

A NIGHT AT THE RAGGED STAFF  
OR A SCENE AT GIBRALTAR.

The mists boil up around me, and the clouds  
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,  
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep hell.

I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—  
I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl  
Spinning around me—I grow blind—  
What art thou?

Byron.

The first time I ever saw the famous rock of Gibraltar was on a glorious afternoon in the month of October, when the sun diffused just sufficient heat to give an agreeable temperature to the air, and shed a soft and mellow light through the somewhat hazy atmosphere, which enabled us to see the scenery of the Straits to the best advantage. We had had a rough and stormy, but uncommonly short passage; for the wind, though tempestuous, had blown from the right quarter; and our gallant frigate dashed and bounded over the waves "like a steed that knows his rider." I could not then say with the poet, from whom I have borrowed this quotation, "welcome to their roar!" for I was a novice on the ocean in those days, and had not yet entirely recovered from certain uneasy sensations about the region of the epigastrium, which by no means rendered the noise of rushing waters the most agreeable sound to my ears, or the rolling of the vessel the most pleasant motion for my body. Never did old sea-dog of a sailor, in the horse latitudes, pray more sincerely for a wind, than I did for a calm during that boisterous passage—and never I may add, did the selfish prayer of a sinner prove more unavailing. The gale, like Othello's revenge, "kept due on the Propontic and the Hellespont," and it blew so hard that it sometimes seemed to lift our old craft almost out of the water. When we came out of Port, we had our dashing fair-weather spars aloft, with skysail yards across, a moonsail to the main, and hoist enough for the broad blue to show itself to good advantage above that. But before the pilot left us, our top-gallant poles were under the boom-cover, and storm stumps in their places; and the first watch was scarcely relieved, when the boatswain's call—repeated by four mates, whose lungs seemed formed on purpose to out-roar a tempest—rang through the ship, "All hands to house-top-gallant sails, ahoy!" From that time till we made the land, the gale continued to rage with unintermitted violence, to the great delight of the green reefers, whom we had rather an unusual number on board. If my pen were endued with the slightest portion of the quality which distinguished Hogarth's pencil, I might here give a description of a man-of-war's steerage in a storm, which could not but force a smile from the most saturnine reader. I must own I did not much relish the humour of the scene then—*pars magna fui*—that is, I was sea sick myself; but

Quæ fuis durum pati—meminisse dulces est;

and I have often since, sometimes in my hammock, sometimes during a cold mid-watch on deck, burst into a hearty laugh as the memory of our grotesque distresses, and of the odd figures we cut during that passage has glanced across my mind.

But the longest day must have an end, and the stiffest breeze cannot last for ever. The wind, which for a fortnight had blowing as hard as a trumpet for a wagger, blew itself out at last. About dawn on the morning of the day I have alluded to, it began to lull, and by the time the sun was fairly out of the water, it fell flat calm. It was my morning watch, and what with sea-sickness, fatiguing duty, and being cabined, cribbed and confined for so long a time in my narrow and unaccustomed lodgings, I felt worn out, and in no mood to exult in the choice I had made of a profession. I stood holding by one of the belaying pins of the main fife rail, and looking I suppose as melancholy as a sick monkey on a lee backstay, when a cry from the foretop-sail yard reached my ear that instantly thrilled to my heart, and set the blood running in a lively current through my veins. "Land oh!" cried the jack-

tar on the look out in a cable tier voice which seemed to issue from the bottom of his stomach. I have heard many delightful sounds in my time, but few which seemed to me more pleasant than the rough voice of that vigilant sailor. I do verily believe that not seven bells (grog time a day) to a thirsty tar, the dinner bell to a hungry alderman, or the passing bell of some old rich curmudgeon to an anxious heir, ever gave greater rapture. The how-d'ye do of a friend, the good-bye of a country cousin, the song of the Signorina, and Paganini's fiddle, may all have music in them; but the cry of land to a sea-sick midshipman is sweeter than them all.

We made, what in nautical language, is termed a good land fall—so good, indeed, that it was well for us the night and the wind both ceased when they did; for had they lasted another hour, we should have found ourselves landed in a way that even I, much as I wished to set my foot on terra firma, should not have felt particularly pleased with. On its becoming light enough to ascertain our whereabouts, it was discovered that we were within the very jaws of the Straits, completely land-locked by the steeply shore, where

Europe and Africa on each other gaze, and already beginning to feel the influence of the strong and easterly current which rushes into the Mediterranean through that passage with a velocity of four or five knots an hour. A gentle land breeze sprung up in the course of the morning watch, which though not exactly fair, yet coming from the land of the "dusky Moor," had enough of something in it to enable us to get along at a very tolerable rate, beating with a long and a short leg through the Straits.

It would be uncharitable to require that the reader should arrive at the rock by the same zig-zag course which we were obliged to pursue; so therefore, let him at once suppose himself riding at anchor in the beautiful but unsafe bay of Gibraltar, directly opposite and almost within the very shadow of the grand and gigantic fortress which nature and art seemed to have vied with each other in rendering impregnable. No one of Abila, which not even the unromantic modern name of Apes Hill can divest of all its interest as one of "the trophies of great Hercules"—these are all features in the natural landscape which, combined, render it a scene of exceeding beauty. The clear blue waters of the bay itself commonly present an appearance of variety and animation which very materially increase the picturesqueness of the general effect. Here may at all times be seen, moored closely together, a numerous fleet of vessels, from every quarter of the globe, of every fashion of structure, and manned by beings of every creed and colour. The flags and pennons which float from their decks, and the appearance and employments of the moving throngs upon them, all tend to heighten the charm of novelty and variety. In one place, may be seen a shattered and dismantled hulk, on board of which, some exiled Spanish patriot with his family, has taken refuge, dwelling there full in the sight of his native land, which yet he can scarcely ever hope to tread again; in another—on the high latticed stern of a tall dark-looking craft whose raking masts, black bands and trig-warlike appearance, excite a doubt whether she be merchantman or pirate—a group of Turks in their national and beautiful costume, smoking their long chibouques with an air of gravity as great as if they were engaged in a matter of the greatest importance. Beside them, perhaps, lies a heavy clumsy dogger, on board of which a company of slow moving Dutchmen are engaged in trafficking away their cargo of cheese butter, Bologna sausages, and real Schiedam; and not far away from these, a crew of light-hearted Genoese sailors are stretched at length along the deck of their polacca, chanting in voices made musical by distance, one of the rich melodies with which their language abounds. Boats are continually passing hither and thither between the vessels and the shore; and every now and then, a long and slender felucca, with its slanting yards, and graceful lateen sails glides across the bay, laden with the products of the fruitful soil of Andalusia, which are destined to supply the tables of the pent up inhabitants of the garrison.

At the foot of the rock, on a small and narrow slip less precipitous than the rest

stands the town of Gibraltar, which as seen from the bay, with its dark coloured houses, built in the Spanish style, arising one above another in amphitheatrical order; the ruins of the Moorish castle and defences in the rear; and the high massive walls which surround it at the water's edge, and which, thick planted with cannon, seem formed to laugh at siege to scorn, has a highly picturesque and imposing effect. The military works of Gibraltar are on a scale of magnificence commensurate with the natural grandeur of the scene. Its walls, its batteries, and its moles which bristling with cannon, stretch far out into the bay and against whose solid structures the waves spend their fury in vain, are all works of art planned with great genius, and executed with consummate skill. An indefinite sensation of awe mixes with the stranger's feelings, as gazing upon the defences which every where meets his eye, he remembers, that the strength of Gibraltar consists not in its visible works alone, but that hewn in the centre of the vast and perpendicular rock, there are long galleries and ample chambers, where the engines of war are kept always ready and from whence the fires of death may at any moment be poured down upon an assailant.

Though the rock is the chief feature of interest in the bay of Gibraltar, yet when fatigued by long gazing on its barren and solitary grandeur, there are not wanting others on which the eye of the stranger may repose with pleasure. The green shores of Andalusia, encircling the bay in their semicircular sweep, besides the attraction which verdant hills and valleys always possess, have the super-added charm of being linked with many classical and romantic associations. The picturesque towns of St. Roque and Algesiras, the one crowning a smooth eminence at some distance from the shore and the other occupying a gentle declivity that sinks down to the sparkling waters of the Bay—the mountains of Spain, fringed with cork forests in the back ground—the dimly seen coast of Morocco across the Straits, with the white walls of Ceuta just discernible on one of its promontories—the towering form of Abila, which not even the unromantic modern name of Apes Hill can divest of all its interest as one of "the trophies of great Hercules"—these are all features in the natural landscape which, combined, render it a scene of exceeding beauty.

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(To be continued.)

## POETRY

## THE MAID OF MALAHIDE.

The dark eyed maid of Malahide  
Her silken bodice laced,  
And on her brow, with virgin pride,  
The bridal chaplet placed;  
Her heart is beating high, her cheek  
Is flushed with rosy shame,  
As laughing bridesmaids silly speak  
The gallant bridegroom's name.

The dark eyed maid of Malahide  
Before the altar stands,  
And Galtrim claims his blushing bride,  
From pure and holy hands:—  
But hark! what fearful sounds are those  
"To arms, to arms!" they cry:—  
The bride's sweet cheek no longer glow  
Fear sits in that young eye.

The gallants all are mustering now,  
The bridegroom's helm is on;—  
One look upon that wretched brow,  
One kiss, and he is gone!  
The feast is spread; but many a knig  
That should have graced that hall,  
Will sleep anon in cold moonlight,  
Beneath a gory pall.

Hark to the clang of arms! 'tis he,  
The bridegroom chief returned,  
Crowned with the wreath of victory,  
By his good weapon earned?  
Victorious bands indeed return;  
But on their shields they bear  
The laurel'd chief, and melt, though stern,  
At that young bride's despair.

Take—take the roses from my brow,  
The jewels from my waist:—  
I have no need of such things now;  
And then her cheek she placed  
Close to his cold dead cheek and wept  
As one may wildly weep.  
When the last hope the heart had kept,  
Lies buried in the deep.

Long years have passed, since that young  
bride  
Bewail'd her widow'd doom;  
The holy wail of Malahide  
Shall shrine her marble tomb;  
And sculpture there has sought to prove,  
With rude essay of art,  
What form she wore in life, whose lot  
Did grace her woman's heart.

## TO DIE.

What art thou life! that man should  
Regret to know that he must die?  
What art thou death! that he should  
steal  
With trembling steps where must lie;  
It is the doubt beyond—the dread—  
The sleep eternal that we dream—  
Or tortures endless—and the gloom  
That lies beyond the narrow stream  
That flows around the oblivious  
tomb.

There is a stream where man must take  
A thirst which all are doomed to  
know,  
And in the draught the pangs partake  
That with its pleasant waters flow;  
'Tis pleasure's sweet delicious ware,  
That skirts his pathway to the grave.  
Sip gently and the pain it brings  
Will leave you, as you close your  
way,  
Where death his darkness o'er you  
flings,  
In peace to slumber and decay.

To live in peace is to depart  
Without a tear, without a sigh—  
To feel a calm around the heart  
When we are called by time to die.  
'Tis vain to deem that life can spread,  
A thornless pathway where we tread,  
Though smooth at first, it rougher  
grows.

As to its summit we ascend;  
Where calm as evening's twilight close,  
The guiltless find its shadowy end.

GOOD-NATURED EDITORS.— Cobbett says—I believe that if the devil were to lie, the London newspapers would express their regret at the event. I wonder whether the Whig papers would announce with regret the death of the Duke of Wellington or Sir Robert Peel! I should not wonder if they were to do it, such is the force of habitual and almost mechanical hypocrisy.  
The evil that a man does lives after him, but the good he does is buried with his bones.