

passed over, and some of the crew were already wounded. Still no word escaped from the lips of the British commander. At length he spoke a word in the ear of the man at the helm, and the next moment the frigate was brought across the bow of the enemy. "Now my lads," cried the captain, "now give them it." An earthquake seemed to burst at his words: the American was raked fore and aft, and the dead and dying and limbs of the wounded strewed her deck. The enemy quickly brought their vessel round; then followed the random gun, and anon the heavy broadsides were poured into each other. For an hour the action had continued, but victory or death seemed the determination of both parties. Both ships were crippled and had become almost unmanageable, and in each equal courage and seamanship were displayed. It was drawing towards midnight, they became entangled, and the word "to board!" was given by the commander of the frigate. Peter Paterson was the first man who, cutlass in hand, sprang upon the deck of the American: he seemed to possess a lion's strength and more than a lion's ferocity. In a few minutes four of the enemy had sunk beneath his weapon. "On my hearties! follow Paterson," cried an officer; "Peter's a hero!" Fifty Englishmen were engaged hand to hand with the crew of the American, and for a time they gained ground, but they were opposed with a determination equal to their own, and overpowered by superiority of numbers, they were driven back and compelled to leap again into the frigate. At the moment his comrades were repulsed, Peter was engaged with the first lieutenant of the American—"Stop a minute!" shouted Peter, as he beheld them driven back, "keep your ground till I finish this fellow!" His request was made in vain, and he was left alone on the enemy's deck, but Peter would turn his back on no man. "It lies between you and me, now friend," said he to his antagonist: he had shivered the sword of the lieutenant by the hilt, when a Yankee seaman, armed with a crowbar, felled Peter to the deck.

Darkness came on and the vessels separated. The Americans were flinging their dead into the sea; they lifted the body of Peter: his hands moved—the supposed dead man groaned: they again placed him on the deck: he at length looked round in bewilderment: he raised himself on his side: "I say neighbours," said he to the group around him, "is this our ship or yours?" The Americans made merry at Peter's question. "Weel,

if it be yours," continued he, "I can only tell you it was foul play that did it. It was a low cowardly action to fell a man behind his back; but come face to face, and twa at a time if ye like, and I'll clear the decks of the whole ship's crew o' you."

"You are a noble fellow," said the lieutenant whom he had encountered, "and if you will join our service, I guess your merit shan't be long without promotion."

"What!" cried Peter, "raise my right hand against my ain country! Gude gracious, sir! I wad sooner eat it as my next meal!"

In a few weeks the vessel put into Boston for repairs, and on her arrival it was ascertained that peace had been concluded between the two countries. Peter found himself once more at liberty, but with liberty he found himself in a strange land, without a sixpence in his pocket. This was no enviable situation to be placed in, even in America, renowned as it is as the paradise of the unfortunate—and he was standing on the second morning after his being put on shore counting the picturesque islands which stud Boston harbour, for his breakfast, poor fellow, when a person accosted him: "Well, my lad, how is the new world using you?" Peter started round: it was his old adversary the lieutenant.—

"A weel filled pocket, sir," returned Peter, "will mak either the new wark or the auld use you weel; and without that, I reckon your usage in either the one or the ither, wad be naething to mak a sang about."

The lieutenant pulled out his purse—"I am not rich, Paterson," said he; "but, perhaps, I can assist a brave man in need." Peter was prevailed upon to accept a few dollars. He knew that to return to Berwickshire was again to throw himself into the power of his persecutor, and he communed with himself what to do: he could plough; he could manage a farm—he was master of all field-work—and within a week he engaged himself as a farm-servant to a proprietor in the neighbourhood of Charleston. He had small reason, however, to be in love with his new employment. Peter was proud and high minded (in the English, not the American acceptation of the word) and he found his master an imperious, avaricious, republican tyrant. The man's conduct ill accorded with his profession of universal liberty. His wish seemed to be, to level all down to his own standard, that he might the more easily trample on all below him: his incessant cry, from the rising of the sun until its setting, was, "Work! work!" and with an oath he again called upon his