

THE RESCUE

PART I

THE MAN AND THE BRIG

THE shallow sea that foams and murmurs on the shores of the thousand islands, big and little, which make up the Malay Archipelago has been for centuries the scene of adventurous undertakings. The vices and the qualities of four nations have been displayed in the conquest of that region that even to this day has not been robbed of all the mystery and romance of its past—and the race of men who had fought against the Portuguese, the Spaniards, the Dutch and the English has not been changed by the unavoidable defeat. They have kept to this day their love of liberty, their fanatical devotion to their chiefs, their blind fidelity in friendship and hate—all their lawful and unlawful instincts. Their country of land and water—for the sea was as much their country as the earth of their islands—has fallen a prey to the western race—the reward of superior strength if not of superior virtue. To-morrow the advancing civilisation will obliterate the marks of a long struggle in the accomplishment of its inevitable victory.

The adventurers who began that struggle have left no descendants. The ideas of the world changed too quickly for that. But even far into the present century they have had successors. Almost in our own day we have seen one of them—a true adventurer in his devotion to his impulse—a man of high mind and of pure heart, lay the foundation of a flourishing state on the ideas of pity and justice. He recognised chivalrously the claims of the conquered; he was a disinterested adventurer, and the reward of his