching into his subject at once, "we've business on hand to-night, and perhaps you don't like to have a fist in it. There are some natives coming on board to-night, and we must get men somehow. I'll speak plainly to you. They will be taken from this here tribe's enemies, and there may be a row, possibly a gun or two fired, but we must have them, you know. They are just as much prisoners-of-war when thus taken as the French among the Prussians."

"But do you really mean to use force to detain them against their will?" I inquired, thinking of the tale the missionary recently imparted to me.

"No, indeed,—that's out of the question. I'll deal candidly by you. You have seen the chief who was on board twice to-day. Well, he knows where he can obtain seven good men of his enemy's by a little bit of stratagem, and as all is fair in war, as well as in love, he gives them to me—for a con-

sideration, of course," he added, with a smile. "Now," he continued, "I'm not quite sure that you like this sort of things, and I, therefore, will leave it to your own discretion, whether you will remain on deck with us and receive the new comers, or go below, in which case I shall be compelled to lock the cabin."

I said I preferred to be on deck.

"And take part in the affair?" he sharply inquired.

"No," was my reply.

He laughed, and went on deck. When left alone I pondered over these things, and wondered if a new outrage was to be committed.

When it struck eight bells, and I was half-dozing by the dim lamp in the cabin, I heard the tramping of many feet above. The boat was evidently shoved off, to go shorewards, and I went on deck. Below the southern point, beyond the ravine separating the two tribes, was seen, strange to relate, a Grecian light! There was no mistake about it, no native ingenuity could have produced that light green reflexion, but the composition alluded to.

"'Tis a signal, I suppose?" I asked.

"Aye, it is a signal, and one that shows that all is right. If it had been red we would have been off at once."

"You expect some labour?"

"Certainly; they will be here in half-an-hour. We are off as soon as they are on board, and I wish you would not ask impertinent questions. Of course the labourers are going with us voluntarily; you don't suppose I would have them otherwise. The chief has made a bargain for them."

I certainly did think the case was somewhat different. However, I said nothing.

About half-an-hour afterwards the boat returned, and some packages, that turned out to be human beings, bound hand and foot with cocoa strings, and gagged with coarse palm leaves, were hoisted up, all passive, and showing no resistance. They were immediately lowered into the hold, and I counted seven of them. Next followed the chief I had seen in the morning, who, in his very imperfect English, demanded his payment.

"Certainly," I heard Dick say, in his smoothest voice, "here they are. Seven muskets for seven men. Fair play everywhere. You have done us a good turn, we'll do one for you. Up with the anchor, Captain, if you please, while Nillibee (or some such cognomen; I really never knew the exact name of that chief) and I go down and have a sip. Are you coming too, sir," he said, to which I nodded an affirmative.

Seated in the cabin, brandy, gin, and rum were produced, and, as the chief had been in Queensland, he was induced to have a "rum hot," I dare say it must have