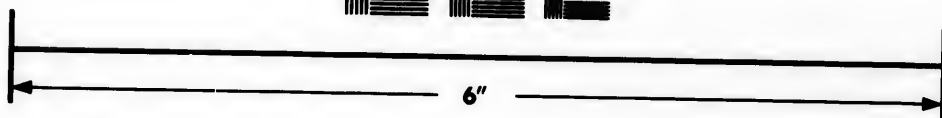
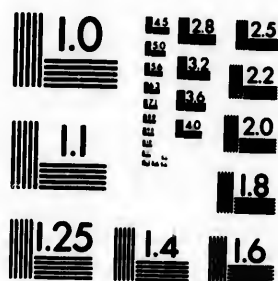


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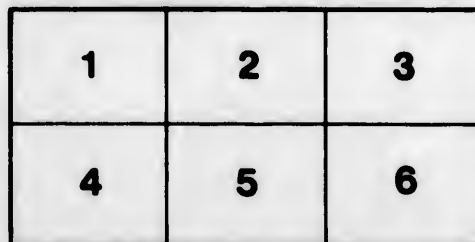
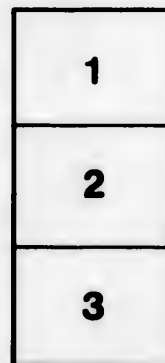
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RUPERT AND SIMOLA.

THE FUR TRADERS OF
THE WEST

OR

ADVENTURES AMONG THE REDSKINS

BY

ERNEST R. SUFFLING

AUTHOR OF "THE LAND OF THE BROADS," "AFLOAT IN A GIPSY VAN," "THE STORY
HUNTER," ETC., ETC.



ILLUSTRATED

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PREFACE.

THAT boys are strange beings none will care to deny: Restless and buoyant as the waves on the sea, they are ever on the move, and, like the sea, if they lose their movement they lose one of their chief characteristics and become dull, flat, and uninteresting.

To them movement is a necessity of life, and all they engage in must have vigour and dash, or it will inevitably be rejected as too slow and monotonous for their delectation.

I know the British boy, his likes and dislikes; and I know the kind of books he loves, and why he appreciates them. Every page must carry him forward and contain its store of interest, without long pages of description and sentimental platitude before he arrives at the gist of what is about to happen.

Oh, he is an impatient fellow, is the English boy, and does not like to be held unduly in suspense while the story drags its slow length wearily along. Why does he love "Robinson Crusoe"? Because every page brings something strange and adventurous before him. Why is "Masterman Ready" in favour with him? Because its movement is continuous. And so with all his favourite books, adventure follows adventure, and seldom a dull page confronts him; there is almost an entire absence of the platitudes, long conversations and mental

literary food which his father and mother and grown-up brothers and sisters so relish in the works of the leading novelists.

Very well ; knowing, as I do, the temperament of the ever-rising generation, I have endeavoured to conjure from my ink-vase and my brain, a story that shall be full of adventures of a thrilling nature (without overstepping the bounds of moderation and probability), of a kind that contains nothing hurtful to the young mind ; one shorn of all conversation, except where absolutely necessary to explain the meaning of certain events, and one that, while it shows that courage and energy are traits to be admired, also goes far to prove that truth, sincerity, and magnanimity should also form integral parts in the composition of the character of the boys of Great Britain.

ERNEST R. SUFFLING.

BLOMFIELD LODGE,
PORTSDOWN ROAD, W.
Midsummer, 1896.

TO MY READERS.

N.B.—Might I suggest the advisability of having an Atlas handy when reading this story, as by so doing the locality of the numerous places will the more readily be fixed in the mind, and the narrative will be better appreciated. The reader armed with an Atlas will thus kill two birds with one stone—he will be more entertained with the book and at the same time receive a good and lasting lesson in geography.

E. R. S.

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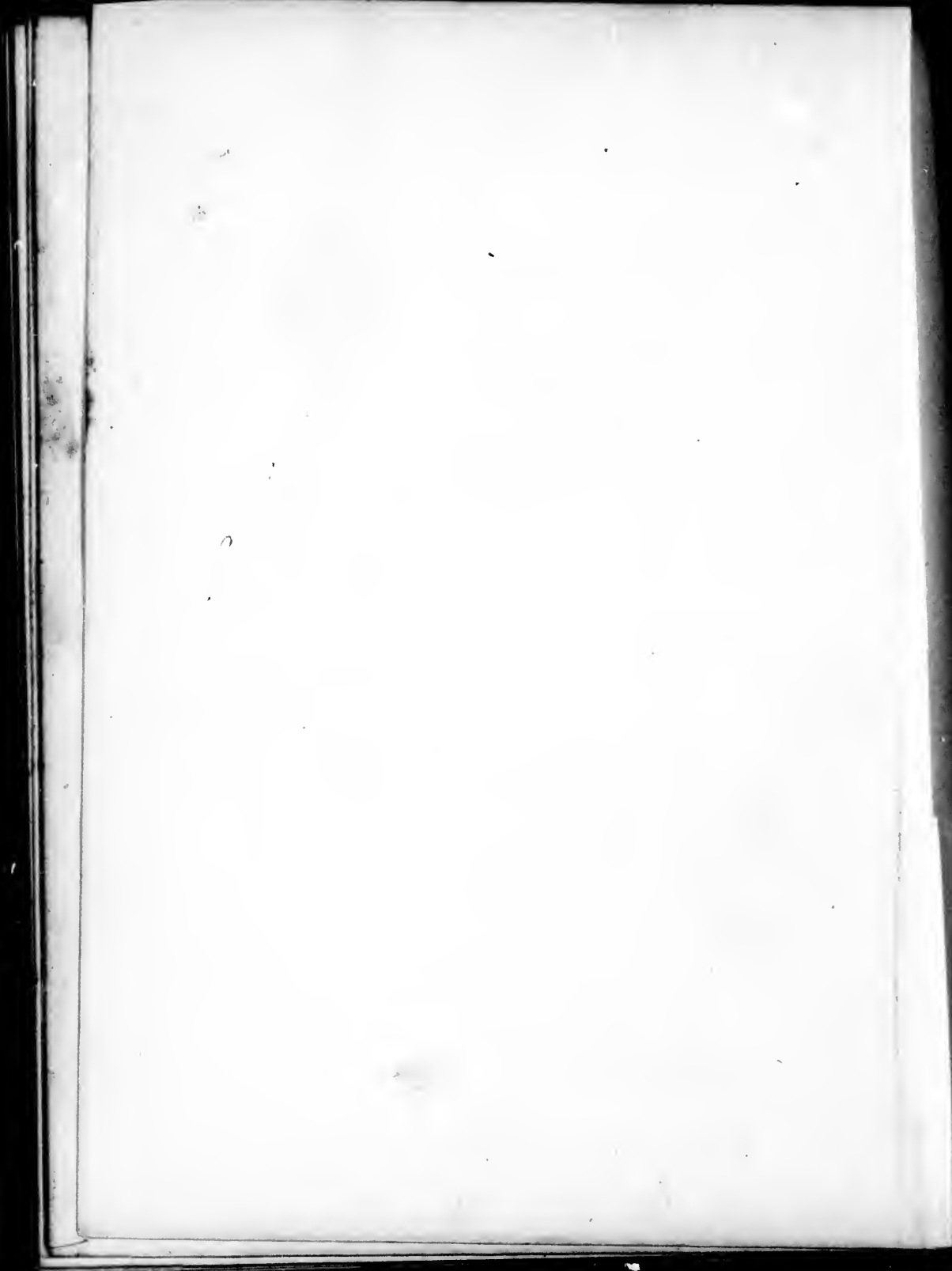
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The Fur Traders of the West.

CHAPTER I.

The Return of *The Hunter*.—A Beautiful Town.—Village Rejoicings.
—William Doone of Fowey.—Baggage Ashore.—The Two Brothers.

It was a bright, breezy day, towards the end of October, in the very year that Victoria, our gracious young Queen, commenced her happy reign, that a small, but excited, crowd of villagers had gathered upon the little stone quay at the quaint old port of Fowey, in Cornwall. It was the second occasion in one year that an event of importance had been bruited through the village, and the inhabitants were all agog with excitement.

The first event had been the death of King William, the news of whose decease had reached the quiet little humdrum village in less than a week; which was quick work sixty years since, when there were no telegraph wires to flash the doleful news through the length and breadth of the land with lightning celerity. The first event, the decease of the King, was a national event, but the present excitement, which was of such interest to the village, was of local importance only—it was the home-coming of Captain David Rose in his trim little schooner, *The Hunter*.

Two years since the gallant Captain had left port, with a very miscellaneous cargo, upon a trading voyage to the

western coast of North America, to try his luck at bartering for bear robes, beaver, otter, deer, and other peltries. It was a tremendously long and hazardous voyage for a man to undertake, but Captain Rose was of iron nerve and unflinching resolution, and being owner as well as skipper, with neither wife nor children to give him anxiety, he had staked his all in this one big adventure to the far West.

As he stepped on board to commence his voyage, his remark to a friend had been, "I leave Fowey in debt to no man, and take away not a single penny piece from the port that would be missed if anything occurred to me. The ship is mine, the cargo is mine, and the hope of a prosperous voyage is mine also, and if God so wills it, I shall be back in two years with a valuable assortment of peltries; but should a disaster happen to *The Hunter*, why, it will be like clapping an extinguisher over a candle—it will be 'Good-night to you, David Rose, and farewell to bonny Fowey.'"

Let us just peep at the little town and see what it is like.

Along the southern coast of Cornwall, between West Looe and Mevagissey, the line of cliffs attain a considerable elevation, rising and falling like huge Atlantic rollers. Between two of these massive granite cliffs, which rise like giants sheer from the sea, is the entrance to Fowey Haven (as the estuary is called), and a more fitting title could not be given it, for the great guardian cliffs completely shelter it from the prevailing, blustering winds. One usually associates the word *estuary* with a broad open space of water having low-lying land around it, and so exposed, that the heavy winter seas may come rolling in without let or hindrance from the surrounding shores. But it is not so with Fowey, for the entrance is

so narrow, that however fiercely the storm may rage upon the main, it is all peaceful and comparative calm within. It may blow great guns out at sea, but open boats are in no danger in this sheltered estuary.

We cannot wonder, therefore, that, in days gone by, it was one of the principal ports in the west of England; and when the dreaded Armada threatened our shores, sent out quite a formidable fleet to help to oppose and scatter the Spanish dons in their *Invincible* fleet.

Coming to more recent times, is there any wonder that it was the chosen haunt of many smuggling vessels? Captains watching the private signals from the bold headlands at the entrance to the harbour, could pop in and out at all states of the tide and weather.

In those times Fowey was a light among fishing ports, but her radiance has now departed, the tall candle of prosperity has waned, leaving but a little flickering spark to show where once flashed forth the rays which helped to sustain Elizabeth on her throne, and gain for her seafaring sons the sobriquet of "Gallants of Fowey."

There still remain the great entrance hills and the lovely pool of glittering water, into whose upper end the river Fowey glides, and crossing the haven loses itself in the sea beyond.

There still stands the old church, contemplating from its prominent position the beauties of its surroundings. It has looked down for several centuries on the fortunes of the little town at its feet, but never, it is feared, will it witness such stirring scenes and thrilling times, as when the Maiden Queen held sway in Merry England three-hundred years ago.

The once long quay is but a fragment of its former self, and much of it has ceased to exist since the great ware-

houses which formerly lined it gradually disappeared with the diminishing trade, till nothing remains but a pleasant sleepy little village, mustering but a few hundred inhabitants, whose cottages and houses line the western acclivity of the haven.

Notwithstanding its great past to look back upon, Fowey still retains one of its features intact, and that is its beauty.

Clean, white-fronted houses, its fine old church, the deep blue pool, the hills, the profusion of foliage and flowers, forest trees, and healthy shrubs, several smart trading vessels and a few tarry fishing vessels rocking idly near the quay, all go to make it, even among Cornish villages, a spot which lingers in the memory of visitors to ancient Lyonesse.

On the October morning in question, Captain Rose's vessel had been sighted in the offing, and like wildfire the news quickly spread through the village, and every one was agog to see the gallant skipper once more; for he was very popular among the people, and when at home was sure to be first and foremost in anything that happened to be on the local *tapis*.

Many of the younger fishermen and lads had scrambled up to the top of the headland, upon which a signal pole was erected, and this they had dressed with bunting from the truck to the ground at the four cardinal points, so that there was a most extensive show of bunting to greet *The Hunter* as she sailed into port, after safely accomplishing her round voyage of thirty-five thousand miles.

Flags were displayed on the vessels in the harbour and on the quay, while from the open windows of the houses, poles bearing bunting or coloured material were lavishly displayed. From the summit of the church tower waved a large royal standard, just as it may have fluttered many

generations ago, when the gallants of Fowey returned from the fleet which had been in chase of the Armada.

As the weather-worn ship, with her patched sails, showed herself at the entrance to the haven, the people set up a hearty cheer, and the church bells rang out with a merry peal, for the vicar was a warm friend of Captain Rose, and willingly gave his consent for the village ringers to welcome home their brave townsman.

On the quay there was quite a stir among the bustling throng, for the village lads had brought down two very ancient cannon, so old that no one knew how they came into Cornwall, they were of foreign make, and may have formed part of the armament of the Armada. The young rascals had mounted these obsolete cannon upon a couple of fish barrows, and having attached ropes, brought their ordnance through the village at full speed, yelling at the top of their voices as they ran, and scattering the people to left and right.

At the quay side they halted and loaded, and at a signal two stalwart brothers named Doone applied red hot irons from the smith's forge to the touch-holes, and bang they went, sending out volumes of smoke and enough noise to frighten the whole town and awaken the neighbouring hills till they echoed again.

There was a bustle on *The Hunter's* deck, near the waist, and in a couple of minutes came an answering salute from her four brass six-pounders; these reports were so unexpected that they quite scared the people, who for the moment had forgotten that firing is a game two can play at.

As *The Hunter* neared the quay, many of those who had friends or relations on board could contain themselves no longer, they wanted to grasp the brave fellows once more by the hand, and the time between the ship entering

the headlands to the moment she should drop anchor was too long for many of them to wait, so springing into boats they pushed off from the quay, and boarded her as she slowly and gracefully bore up the channel.

As the vessel neared the quay, willing hands helped the bronzed sailors to furl the sails that had so safely wafted the good ship across two oceans, and borne her crew back to their loved ones at home. The young fishermen sprang like monkeys up the shrouds, and in a very few minutes the gallant *Hunter* was snugly berthed alongside the quay. Such a scene then took place, as only those who have participated in the like can sympathetically describe. Parted for two years, with thousands of miles of angry sea between them, the reunion of husbands and wives, fathers and children, brothers and sisters, was a touching sight to witness. Such hugging and kissing; such joy; such beaming countenances, and such streaming eyes are seldom seen. Some of the poor women actually could not find words with which to greet their loved ones; their joy utterly choked them. Many of the smaller children had not seen their fathers for so long a time that they did not quite know them, neither were the fathers quite sure of their little ones, for there is a vast difference between a youngster in arms and a little fellow of three trotting about in breeches!

It was indeed a happy return; as, of a crew of twenty hands all told, not one was missing, and even the cabin boy who had sailed away a thin lad of sixteen, had returned a strong, sturdy young man, a credit to his mother, who quite embarrassed him with her loving embraces and hearty kisses. Captain Rose was surrounded by a host of friends, who all wanted to shake hands and congratulate him at the same time. Questions were fired at him in

volleys; in fact, he was completely stormed, and not only stormed, but actually carried by assault, for kick as he might, his townsmen raised him on their shoulders and bore him ashore as a prize. He was a big powerful fellow, but a single man in the hands of a dozen sturdy fishermen is helpless, so he allowed himself, willy nilly, to be carried to the village inn, where he was placed on his feet and a speech demanded.

Like the hero that he was, he complied, first ordering a barrel of ale to be brought out on the little green and broached, that all might pledge his safe return in a bumper. The abstemious Cornishmen were only too pleased to have the opportunity, and as the horn mugs circulated the Captain mounted a settle by the inn door, and for a whole hour held forth to the good-tempered crowd, who lustily cheered the recital of his various adventures.

Having spoken himself nearly hoarse, he presently leaped from his vantage post, and, rushing forward, embraced a tall gentleman, who at that moment walked quietly up. The new comer was the Captain's old school-fellow and former trading partner, William Doone.

As they stood, hand in hand, they looked the very picture of vigorous manhood, both of them typical Englishmen in every respect. Captain Rose was rather above the average height, of powerful build, thick set and massive, with a large, tawny beard, bronzed visage, and two good-humoured blue eyes.

William Doone was about the same age as the Captain, that is, about forty, but much taller, standing six feet one in his stockings; he was not particularly broad, but had a fine, deep chest, and long muscular limbs, which, by their easy swing, showed great strength. He was dark, and simply wore a moustache, the rest of his face being

clean shaven. His dark skin showed off his fine set of teeth, which were often exposed by reason of his gay humour and jocular manners.

The two men, arm in arm, made their way slowly along the quay, the Captain stopping frequently to receive the congratulations of his friends (who came from their houses as he passed), and, leaving the little town behind, continued about half a mile along the side of the estuary, when, ascending a slight acclivity which gave a fine view over the water, they stopped at the gate of a pretty little house nearly surrounded by an orchard, upon the boughs of some of the trees in which the golden apples still nodded to the breeze.

As the two friends chatted up the pathway, the door of the house was thrown open, and out stepped Mrs. Doone, her face wreathed in smiles, and both hands extended to welcome the wanderer home.

Then, holding him at arms' length, she scanned him from head to foot, exclaiming :

"Now, wait a moment, David, let me see if it really is you. Yes, it is indeed; you great, brawny giant. Stoop down," and, throwing her arms round his neck, she saluted him with several hearty kisses, for they were brother and sister. Then, linking her arms through those of her husband and brother, they walked happily towards the house, the exuberance of their joy making their countenances radiant with delight.

"But where are the boys, William?—and where is my pretty little Ruth?" asked the skipper.

"Ruth," replied Mrs. Doone, "has gone to spend the day at St. Austell, but will be home by eight o'clock, as she will return with old Trereen the carrier. But surely you have seen the boys?"

"No," said the skipper. "I rather expected they would have been the first to leap aboard *The Hunter*, but so far I have not even seen them."

"I can account for them," said Mr. Doone rising, "they would have been the first to greet you, David, but knowing there would be a rush to board you they kept ashore, and it was they who welcomed you with the salute from the old cannon as you came alongside the quay. Knowing you would have the whole town at you, I sent them off on a certain little business which should by this time be about concluded."

Going to the door he gazed down the pathway towards the village, and presently his face brightened up as he exclaimed—

"Yes, here they come, and, by jove, deeply laden too. Now keep your seat, David, for I expect the boys will think you are still in the town, so it will be a pleasant little surprise for them to find you here at anchor."

In a few minutes the sound of happy voices and a great deal of heavy breathing and puffing was heard. The sounds proceeded from the boys toiling up the pathway, carrying something heavy between them. Then came a cheery "Dad, give us a hand here, will you? we've brought a whole houseful of furniture on our backs, and goodness knows what besides."

Mr. Doone stepped outside and burst into laughter, which was the signal for the skipper and Mrs. Doone to rush to the door also to see what was in the wind.

There were Rupert and Bernard, her two sons, nearly hidden by the number of articles they were carrying; they had been to the ship and brought Uncle David's belongings with them. They had brought his bedding, his canvas clothes-kit, and his old wicker-chair, which

they had unscrewed from the cabin floor. In this old chair the skipper sat when he wished to be on the alert, and could not afford more than an hour or two's slumber; if he turned into his berth he found it too comfortable, and slept heavily, but if he sat down in the old wicker-chair, which was so pliable that it gave with the rolling motion of the ship, he was ready to jump up, dressed as he was, and rush upon deck.

Besides these cumbersome articles, they had each a basket; one filled with eggs and butter, and the other with groceries, so that they were, as Mr. Doone had remarked, "heavily laden."

When the boys caught sight of their uncle's burly figure in the doorway, they, with one accord, dropped their respective loads in the pathway, except the egg basket, which Mrs. Doone luckily secured before its contents had been converted into a deplorable mess of butter and broken eggs.

The meeting between the boys and their uncle was indeed a hearty one, and as he grasped each lad by the hand he could not help congratulating them on their smart looks, for, during his absence, Rupert had developed into a very fine young man, and Bernard was also bidding fair to grow into a fine lad in another year or two.

Rupert, who was now nearly twenty, was like his father, tall and dark; there was "just a tathom of him," as his uncle put it, and his daily exercises of rowing and swimming had so developed his muscles that he promised in a year or two to become as strong as his father. He already had the frame, and only wanted to fill out and "furnish," as it is termed, to make him an unusually fine young fellow. He had dark hair, and intelligent

dark brown eyes, while his nose being slightly curved, gave him somewhat the appearance of a gipsy.

Strange to say, his brother Bernard was rather fair, having light hair and blue eyes. He was just turned seventeen, and of a sturdy figure, thicker set than his brother, but not so tall by four inches; but, as he said, "Give me time, and I will eat plenty of pudding till I catch up with Rue. I have four years yet to grow, and surely I can do an inch a year!"

He was fond of wrestling, and had won several prizes for lads.

In temperament there was a great deal of difference between the lads. Rupert was somewhat inclined to look too seriously at his surroundings, while Bernard was quite the reverse, taking everything in a humorous manner, always trying to see how much fun could be squeezed out of everything that came before him. His life was a continuous laugh, and, as he affirmed, "he was born laughing, meant to laugh through life, and hoped he might be found with a smile on his countenance when his last hour came."

Such were Rupert and Bernard Doone; and now let us see what followed the greeting.

CHAPTER II.

The Captain's Surprise.—Ruth.—A Retrospect of David Rose and William Doone.—A Thirty-five Thousand Miles Voyage projected and safely accomplished.—A Glance at the Far West.

THE lads carried the goods and chattels up to the house, and placing the wicker-chair in the sun, in a snug sheltered corner, they seated their uncle on the "throne," as they termed it, and having brought out four other chairs, the party formed an audience to listen to the skipper's yarns of a two years' voyage.

Hundreds of questions were put and answered ; then it occurred to Rupert that it would be better to wait until Ruth came home in the evening before asking the skipper to spin them the yarn through from beginning to end. This was agreed to, and what with chatting, comparing notes, eating and drinking, inspecting the pigs, and perambulating the garden, the time soon slipped by and eight o'clock arrived, at which hour Ruth was expected home.

All evidence of the return of Captain Rose was carefully hidden from sight, and he himself was spirited away to a lumber room, while the rest awaited impatiently for Ruth's return.

At last her footsteps were heard as she came up the pathway, but instead of coming in at the door they heard her proceed to the window, through which she was evidently peeping to obtain a glimpse of Uncle David ; no one took

the slightest notice, and presently she burst into the room with,

"Well, mother, I *am* disappointed! why the news has reached St. Austell that *The Hunter* and her crew have returned safely to Fowey, and I have been so excited at expecting to find Uncle David here, that I have not eaten a morsel since I heard the good news. Oh, mother, I *do* feel disappointed," and the tears stood in her pretty eyes, telling of her love for her uncle.

Poor Ruth sat down and did not appear at all herself, and her brothers began to tease her, asking why she heeded every little bit of gossip she heard.

"Why," said Bernard, "uncle may be down among the mermaids at the bottom of the deep blue sea, for what the folk at St. Austell know, and, if so, there will be a nice row in Neptune's camp, for he was always a lady killer, and if——"

Crash! Bang!—and then came strange and excited words from the scullery. Everyone leaped up, and Mrs. Doone, flinging open the door, revealed Uncle David vigorously rubbing his shin with one hand, and his nose with the other. His face was smeared with soot, and his coat covered with flour, but in spite of his wild appearance, Ruth sprang into his arms, and very soon she had transferred a part of the soot from her uncle's face to her own.

Everyone roared with laughter, and on looking in the glass the gallant skipper joined in the merriment, laughing till the tears coursed down his tanned cheeks.

Then he explained how it was he had caused such consternation, both to himself and his friends. He left the lumber room, intending to steal across the scullery, and burst into the parlour as a surprise to Ruth, but unfor-

tunately it was he who got the surprise, as he fell over a pile of saucepans and tin ware, which had been carelessly left by the maid, that she might clean them early in the morning, for in Cornwall but little work is done after dark.

He had rather a severe cut on his shin and another on his forehead, but Ruth's nimble fingers were soon busy with scissors and plaster, and the wounds were skilfully dressed.

Ruth's usual appetite returned at supper time; after which meal, in answer to the calls of the boys, the skipper commenced the yarn of his voyage to Oregon. What he said would be much too long to recapitulate, as it took him several evenings before he, as he termed it, "dropped anchor," or in other words brought his narrative up to his arrival in Fowey Haven.

We will, however, summarise the principal items of his voyage, and with a few incidental remarks concerning both him and Mr. Doone, place the reader in possession of several facts that are necessary for him to know, so that he may grasp the why and wherefore of many things in this veracious story.

Each evening during the recital of his adventures, a select company of friends and neighbours were present, and most cheerful were these gatherings of old friends, who were pleased to listen to the daring stories of adventures by sea and land, as told by the gallant Captain Rose.

First we will take a retrospective glance.

David Rose and William Doone were both born in Fowey, of an old lineage, for their respective and respected families had resided in the district for many generations.

As boys they went to school together, first in the little village school, and afterwards to the grammar school at St. Austell, a few miles distant. They were constant companions, sharing the same bed at school, the same lessons, and the same drubbings, for it must be owned that being high-spirited lads they were frequently involved in scrapes, both in school and out, which usually ended in a wholesome and just castigation. It must not be supposed that they were "bad" boys in the ordinary acceptance of the term, for they were not; but they were leaders among their companions, and planned and captained all the little exploits which boys usually indulge in during their happy, callow school-days.

If an orchard was to be *visited*, Rose and Doone were there; if a boat had to be captured for an hour or two's fishing, they were in it; if there was a fight with the town boys, David and William did not fail to leave their marks on some of the foe. Being thus, like David and Jonathan of old, more as brothers than friends, it is not to be wondered at that when the time arrived for them to leave school, they were apprenticed to the same skipper, and sailed together to many a trading port on the English, Irish, and Welsh coasts.

When the lads were out of their time, Rose, who was a better sailor than Doone, became skipper of the *Fairy Belle*, a small trading schooner; Doone being engaged on the same vessel as supercargo and factotum. The ship was owned by Mr. Doone, senior, and upon his death, when William was about two-and-twenty, she became his property.

David Rose, who was two years older than William, was a very steady, sober young fellow (his school-pranks were forgotten), and he quickly simmered down into quite

THE FUR TRADERS OF THE WEST.

the ideal sea captain, frank in manner, reserved in speech, alert, and ever ready to seize any opportunity that presented itself for his own or his employers' advantage.

He and Doone hit it capitally together, and eventually the ship, stores, and cargo became the joint property of the two young men; for Rose was a saving fellow, and had a little money by him, which, added to certain sums advanced by his friends, provided a sufficient amount for him to purchase a half share in the *Fairy Belle*.

By perseverance, frugality, and a fair share of good fortune, their business affairs prospered; and by-and-by an event happened which further cemented the ties which bound the fortunes of Rose and Doone together; this was no less than the marriage of William Doone to David's only sister, Hetty. And a right happy marriage it was, for Hetty was very fond of her big husband, and managed his home affairs during his absence as if she had been born with a quill pen behind her ear.

In due course Rupert was born, then came Bernard, and finally happy, smiling Ruth; but then came a day of sadness for the family, for Mrs. Doone, the mother of William, met with an accident which eventually caused her death.

By his mother's death Mr. Doone's mode of life was to a great extent changed, for he now became the owner of a fair-sized farm, which was, however, mortgaged to a considerable extent, and the working of which caused him to spend much more time on land than formerly. Eventually, after spending nearly twenty years in the coasting trade, he disposed of his half of the venture to Captain Rose, and devoted his time exclusively to his farm and business of ship's chandler.

Captain Rose's fair fortune continued for another two

or three years, till on a certain voyage to Bristol he fell in with a party of Americans, one of whom had been in the fur trade of the American far West, indeed, he had been in Mr. Astor's service when that gentleman founded the American Fur Company, by establishing a depôt, called Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia River in Oregon.

The stories of adventure, and the profits which were to be made by trading with the Indians for furs, fired Captain Rose with the idea of fitting out a vessel and proceeding to the coast of Western America to traffic for furs and peltries with the natives.

For six months he worked at the idea, knocking it into practical form, and at last made up his mind to start by fitting out a suitable vessel for the long and perilous voyage of nearly eighteen thousand miles.

With Doone's assistance a smart schooner called *The Hunter* was purchased at Plymouth, and freighted with a cargo of common guns, leaden rods for bullets, coarse gunpowder, blankets, knives, coloured ribbons and tape, needles, looking glasses, linen, iron and tin saucepans, tin goods, and a hundred other "notions" as the Yankees would call them.

The fitting out caused a great commotion in the little half-hidden town under the hill; but one fine day away went *The Hunter* with her hardy crew, amid the God-speeds of the entire population.

To follow the course of Captain Rose and recount his various adventures would take up as much space as the story which follows this introductory matter, so we must content ourselves with a brief epitome of what was done on the voyage out and at home.

The run across the Atlantic was uneventful. They put

in at Bahia for fresh provisions and ran down the South American coast without mishap, till, nearing the Straits of Magellan the weather became somewhat blustering, and in going through the dreaded Straits they lost their mizzen topmast, which broke off at the cap, and falling upon two of the hands injured them severely. They put in at a Peruvian port for a week, while the injured men were attended by a doctor; fresh water, vegetables, and sheep taken aboard, and a new topmast made and rigged.

Then they sailed with favouring breezes northward; had the usual cases of sunstroke and dysentery while passing through the tropics, and at length, after a voyage of six and a-half months, arrived off the North Californian coast. They ran along the coast slowly, making frequent calls at the mouths of rivers and other likely places for trading; but found the natives either quarrelsome or indisposed to barter, the surroundings rocky and dangerous, the locality unsuitable, the entire absence of population, or some other circumstance to cause them to proceed farther, till they came one day to a bold promontory, which from their chart they knew to be Cape Blanco, near the southern extremity of the Oregon coast. Here a heavy westerly gale overtook them, and they drove before it along the coast, fearing hourly that they should be driven on the rugged shore and become a total wreck, but as by stress of weather they were blown dangerously near the shore, they, on the second day of the gale, perceived a tall rugged headland jutting out far into the wild ocean.

Strive as they would, they could not claw out to sea in the teeth of such a gale, and gradually they neared the massive, rocky headland, against which in a short time they would strike, and then, God help every soul of them,

for they were no better than dead men. Everything that human hands could do had been done, and now they tried what human lips and tongues could do for their salvation.

They prayed: and as they prayed their deliverance was shown them, for through the mist they saw, to their joy, a smaller headland nearer to them than the huge one upon which they expected to end their lives. Between these two headlands they could discern certain effects upon the sea which told them that it was the embouchure of a river.

Now let the gale blow; they ran cheerfully before it, and in another hour were safely moored to the lea of the small headland, a mile up the river Umpqua. Here they stayed for several weeks among the friendly Indians, and then cruised as far north as Vancouver's Island, where they received a great number of sea otter and deer skins in exchange for their trinkets. Up the Columbia River, on their return, they sailed for seventy or eighty miles to where the Willamette River joins the parent stream, and were fairly successful in their negotiations with the natives; but through the indiscretion of two of the crew, they had to leave the trading port for fear of being massacred. Here they met with several hair-breadth adventures which we cannot record, as these pages will presently be filled with many of even a more startling nature.

Back to the Umpqua River they sailed, and ascended it for some forty or fifty miles to where it forks; one branch going to the west and the main stream to the south. Here, upon an isthmus at the fork of the two rivers, they built a hut, and spent the entire winter; living in peace with the Indians, whose village stood in a sheltered position on the bank of the main river—the Umpqua proper. In the ensuing spring the Prairie Indians came in with many

packs of fine furs, which they readily bartered for the curious commodities of the white men.

Early in May they set sail for England, and after a voyage of alternate calms and gales, some of which were favourable to their passage, arrived in Fowey, as we have seen, in the following October safe and well.

Such is the very brief epitome of the voyage, in which the many most interesting details of adventures and incidents have been purposely omitted, as they are really not part of our story, although connected with it. Sufficient has been stated to convey to the reader a reason for what follows.

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CHAPTER III.

Doone's Dilemma.—He takes Council.—The Cargo of *The Hunter*.—
The Convoy to London.—Rupert's Ride.

WHEN at the end of many convivial evenings the Captain's account of his long voyage came to a close, it became his turn to inquire into the welfare of his old comrade Doone. This he did, and we will now give a short recapitulation of Doone's account of his circumstances.

"Well, David, I must tell you frankly, I am not doing at all well. As you know, there is a rather heavy mortgage on the farm; I have just one hundred acres, and the mortgage amounts to £2,000, for which I have to pay £100 a year as interest. That I can afford, and I pay it as regularly as quarter-day comes round, and am pleased to do so; but the mortgagee requires his money, and although I have several hundred pounds that I can scrape together, still, I cannot muster more than one-third of the mortgage.

"I am in a fix; I do not wish to sell the farm, which has been in our family for many generations, and I do not like to borrow the money to pay the mortgagee, as I might get into the hands of some sharp person who would, by-and-by, foreclose and sell me up, house, land, and stock.

"My present income is ample for my wants, but I have little prospect of saving enough to pay off the mortgage, even if old Mr. Prothero would oblige me by waiting for the money.

"Perhaps, David, you can see a way to help me out of my present embarrassment? They say two heads are better than one, so let the matter rest awhile, and we will go into figures a little, and possibly an interchange of ideas may lead to a practical mode of untying my Gordian knot.

"Do not speak of it before the boys or Ruth, as, bless their hearts, my troubles have no right to be theirs, especially as they are powerless to help me out of my financial predicament.

"Hetty knows all, and will willingly help us in our little three-cornered council."

So spoke Mr. Doone, but when he had concluded, David broke in with :

"Now look here, William, don't say another word about this plaguy business for a week ; in the meantime I will cudgel my brain for a solution of the difficulty, and if I do not devise something practical may I never set teeth into a new ship's biscuit again. The fact is, I have heard most of what you just told me from my sister, and I may add that I am already cruising after an idea that lies in the offing of my imagination."

The two men shook hands heartily, drank a dram to the skipper's success, gave a groan for old hunks Prothero, and strolled down to the quay arm in arm.

The work of unlading *The Hunter* was quietly going on, pack after pack of skins being lazily brought ashore on men's backs and deposited in the long dry store-shed upon the quay.

In due course merchants from Bristol and Plymouth came to look at the valuable cargo of skins, and a great many of the bales were disposed of at a rate that left a very ample margin of profit, but a great number of the

best furs and peltries were reserved for the London market.

Weapons and curiosities picked up on the voyage, found ready purchasers among the many Bristol merchants who came to inspect the skins, but when the larger part of the cargo had been disposed of the store was closed, and its most valuable contents packed in four huge, lumbering waggons, ready to start for London.

In those days there was no railway into Cornwall from the Metropolis, so that all goods had to be conveyed by road; the distance from Fowey to London being nearly three hundred miles, such a journey was quite a serious undertaking. There were three horses to each waggon, and as twenty-five miles per day was as far as they could conveniently travel, the cavalcade would be just a fortnight on the road, as Sunday would be regarded as a day of rest for both man and beast.

It was a fine frosty morning in November, when the little cavalcade commenced its long, weary, cold journey, but both Mr. Doone and Captain Rose looked upon the trip as a very pleasant one, for they anticipated a very profitable termination to the venture.

The cavalcade, as we have said, consisted of four waggons, each drawn by three horses, with a reserve horse, ridden by Bernard; there were six men to act as convoy (two of whom were well armed), while Mr. Doone and the Captain, both well mounted and armed, brought up the rear.

A week previous to the starting of the waggons a mounted messenger had been despatched, with notices to several London merchants advising them of the coming of such a freight of skins as seldom reached London for public sale; most of the fur trade being carried on through

the agents of the Hudson Bay Company. The messenger was also instructed to place advertisements in several London newspapers, giving full particulars of the sales. This trusty messenger who set out alone on horseback was Mr. Doone's eldest son, Rupert. A ride of three hundred miles in our present well-governed country is very different to what it was sixty years ago, when the highways were infested by highwaymen, ever ready to plunder those upon whom they could pounce with impunity.

Rupert had received his orders to travel only between the hours of 8 A.M. and 4 P.M., and these instructions he rigidly adhered to, making the best of his way through the wild western counties in broad daylight. The young man did the full distance in six days—a very fair performance, considering the state of the roads and the many hills he had to cross, especially at the outset.

Without any incidents of travel worthy of note, Rupert arrived safely in London on the Saturday after the Monday upon which he set out, and there we will leave him, in a state of astonishment at all he saw and heard (for it was his first visit to the Metropolis, or, indeed, any large town or city), while we see how things fared with Captain Rose and his convoy

CHAPTER IV.

The Fur Convoy Starts.—The Conversation on Dartmoor.—A Startling Proposal.—Its Acceptance.—The Land Pirates at the Inn.—Fallen Among Thieves.—Nineteen, Twenty!—A Lucky Shot.—The Furs Sold.

THE first three or four days of the journey were most enjoyable, being clear, cold, and sunny; but the two leaders had plenty to talk about and many arrangements to make, as they crawled slowly along the undulating roads at an average of a little over three miles an hour, which was the rate of their travel.

Having passed safely across Dartmoor, that vast western wilderness, beautiful in summer and dismal and wild in stormy winter, the conversation one day took this turn as the comrades rode side by side over the springy turf.

“Now, William, it is a fortnight since we had that little chat about your affairs and your future prospects; but, as you know, I have had but little opportunity of speaking to you on private matters while these things were being prepared for the London market; but now that we have a long day before us with nothing to do but to ride and converse, with an occasional halt to wet our whistle (for we sailors are so impregnated with salt as to be ever in a state of drought), why, we can look into our future prospects at our leisure. I say ‘our,’ because whichever way I look at it, we seem to have been pre-

ordained for partners, and right well we hit it; what do you say, William, eh?"

"While we were partners," replied Mr. Doone, "we did well together, William; but while you have been successfully climbing the tree of prosperity, I seem to have crawled out on a branch, which at any minute may snap and bring me to the ground, from which I should find it very difficult to climb again, even if I had any heart left to attempt it.

"You see I have had a bad year of it, David; first I lost . . . cows by some plaguy disease; then, in April, my little fishing lugger, *Hetty*, was lost, with all her gear and two of her crew; this was followed by the bankruptcy of one of my creditors, my largest, in fact; and now, to crown all, that old rascal Prothero, seeing me on my knees, tries to crush me still lower by foreclosing on the mortgage."

"Cheer up, old comrade," cried the Captain, in his boisterous manner; "who can tell what the future has in store for you? Wait and hope, and probably things may turn out brighter than you anticipate."

"Oh, never fear, David, I'm not going to despond; I and my youngsters are alive and well, and while we have health at our backs there is no need for crying *peccavi*. But, my friend, I think you will own that I have had a very large share of ill-fortune for one year?"

"True, I have thought of that, and I am now thinking of what I said a few minutes since as to our suitability to share each other's fortune. We have constantly been together since we robbed old Trevelyan's orchard when we were schoolboys, and had the luck of being uncaught in running the blockade, even when he had his men on the look-out for us, eh? Our apprenticeship together was

a happy one, our partnership in the coasting trade was a prosperous one, and why should we not again join our hands and trade in unison?"

"Because," said Mr. Doone, pointing to the waggon, "you are, in comparison to me, a wealthy man, and my affairs are in such a shaky state that I am afraid a partnership is out of the question."

They rode on for a long time in silence, thinking deeply; but at length, as the horses walked side by side up a steep hill, the Captain again spoke:

"What do you say, William, to my paying old Hunks the £2,000, and taking the mortgage on my own shoulders?"

"Say! why say you would make me the happiest man alive, and I should pay you the £100 a year for interest with the utmost cheerfulness."

"Very well, old comrade, when I have disposed of the furs I will carry out my suggestion, but that is only part of my grand idea; now give me your opinion upon this scheme.

"I have a project in my mind that I want you to help me carry out, for it is one that in a space of three or four years should make us both men of means—that is, it ought to place us both in comfortable circumstances for the rest of our days. Here is my plan—

"Before leaving my quarters on the Umpqua River, I placed a half-bred trapper, named Simola, in charge of what remained of my cargo, instructing him to barter with the natives until I returned to him next autumn. With him I left two strapping young Mandan Indians, who were with me on my Columbia expedition, and as they have plenty of provisions to last till my return, they should not only keep my trading station free from possible

(but not probable) rivals, but have a good store of peltries ready for me to take on board.

"I am certain that a great deal of money may be made from this venture if you will help me to carry out my scheme, which really requires two heads.

"I will offer you these terms—

"Let your farm to your worthy old neighbour farmer Treffry, who has been so willing to help you in your trouble; then, with what money you can scrape together—some £700 I believe—you shall become my partner, and I will place a like amount in the concern to victual and freight *The Hunter*, and if more money is needed I will supply it without prejudice to our equality as partners, for your wife and family will be of considerable monetary value in the affair. Pardon me putting it in that way, but likening your youngsters and my sister to 'stock' is merely my way of saying that if I have a greater pecuniary share of the fitting out of the expedition, still, your family will make your contribution of equal value to mine, for it is a well-known business axiom that 'stock is as good as money,'" and the Captain roared at his little witticism.

"Yes, yes; I know that, David," said Mr. Doone, looking extremely perplexed; "but how do you propose to turn Hetty and the boys into 'stock'?"

"Why, in this way," laughed the Captain. "I propose that when *The Hunter* is ready for sea that, leaving all your Fowey property either in the hands of friend Treffry or a trustworthy bailiff, you and your wife and family shall take the voyage to the far West with me, and become agents for our little firm on the Umpque River and the district around. I will promise you it is a lovely place, and has a grand climate; it is healthy, and inhabited with

friendly natives. I can then trade along the coast in *The Hunter*, visiting the many tribes of Chinooks, Flat-heads, and others who inhabit the coast during the summer season.

“What do you say, William?”

Mr. Doone turned excitedly in his saddle and, grasping his comrade's hand with a firm, honest grip, while tears stood in his eyes, said:

“I cannot thank you enough for this great kindness, David, it has quite unnerved me to think there is yet an opportunity of gaining something to leave my boys and Ruth, and I gladly say ‘Yes’ to your proposition with but one reservation—that Hetty also approves of our scheme, and acquiesces in changing her comfortable English home for a log cabin in the wild West. True, it would be but a temporary exile, and if all went well we should return in two or three years with ample means to live once more in dear old England.”

So for the present the scheme was left in abeyance, the journey and prospective sales being the principal themes of conversation.

At the end of the first week the weather became very cold, and several heavy snow-squalls occurred, which rendered travelling very slow work; but being so early in the season—mid November—they had no apprehension of enough snow falling to block them on their journey.

Enough fell, however, to turn some of the soft roads into quagmires and greatly impede their progress, so that to reach London by the appointed time they had to prolong their day's work till 6 p.m., and this travelling in the dark produced for them an adventure which threatened to put a sudden termination both to the journey to London and their subsequent voyage to the West.

It was getting towards the gloaming one evening when the cavalcade stopped at an inn to ascertain if accommodation could be found for the horses and their drivers ; but the landlord informed them that, though he could only put half of them up at his house, he would see what some of his neighbours could do to take in some of the horses and men ; but while he was busying himself in this business two well-to-do looking young men, who appeared to know the district, informed Captain Rose that at N——, about four miles on the road, there was a large, old-fashioned inn that could afford them every accommodation, and as they were going that way they would pilot them, if they might be allowed to do so.

Their offer was accepted, as the place recommended was but an hour's journey, and it was much better for the vans to be in one yard, and the escort under one roof, than scattered about a village, as would be the case if they stayed where they were. The cavalcade was therefore sent forward while the leaders stayed behind to explain matters to the obliging landlord on his return. By spurring on the steeds they could soon catch up to the vans which went lumbering along but slowly. They remained about twenty minutes, when, becoming tired of waiting, and anxious to overtake their vans for fear they might take a wrong road, Mr. Doone, the Captain, and the two young men, who were well mounted, rode off, leaving Bernard, who was fond of making incidents of travel, to pay the score and thank the landlord for the trouble he had been at in scouring the village for their benefit.

We must leave Bernard at the inn for a short time while we recount what happened to the four travellers in their endeavour to overtake the caravan. They chatted amicably enough as they proceeded at a smart trot ;

Captain Rose and Mr. Doone riding side by side, with one of their new friends on either flank, and all went well enough till they came to a short steep hill, with a wood or plantation on the right, and a gorse-grown common on the left.

Without any intimation from their riders, the horses slowed down to a walk in ascending the hill, when suddenly, by means of some preconcerted signal, each young man, from the interior of his riding cape, drew out a pistol and desired the two friends to halt; at the same time reining back their steeds to either side of the roadway.

The one who covered Mr. Doone with his weapon quietly said:

"I am very sorry, gentlemen, to part with such good fellows so soon, but we have altered our minds, and do not go farther with you; kindly dismount and turn out your pockets, as we are unfortunately in somewhat straitened circumstances!"

Mr. Doone, who saw that any attempt to snatch a pistol from one of his holsters would be both foolish and futile, suddenly drove his spurs into his horse's flanks, and as the startled animal gave a mad plunge and reared, he threw himself forward in the saddle to evade, if possible, the anticipated bullet.

His ruse, however, availed but little, for the robber fired, and the ball sped to its billet, passing through Mr. Doone's thigh, and entering the side of his horse, rolled the poor animal over in the roadway.

Unfortunately for its rider, the horse fell dead on the spot, having been shot through the heart, and in falling completely pinned his rider to the ground, so that it was impossible for him to rise.

Mr. Doone was for a moment stunned with the sudden fall, but opened his eyes just in time to see his assailant draw another pistol and point it at his head.

Raising one hand in front of him, and entreating the robber not to fire, he placed his right hand on the ground behind him to raise himself, and in doing so put his hand down upon the butt of one of his own pistols, which had fallen from the holster. The robber saw the movement, and taking deliberate aim at Mr. Doone's chest, pulled the trigger, but for some reason a flash in the pan was the only result.

The prostrate man noted this instantly, and raising his own weapon fired at the robber, sending a ball through his breast. As he received his wound the robber was standing in the stirrups, with the intention of hurling his pistol at Mr. Doone's head. He was too late, however, and as his arms dropped heavily at his side he sank into his saddle, a gush of blood from his mouth and nostrils telling of the fatal wound he had received.

Wheeling round, the robber's horse made away over the common, and in the gathering gloom both the animal and its lifeless burden were quickly lost to sight.

Mr. Doone swooned away from excitement and the pain of his wound, which was greatly intensified by the weight of the dead horse lying upon him.

Matters were not quite so bad for the Captain; but whatever inclination for resistance he might have had was completely subdued by his looking down the barrel of the other robber's pistol, which was extended towards his head at a distance of only three or four paces.

Obviously his only course was to obey the behest of his captor, and alight.

This he did, and at the robber's command stripped off

his great coat and spread it in the roadway; then, one by one, he was ordered to turn out his pockets.

This also he did, but that was not enough; he was enjoined to take off his coat and waistcoat, and produce the pistol and contents of his holsters. These requests were reluctantly complied with, and then to his mortification, he was requested to rifle the pockets of his apparently dead comrade.

This was too much for the Captain's temper, and he commenced to use some of those choice flowers of speech which one usually associates with anger in a sailor. Nay, he went further, and flatly refused to sacrilegiously rifle the clothing of a dead man (for so he supposed his friend to be).

"Then, my friend, there is but one way," said the mounted robber, quietly. "I will slowly count twenty, and if you have not then commenced to hand out the belongings of your comrade, which will not be of any further use to him, I shall provide you with a leaden supper, and do the work myself."

"One!" and the pistol was held unquaveringly towards the Captain's head.

"Two, three, four," &c, came quickly from the robber's lips.

When eighteen was reached, the Captain, with his arms folded on his breast, exclaimed:

"You cowardly villain! Fire, and be hanged to you!"

"Nineteen!" from the robber.

Then, as his lips were forming the word *twenty*, a loud and startling report was heard, and the thievish hand which a moment before held the deadly weapon at the gallant sailor's head, fell to his side a ghastly mangled mass of bone, sinew and quivering flesh.

With a couple of hasty strides the Captain was by the side of his assailant, and taking him by complete surprise, seized him by the waist, dragged him from his horse, and hurled him with a thud to the earth.

In another second Bernard leapt over the fence and rushed to his father, who had apparently been killed, and tried to raise him, but could not do so as the weight of the horse was too great for him.

"One second, Berny," said the Captain, quickly, "while I strap this fellow's arms behind him with my bridle-rein."

As they were tugging at the dead horse to get him clear of his master, three countrymen, who had heard the shots fired, came upon the scene, and with their aid Mr. Doone, who had partly recovered from his swoon, was carried to an inn a mile farther along the road, where they found the vans halted for the night.

Mr. Doone was put to bed, and a man despatched to the nearest town for a medical man. In an hour he returned, attended by a doctor and a man to take charge of the prisoner, and lodge him in jail.

The bullet, in its course through Mr. Doone's thigh, had fortunately escaped both bone and large arteries, and the doctor pronounced the wound of such a favourable nature that he might travel in one of the vans in two or three days, if no serious symptoms supervened.

On examination, the thief's hand presented a dreadful sight. The bullet which had struck him had entered at the elbow, and after ploughing its way along the muscles of the forearm, had escaped at the wrist, only to enter the back of the hand and completely shatter it upon the hard stock of the pistol. The limb was next day amputated above the elbow in D—— jail.

Of course, Mr. Doone and the skipper were both anxious

to hear how Bernard came to fire the lucky shot just in the very nick of time, and we cannot do better than repeat his own words.

"When you left me and rode off from the inn I quite



"I BADE THE LANDLORD'S DAUGHTER GOOD EVENING."

anticipated having to wait some time for the landlord, but I was much surprised to see him return almost before you were out of sight. I explained to him that you had gone on to H——, thanked him for the great trouble he had put himself to on our account, and paid the reckoning.

"I bade the landlord's daughter good evening, and, mounting my horse put him into a brisk trot, hoping to catch you before you arrived at our halting-place, especially as you said you would ride slowly to give me time to rejoin you.

"After I had ridden about a mile, I heard a pistol fired at no great distance ahead of me, and then the sound of angry voices which reached my ears in the stillness of the evening, without sufficient distinctness for me to catch the precise words used.

"I stopped my horse and listened, then alighted and ran quietly round the bend of the road where, to my horror, about one hundred yards off, I saw two men on horseback and another prone in the road.

"I scarcely knew what to do, not recognising any of the forms in the crepuscular light, but hitching Beauty's bridle over a gate-post, I seized my pistols from the holsters and leapt over the gate into the plantation, and ran swiftly, but noiselessly, along behind the hedge to where the mounted men were confronting each other.

"A glance over the fence showed me that it was you, father, who lay inanimate upon the ground, while uncle was covered with the pistol of a mounted man, who was seated with his back towards me.

"I had cocked my weapons as I ran, and although panting for breath, I took as steady an aim at the villain's back as possible, but somehow refrained from taking the man's life, for he was but a few feet from me, although he knew nothing of his peril. I suddenly altered my aim and sighted for his upraised hand, thinking that to cripple the rascal would be better than having a fellow creature's blood on my conscience all my life long.

"Getting his hand in my line of fire I pulled the

trigger, and with a shriek his hand fell shattered at his side.

“You know the rest.

“Had my first shot proved futile I should have planted the second ball fairly between his shoulders.”

On the third day the party moved on again towards London, the prisoner preceding them in charge of two Bow Street runners, for he was wanted in the Metropolis on more than one charge.

To abridge our story as much as possible, we may say that Mr. Doone's wound gave him but little trouble, and in a day or two after reaching town he was hobbling about again.

The sale of the skins took place on three separate days, and, as expected, realised good prices, the total sales amounting to close upon £4,000.

Paul Venner, as the bloodthirsty highwayman called himself, was tried at the Old Bailey, and for his share in the attack on our friends and a charge of forgery, was sentenced to transportation for life. His friend, who was shot by Mr. Doone, died of his wound two days after the contretemps.

By the time their business was finished in London, over five weeks had elapsed since they left Cornwall, and having sent the waggons and men off on their return journey to far-off Fowey quite a week before, our four friends booked seats and on the 21st of December mounted the “Western Star” coach and journeyed to Plymouth, where a conveyance was ready to take them to Fowey, which they reached safely on the 24th, glad to be at home once more to join in the usual Christmas festivities.

Mr. Doone had by this time quite recovered from his

wound, and the trio told the story of their adventure with the highwaymen as a capital joke, scarcely realising how near the Doone family had been to a Christmas of sorrow instead of one of joy.

Still, as Mr. Doone said, "All's well that ends well, and thank God that he allows us once more to reunite around our cheery fire-side and sing carols to His Son's remembrance."

CHAPTER V.

Springtime.—*The Hunter* Refitted.—A Glance at Her Stores.—Her Cargo.—The Plan of Campaign.—*The Hunter* Sails.

SPRING had succeeded the mild winter which is usual in our most favoured county of Cornwall, and everyone in Fowey was happy and busy preparing for the harvest, both of land and sea, which would in due time take place. The harvest of the sea would come first, and at that the inhabitants would toil cheerfully, while others, probably of the same family, would be tilling the soil and sowing the seed, which by-and-by would grow up and ripen into corn, and produce the land harvest. But besides these two harvests yet another was being looked forward to, and that was a harvest of skins and peltries in the far West of America.

Mr. and Mrs. Doone and their family had signified their intention of joining their fortunes with that of Uncle David, and preparations were being made for a long voyage and a long sojourn in an uncivilised land.

The Hunter was hauled high and dry on the stocks, and while some were scraping and re-caulking her bottom, the sailmaker and his mate were helping the rigger to re-canvas and refit her spars. Two carpenters were busy refitting her interior and placing a bulkhead across her hold so as to partition off a considerable space towards the stern for a comfortable cabin, which was to be fitted with

lockers, tables, cupboards, and other contrivances in most unexpected places. The hold was fitted for the reception of skins, and the fore-castle made comfortable for the men. The cook's galley amidships was considerably enlarged, and received a brand new cooking range and a perfect armoury of pots, pans, and the other glittering articles which go to make a good *batterie de cuisine*.

Rupert and Bernard, styling themselves "ship decorators," presided over the paint pots and brushes, and during March they painted everything paintable, from the figure-head to the taffrail, and from the white trucks on the tops of the masts to the figures on the rudder post, such a gaily decorated craft never before left Cornwall, and if she arrived safely at her destination would cause a deal of wonderment among the Indians. On the last day of March *The Hunter* was launched from the stocks and brought alongside the quay to receive her stores and cargo.

Now for a glance at her stores. She carried provisions for two years, and when it is remembered that she would carry twenty-five persons all told, it need not be wondered at that the stores filled many waggons. There was for several days a continual going and coming of carts and waggons containing a heterogeneous assortment of all kinds of food, drinks, and requisites, both for ship and crew.

There were barrels of beef and tierces of pork, and many huge casks of ship's bread and biscuits; potatoes in heavy boxes to protect them from rats and sea water; large canisters of tea and coffee, which were luxuries in those days and only meant for cabin use; sugar and molasses, salt, pepper, and mustard, oatmeal for porridge, flour for puddings and pies, butter in hermetically sealed jars, dried

fruits, bottled fruits, honey, and jam, salted fish, raisins and currants, soda, soap, and other domestic necessaries, tobacco and pipes, oil, spirits, and wine for high days and holidays, and many little nick-nacks which Mrs. Doone took as "private ventures," as the captain called her spices, pickles, and other little luxuries.

Then there were heaps of bedding, blankets, and sheets, boxes of clothing, and boots and shoes, books, medicines, crockery, guns and rods, colour boxes and drawing instruments, and a host of cabin requisites.

Weapons for offence and defence had to be thought of, and as our friends were going to a country where frequently "might is right," they had to go well armed, and this is how that part of the lading was carried out.

Five iron guns were mounted on deck, viz., four 4-pounders, and a long eight; there were also two pivot guns, one on either side of the vessel; these were bell-mouthed and intended to be loaded with slugs for firing at belligerent boat crews. Forty muskets, and a like number of pistols and cutlasses, were stowed in the arm-chest, while deep down under the floor of the cabin was made a powder room, lined with iron plates, which in turn received a coating of duffel. In this was stored twelve casks of gunpowder, some for use and some for barter, and quite enough in quantity to have blown up a huge three-decker.

Last, but far from least, the cargo was stowed, which for the purpose in view was of a most miscellaneous kind, and as the articles are very seldom to be met with on an ordinary vessel, we will glance at some of them.

Here are huge bales of blankets, coloured cloths, calicoes, and printed linen goods, all of the most gaudy and inexpensive kinds; there are large casks quite full of glass

beads of all sorts, sizes, shapes, and colours; another full of knives, another of spear heads, axe heads, and common swords. Those long cases contain trade guns, with deal stocks painted vermilion and cast-iron barrels more deadly to shooter than to shootee. Smaller cases contain earrings, brooches, bracelets, and other jewellery for the squaws (and men too), and, yet, other cases are filled with mirrors, earthenware, mugs, and drinking vessels, fancy bottles, and china ornaments. Sticks of metal, about as thick as one's finger, are tied in bundles; these are round rods of lead to be cut up into bullets as required by the natives. Then there are cases of tin mugs, saucepans, kettles, and other culinary utensils, needles, chains, brass ornaments; red, blue, and yellow powders for painting the persons of the Indians; while drums, flutes, whistles, tambourines, cymbals, and triangles form the musical department, and who can tell what else was stowed 'tween decks of the gallant *Hunter* ere she was pronounced ready to put to sea? Almost the last articles to come aboard were twenty hogsheads of water, the most necessary article of all.

Before our good friends sail away let us see how things were to be left and cared for during their absence.

Captain Rose had paid off the mortgage on Mr. Doone's farm, much to Mr. Prothero's chagrin, as that worthy gentleman did not at all require *the money*, but had a covetous eye on *the farm itself*, which was so pleasantly situated that he longed to have it for his own estate. His idea was that by foreclosing, Mr. Doone would be in a dilemma, and not being able to raise the money when suddenly called upon, would forfeit the land.

As we see, however, the biter was bitten, for Mr. Prothero was paid off, and an honest farm bailiff, John

Trefry, left in charge of the farm and homestead until Mr. Doone's anticipated return in about three years.

The plan of the partners was very simple. They were to sail round Cape Horn and then up the west coast of South America, till they arrived at the north-west coast of California, where four men had been left at different places to get the Indians in the mind to trade with the white men. These were half-breeds whom Captain Rose had left on his previous voyage home.

Then *The Hunter* was to proceed to the Umpqua River, in south-west Oregon, and ascend it about fifty miles to the station which the Captain had already formed. Here a fort or trading house was to be built, and Mr. Doone; his wife, sons and daughter, left in charge to barter with the Indians, and send out agents among the outlying tribes to induce them to trap, shoot, and hunt with a view of bringing their spoils to the white men for trade.

Everything being settled at Fort Cornwall, as they were to christen their new stronghold, the Captain was to sail up and down the coast and put into likely places, and purchase furs of the natives or half-breed hunters. He was to watch for the signals of the four agents he had put ashore in North California, and when they made certain signs was to send a boat's crew ashore, with an assortment of goods, and exchange them for the spoils of the native hunters. This means he proposed to adopt, because, although he had faith in the honesty of his own agents, he had not with the tribesmen with whom they would associate, for they would for a certainty murder the men for the sake of the goods in their charge. No goods, therefore, were left with the agents.

By holding out promises of profit when the big white canoe, *The Hunter*, returned, the agents' lives would be

quite safe, and they would meet with every assistance from the tribes with whom they might happen to sojourn.

* * * * *

On the 28th April, 1838, everyone in Fowey was awake and astir by sunrise, very early it is true, but then a great event was to take place that day; it was the day assigned for the sailing of *The Hunter*, and did she not carry some of the finest fellows that ever belonged to their little town?

To be sure she did, and fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters, uncles and aunts, to say nothing of cousins, had to be up early to take leave of their relatives, whom they might never see again. And it *was* a leave-taking, hearty and true. Empty "good-bys," such as one hears when everyday friends part, were not heard, but sobs and sighs that came from the very heart's core sounded on all sides, and many a fervent, silent prayer and ardent blessing accompanied the handshaking and kisses, which were the outward and visible signs of loving hearts parting, perhaps for ever. Hearty, loud leave-takings there were, too—rugged and honest—counterparts of the speakers' faces, kind words were exchanged which would be the voyagers' solace through many a weary night and perilous day.

Tears were shed, hopes were expressed, council given, kisses and tokens exchanged, hands shaken, and forms embraced, and then from the tall masts the sails dropped down one by one, the moorings were cast off, and the last lingerers stepped on the quays.

Cheer after cheer made the surrounding houses and hills echo again; while the breeze catching the sails sped the good ship through the narrow exit from the haven;

and as she glided through, the youths and maidens, old men and children, who had assembled on the cliffs, again raised their voices in loud hurrahs to speed the mariners on their way.

An hour after, a speck on the grey horizon gave those gathered on the headland the last glimpse of the good ship *Hunter*, bearing away many a poor soul whose grave and not his fortune was to be found in the land of the setting sun—the Far West.

CHAPTER VI.

Pass the Cape Verdes.—Crossing the Line.—Pernambuco.—Donna Annetta.—Tumbling round the Horn.—Valdivia.—The all-fitting Poncho.—Socarro Islands.—The Pirate Vessel.—Suspicious Questions.—Preparing for a Tussle.—A Stubborn Fight.—A Terrible Carnage.—Despair of the “Hunters.”—A Strange Explosion.—Victory! But How?

WITH the equinoctial gales over, and a fine summer in prospect, the long voyage of *The Hunter* was commenced under happy circumstances, both as to time of year and staunchness of ship, so that her owners and crew alike had great faith in a safe voyage.

The Doones were all used to the sea, so that *mal-de-mer*, which so frequently causes a considerable amount of dread to those who “go down to the sea in great ships,” for the first time, had none of the usual terrors for them. Many a contemplated pleasure cruise is nipped in the bud and foregone, because of the dread of having to pay Neptune his customary tribute.

It is a pity that the anticipatory contemplation of a few hours' sea-sickness should act as such a deterrent to many would-be sailors, as the after sensation of buoyant spirits, hearty appetite, and healthy, clear complexion, amply compensate for the transitory pangs of a brief spell of sea-sickness.

The Doones had no fears of this kind, and simply gloried in the motion of the bounding vessel and the tingle of the cool salt air on their cheeks, as they rose at an early hour each morning. In mid-May, the days on the Atlantic are delicious, and the cool keen morning air soon gives place to the balmy air of the middle day, which makes it feel a positive pleasure to know and feel that one is alive.

Continuing their course, day after day, in a S.S.W. direction, they passed the Cape de Verde Islands in broad daylight, and so eager were the boys and Ruth to set foot in a foreign land, that they begged the skipper to put into harbour just for one day; but as wind and weather were alike fair, he was loath to comply with their request.

"I am very sorry," he said, "but we must make the most of our time while the ship has everything in her favour, for by-and-by, when we get to the Horn, we may have to lie to for days, from stress of weather. We have scarcely commenced our voyage yet, and do not know what may be in store for us before we reach our destination. We are now in the tropics, and in a few days, if all goes well, shall be crossing the line, when we will have some nautical fun. Then we edge away westward, till we sight the South American coast, and if I can manage it we will put into one of the ports in Brazil, and give *The Hunter* 'a breathing spell' while we fill our water-casks, and take in fresh vegetables, beef, and a half-dozen live sheep. How will that suit you?"

The young people were delighted with the proposal and heartily acquiesced.

The weather now grew hotter each day, until one morning at daybreak, an island was discovered right ahead, which Captain Rose told them was the Island of St. Paul, situated about 500 miles N.E. of the nearest land (Cape

S. Roque in Brazil) and only a few miles north of the Equator.*

"Now Bernard," said Rupert, "there is the very place that would suit you to live and become a second Robinson Crusoe, 500 miles from the nearest land, no one to quarrel with or to molest you, and so hot that you would need nothing in the way of warm food all the year round. I will warrant every tree on the island to be evergreen, which, I believe, is the case with all the trees in the tropics. Look through this glass and you will see a nice little cove where you can keep a boat, and there, between those jagged rocks, is a plateau where you might build a wigwam, and live without having to pay rates and taxes. Think of it and let us put you ashore. You will be king of the island, builder, butcher and baker, your own doctor, and finally, if you can manage it, your own undertaker. What do you think of these advantages? Say yes, and we will lower a boat and maroon you."

Bernard thanked his brother, but was quite content with his lot as a subject on ship-board, without wishing to exchange it for a solitary monarchy ashore.

At noon that day they crossed the line, and great was the fun they had. All the usual frolic appertaining to passing the equator for the first time was indulged in. Most of the crew had crossed before, but several of them were new to the southern hemisphere, and with Rupert and Bernard had to undergo all the pains and penalties that Father Neptune chose to inflict.

Abel Kenway, the boson, represented his Majesty and made a fine ocean god. He was stripped to the waist and had great bunches of dripping seaweed hung round

* A barren rock belonging to Brazil, and now used as a "half-way" telegraph station by an English company.

his loins; while a splendid crop of hair, made of tow, and a beard of the same material was formed into three long plaits, or pig-tails. From his shoulders a patch-work bed quilt swept downward to the deck, and completed his costume. A tall tin crown was mounted on his head, and in his hand he carried a trident. His myrindons were dressed in an equally fantastic manner, and at Neptune's bidding shaved, lathered, and bathed all the new comers.

Even Mr. Doone took his share in the amusement, and varied the proceedings by standing the barber's boy head downwards in his own bucket of lather.

Oh, what a shaving brush was used! and as for the razor, its blade was fully two feet long.

Despite the terrible heat the fun was kept up till nearly midnight, for Father Neptune brought forth his fiddle and everyone danced themselves into a perspiration and then took a souse into the sail filled with water, which hung between the masts. The main brace was spliced, and toasts drunk, songs sung, and various games kept up till a late hour, so that the proceedings of crossing the line were very unlikely ever to fade from the minds of the participants.

Most of the crew, and the boys also, slept under awnings on deck while in the tropics, for being towards the end of May, the days were intensely hot, and even the nights were none too cool.

So alike was one day to the next, that it was quite difficult to remember the day of the week; but what to ordinary individuals would have seemed a period of dull monotony, was to the boys a glorious time of fun and amusement, and their hilarity and constant sportiveness imparted itself to everyone on board, so that everything went as merrily as a wedding bell.

One morning they noticed a number of gulls flying above them, betokening their approach to land, and then was frequently asked :

“ How far are we from South America, uncle ? ”

“ At what point shall we first touch ? ”

“ How long shall we remain in port ? ” and a score of other questions, which had to be repeated and answered several times before land was actually sighted.

“ Now, my lads,” said Captain Rose, “ you see the South American coast at last, and if all goes well we shall anchor in Pernambuco harbour this evening. It is a queer place, and you will enjoy yourselves, during a couple of days ashore, for I will introduce you to my old skipper, Captain Bedford, who settled there some seventeen or eighteen years ago, and who will be pleased to show you about ‘ the city. ’ ”

Pernambuco is indeed curiously situated, and is, in reality, three towns under one municipal government.

As one approaches the coast, a long peninsula is seen running nearly parallel to the mainland ; on this is built the first portion of the town, which is called Recife. On the seaward side of this is the harbour, defended by a line of rocks, which at low tide are several feet above the level of the sea, but at high tide they are covered. Forts govern the harbour and dominate Recife, which is the fishing and shipping quarter of Pernambuco.

Between the peninsula and the mainland lies the island of San Antonio, upon which is built the town of that name ; while on the shore of the mainland lies Boa Vista, the third town. Bridges connect the three towns, which at the date of our story contained some 50,000 inhabitants.

San Antonio is the heart and fashionable part of Pernambuco, and contains the principal buildings—the

governor's house, prison, treasury, town-hall, barracks, and the monasteries of the Carmelites and Franciscans. Altogether it is a most strange place, even for an experienced traveller to visit for the first time, and to our friends was quite a revelation of quaintness. Captain Bedford entertained the Doones at his house for three days, during which time they had a long drive into the interior, and a long boating excursion about the towns and up the river Capibaribe, having for their guide, Donna Anneta, Captain Bedford's daughter. She was a beautiful girl of sixteen, and acted as housekeeper to her father (who was called Don Frederica), as his wife had been dead some years.

Poor Bernard was quite overcome by her beauty and unaffected manner; her dark eyes seemed to burn two deep holes into the poor lad's heart, which in a great degree spoilt his pleasure, as it did his appetite for two or three days after they sailed.

Anneta was tall, dark, and slight, with wavy hair approaching blackness, and of a most merry disposition, which at times amounted to boisterousness; yet there was nothing vulgar nor unmaidenly about her; she thoroughly enjoyed herself, and made those around her do the same, simply because she could not help it. Her very nature was gay.

When the good ship *Hunter* sailed on the fourth day, all the Doones were sorry to part with Anneta; Ruth and she had so romped together like sisters, being of the same age, that their embraces at parting were not without tears. Had Captain Bedford not been tied to Pernambuco by certain business arrangements, which could not be cancelled, he would certainly have taken the opportunity of joining the party which Messrs. Rose and Doone proposed he should do.

Poor Bernard was quite upset at parting with pretty Anneta; he told her he would certainly come and see her when they returned in a couple or three years' time, and implored her to try and influence her father to take up



“FAREWELL, DEAR ANNETA; ADIEU!”

his residence in England again when his present business engagements ran out.

“For then,” said he, “maybe I might be able to see you frequently, whereas thousands of miles will soon part us. Farewell, dear Anneta; adieu!”

For two or three days he sat moping on deck, eating but little and talking less ; but gradually his boyish spirits returned, and while running down the South American coast he no more sorrowed for "the girl he left behind him," although his thoughts often flew back to Pernambuco.

The four thousand miles between Pernambuco and the Straits of Magellan took them nearly six weeks to sail, as they had contrary winds and gales, which greatly delayed them ; in fact, when they arrived at the entrance of the Straits, Captain Rose found the difficulties of navigation so great that he decided to turn the Horn rather than face the intricacies of the rocky Magellan Straits in such blustering weather.

This course added several hundred miles to their voyage, but the extra time involved lessened the risk, for by making a wide detour they had ample sea room, which was of great consequence in such stormy weather.

It is sufficient for our purpose to say that the "turn of the Horn" was safely accomplished, although it took them more than three weeks to reach the west coast of Patagonia, and even then they did so in a very battered state, having lost their foretopmast, a boat, hencoops, and other deck gear.

There was no help for it but to rig a jury topmast and run for the nearest port in Chili, and this they did, although it was some 1200 miles to the north of their present position.

Valdivia, which was the port for which they made, is situated in a beautiful bay, said to be the largest, safest (from its natural position), and most capacious port on the South Pacific coast.

The town, however, did not compare favourably in the

eyes of our friends with Pernambuco, which they had left nearly three months since, as it was a mean, woebegone little place, and seemed to have great affinity for fire, having been nearly destroyed by that element on more than one occasion; and in passing we may add that in 1837, the year before our hero's visit, the town was so shaken by earthquake that but little of it was left. Indians, Spaniards, fire, sword, and earthquake have left but little of what was at one time a prosperous and wealthy town.

They stayed but three days at Valdivia, just long enough to have a new foretopmast made and rigged, but this gave the boys time for a scuttle ashore so as to see what the inhabitants were like. They were not greatly taken with the people, as they appeared neither civilised nor savage, but merely an unsatisfactory link between the two. Swarthy in complexion, unkempt as to hair, not over clean in person, and strange in dress; these were the chief points about these South Chilians.

The "poncho," a kind of mantle, struck Rupert as a very comfortable and picturesque garment. It was simply a large piece of thick waterproof cloth with a hole cut through the centre, through which the head is thrust, while the remainder of the garment is allowed to hang down all round the wearer. It is both picturesque and serviceable.

"Now," said Rupert, "that is what I call a sensible article of apparel. It fits anyone; there is no fussing about to find the armholes; no buttons to fasten, unfasten or rumple one's temper with by coming off; no pockets; no collar. It is simply perfection, and takes at least a couple of lives to wear one out if it is made of good material in the first place."

Then, having exhausted his eloquence, he persuaded his

father to purchase one for him ; this was done, and Rupert afterwards acknowledged that it was a most useful and comfortable article. Put on or off in a moment, it afterwards proved a friend to him in many ways, as by day it carried his little sundries of travel, and served him for a seat or a pillow on warm nights ; on cold ones it was his counterpane.

Leaving Valdivia behind, *The Hunter* ploughed her way northward ; for they had so far only proceeded half way upon their long voyage.

With fair winds, they made good progress, running from 80 to 130 miles a day when the elements were favourable. Day by day the time crept slowly away, slower now than at the commencement, for the novelty of being at sea had to a great extent given way to a kind of apathy, everything being taken as a matter of course ; but not long after crossing the line for the second time an event occurred which effectively woke up every member of the ship's company, from the cabin-boy to the skipper.

While running up to the South American coast, *The Hunter* had been kept a long way from the shore, so as to give her plenty of sea room in case of a storm, and that they might miss any outlying rocks, and also be out of the way of passing coasting vessels, which might run them down at night. From Point Payta, in Lat. 5° south, they were making a bee-line for the Californian coast, instead of skirting the rocky shores of Guatamala and Mexico, when one morning land was descried right ahead. At this the Captain was immediately called on deck, for they did not expect to sight the Californian coast for two or three days.

Captain Rose was soon on deck with his telescope, and on consulting his chart made the land out to be the island

of Socorro, one of the Revilla Gigedo group, lying some 300 miles S.W. of Cape San Lucas at the southern point of Lower California.

It is a large island, some 30 miles long, and the ship's head was pointed directly for it; her course was soon altered to N.W. so as to leave the island on her larboard side. There was only a light wind, and the vessel was moving but slowly through the water, when a schooner was observed leaving the harbour of Socorro and bearing also to the west.

The ships gradually neared each other, and when they were but a couple of miles apart, Captain Rose ordered the Union Jack to be run up, so that the stranger might know their nationality. To the surprise of those aboard *The Hunter*, a Union Jack was also displayed by the other vessel; which bore up for them and signalled that they wished to communicate. The sails of *The Hunter* were therefore eased off, and her spanker brailed, to give the schooner an opportunity of overtaking them sooner than she otherwise would, for the stranger in a light wind was a much faster sailer than *The Hunter*.

There was quite a commotion among the crew of the latter vessel when it was seen that theirs was not the only vessel belonging to old England in these distant seas.

The stranger approached, and when within a hundred yards, a man on the fore part of the vessel hailed Captain Rose in English, but with a distinctly foreign accent, "What ship are you, and where are you bound for?"

"*The Hunter*, from England, bound for Columbia River."

"What is your cargo, Captain?"

"A general cargo," answered Captain Rose, with some

suspicion that all was not right ; “ but who are you, and where are you from ? ”

“ This is the English schooner *William III.*, from Costa Rica to Yerba Buena, with fruit and mollasses.”

“ Why, you are taking coals to Newcastle, my friend ; they have plenty of fruit at this time of the year without importing it from Central America.”

“ Captain of *The Hunter*, will you come aboard my vessel and do me the honour of drinking my health in a bottle of good Spanish Port ? I have also some of your countrymen sailing with me who would be pleased to see you.”

To this Captain Rose replied, “ Thank you all the same, but I want to make the most of what little breeze there is, and wish you a pleasant voyage. Good morning.”

During this colloquy the Captain had had his eye on the strange vessel, as he looked upon her with suspicion for several reasons, among them being the fact that only three or four hands could be seen on the deck of the strange vessel, and they were of the pale chocolate complexion peculiar to the natives of Central America ; no white men were visible anywhere, except the swarthy person speaking, who appeared to be a Spaniard. The sharp eyes of Captain Rose also noticed four heaps of lumber, two on either side of the deck, which he surmised might possibly hide four guns.

As the Captain stood at the taffrail of *The Hunter* several other men made their appearance from the after-hatch of the stranger, and carelessly lounged about her deck, which made him more suspicious that the *William III.* was not what she purported to be—a peaceful trader.

The mate Harding stood at the Captain’s side, and in a quiet tone the latter informed him of his doubts as to the

vessel alongside being honest in her intentions, and told him to go quietly among the crew and warn them that they must be prepared for a skirmish. To Rupert and Bernard he gave instructions to open the arm chest and powder magazine; to bring powder and shot quietly on deck in a covert manner, that no suspicion might be aroused on the part of the stranger captain, who was now seen to be talking to two of his men, although he never took his eyes off *The Hunter*.

The latter vessel had now resumed her course with the *William III.* about a cable's length distant on her starboard quarter, but it was evident that she could come up to *The Hunter* in a few minutes whenever she chose.

"What do you think of her, Doone?" said the Captain.

"I am afraid, Rose, that she means us no good, so let us arm quietly so as to show no bustle to the stranger, and then, having arranged for the defence of the vessel and assigned quarters to the crew, bring up powder and cannon balls and load as quickly as possible."

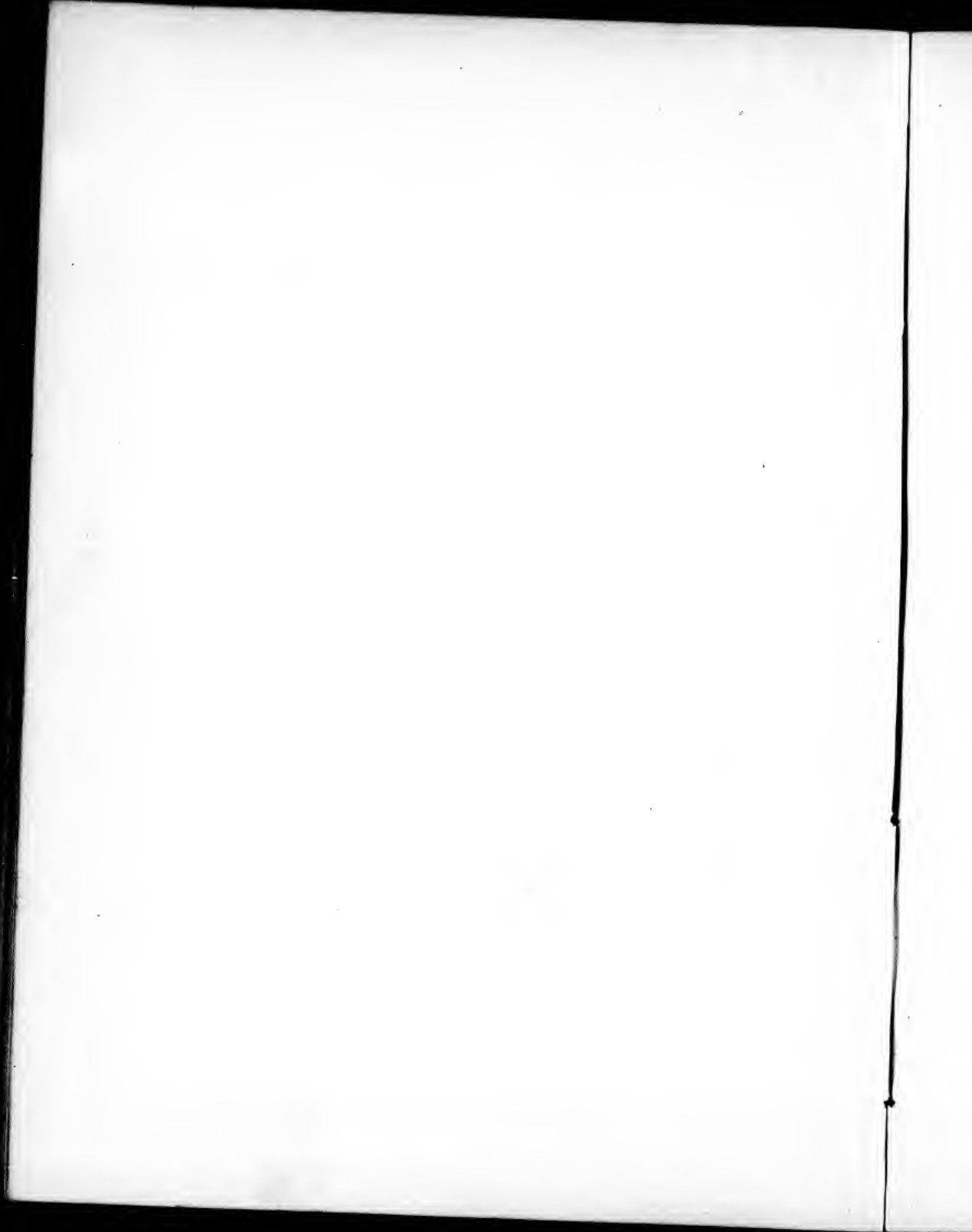
Every man was armed with a cutlass and brace of pistols, while eight of them also received a loaded musket and ammunition.

Mr. Doone and the two boys were also armed, while Mrs. Doone and poor trembling Ruth were locked in the cabin.

Three men were told off to each gun, and at a given signal they loaded them as expeditiously as possible; others, while they were thus occupied, bringing up bales, boxes and casks, which were placed in certain positions on the deck, and against them beds, blankets, &c., piled, so as to form a couple of breastworks for the men to take shelter behind; and as these improvised forts were, to a certain extent, bullet-proof, those inside them would be



THE FIGHT WITH THE PIRATE.



somewhat sheltered from the fire of the enemy's small arms.

Directly the pirate captain—for such he doubtless was—saw what was going forward on *The Hunter's* decks, his own guns were quickly unmasked, and the lumber which had covered them utilised for protection in a somewhat similar way to that aboard *The Hunter*.

On came the *William III.*, and to the dismay of our friends, her deck appeared to be crowded with men of all colours, from the swarthy Spaniard to the full-blooded negro—there were fifty of them at least—and a more fiendish lot of villains were never gathered together than those who made the air ring with their horrid yells.

The men of *The Hunter* stood firmly at their posts, with no voice heard except those of the Captain, mate and Mr. Doone, who hurriedly issued their orders.

Rupert sprang from the hatchway with four small bags in his hands, one of which was firmly rammed into each of the four-pounders. They were bags of nails, and calculated to do great damage to their black opponents.

Yard by yard the enemy approached, till, when nearly alongside, she fired her guns at *The Hunter*, but no great damage was done, except knocking some holes through her bulwarks and smashing a boat which hung on the davits.

Not a gun was fired by *The Hunter's* crew, by the Captain's orders, and as the enemy ranged up alongside, her commander shouted :

“ Will you heave to, or shall we come aboard and slaughter every mother's son of you ? ”

Captain Rose's reply was addressed to his own men :
“ Fire ! ”

And at the word, the guns belched forth their metal

contents, and several men were seen to fall on the enemy's deck. This made them furious, and a continuous musket fire was now commenced upon each vessel, with the result that three of *The Hunter's* men were hit—one of them shot through the head and the other two severely wounded.

The guns were loaded again, this time with odds and ends of iron, and by the Captain's orders were hauled to the waist of the vessel, as he anticipated being boarded near the bows, the enemy having forged ahead.

He had not long to wait for his surmise to be proved correct, for the sails of the pirate were suddenly braced round, which caused her to collide with *The Hunter's* bows. Grappling-irons were flung aboard, and over her weather bow came at least thirty howling, yelling fiends, armed with axes, pistols, and long knives.

"Steady, Hunters!" cried Captain Rose, "wait for the word," and standing by the weather bulwarks, pistol in hand, he waited till about twenty of the enemy had reached his deck and were rushing to attack them; then in stentorian tones he cried: "Fire!" and simultaneously the guns poured their miscellaneous charges into the mass of humanity before them.

A dreadful sight met the gaze of Captain Rose and his crew as they charged forward beyond the smoke which was quickly dispersed to leeward. At least a dozen of the blacks were writhing on deck in mortal agony, while three or four others were lying dead and motionless where they had fallen. Still, there were plenty left to fight, and yells, groans, and sharp reports told of the severity of the *melée*.

Rupert and Bernard fought like lusty young Britons, each brought his opponent down and turned to face

fresh foemen. In front of Rupert was a gigantic yellow-faced Mexican, who with his broad axe had already placed two of *The Hunter's* crew *hors de combat*, and this savage immediately turned his attention to our hero, who, nothing daunted, rushed at him with his cutlass, intending to get a blow at the giant before he could swing aloft his murderous axe, but ere he could accomplish his purpose, he, in his eagerness, trod upon the arm of a dead man, which gave a roll under his foot and threw him backwards headlong to the deck, but not before the giant's axe had descended upon him somewhere in the region of the left shoulder.

The stroke of the axe, and the concussion with which he came backwards upon his head, completely stunned him, and he was as motionless as a corpse, when the giant, thinking he had killed him, immediately stooped with the intention of securing his watch and chain, the latter of which had caught his eye.

His hand was upon the chain when Bernard, who had seen his brother stricken down, dashed forward, and with a terrific stroke of his cutlass, sent the black's woolly head rolling into the scuppers, where it lay, with its blood-shot eyes wide open, to the horror of our hero.

Captain Rose and Mr. Doone, backed by their men, fought heroically for two or three minutes, by which time two of the guns in the rear of the combatants had been reloaded. Suddenly the Captain cried out: "Hurters to the bulwarks!" and as they opened out, the guns were fired at the remaining foe, at such a height above deck as not to touch those lying on deck, for among them were several of their own comrades. This completed the defeat of the boarders, as those remaining leaped over the bows of *The Hunter*, some reaching their own vessel safely,

while others, suffering from wounds, jumped short, and fell into the sea, where two of them were drowned. The rest were saved by a boat from the pirate, except two who were humanely hauled aboard *The Hunter* and placed in irons below.

The *William III.* dropped astern, as if to take breath after this terrible engagement, in which it was calculated they had lost about ten killed and fifteen wounded.

Of *The Hunter's* crew three were killed and five wounded, including Captain Rose and Rupert.

The former had his left forefinger cut clean off and a pistol bullet through his left forearm.

Rupert, poor fellow, was in a sad plight, for his collar bone was broken and a cut in the back of his head exposed the bone for a distance of about two inches.

Mr. Doone was the recipient of a black eye and swollen forehead, both of which he received from the fist of a negro, whom he had disarmed, but beyond making him look ridiculous he felt no pain, and was as full of fight as if he had not received a blow.

It was not a time for mirth, however, or his ludicrous appearance would have caused considerable hilarity. There was yet fighting to be done, and everyone on board was very anxious and serious.

For fully an hour the pirate vessel kept about a quarter of a mile astern, evidently repairing, attending to the wounded, and concerting a fresh plan of attack.

The wounded of *The Hunter* were carried into the cabin, where Mrs. Doone and Harding the mate, who possessed some little medical and surgical skill, his father being a doctor at East Looe, attended them. Rupert's collar bone was set and he was placed in his berth, still perfectly

unconscious, but tended by the loving hands of his mother and sister.

Refreshments were handed round to the crew, and preparations made for another attack, should one be made.

The guns were double shotted, and a few nails and odd scraps of iron added; muskets and pistols were loaded, and boarding pikes improvised out of old bayonets lashed upon broom-handles.

Captain Rose haranguing his men, unfolded to them his plan should they be boarded again. Then, having made all the necessary preparations, they quietly awaited the expected attack.

Two hours had now gone by, and it was seen that the *William III.*'s sails were being braced to the wind, so as to give her more speed to overtake *The Hunter*, and in half-an-hour she was alongside; the crew of each vessel in the meantime doing their utmost to cripple the enemy's ship.

The Hunter's crew fired at the rigging of their opponents, but did not succeed either in bringing down any of the spars, or even severing any of the principal ropes. All they did was to make some large rents in the sails.

The pirates were bent upon sweeping the decks of the English vessel, but everyone not serving at the guns had been ordered to ensconce himself behind some bulky object, from which the constant crack of the rifle told those at the big guns that they were being well seconded by their comrades.

Finding that he could make but little impression on the English vessel with his six-pounders, the pirate Captain determined to board her, and this time to lead the attack in person.

Accordingly, the ships once more neared each other, and again grappling irons were flung, while with demoniacal yells the corsairs leaped upon the deck of *The Hunter* to the number of five-and-twenty, leaving only five men on the deck of their own vessel.

The contest was fierce, but gradually the Englishmen were overpowered by sheer numbers, and driven, some into the forecastle and some into the cabin, Mr. Doone being among the latter; but when he bolted the door and directed those with him to fire from the windows which looked forward on the deck, he had but faint hopes of anything like a successful resistance to the rascals, who were now masters of the deck. It was a dreadful time, and death appeared imminent.

Mrs. Doone and Ruth helped to load the guns and pistols, which were fired rapidly, but almost at random, from the windows along the deck; those in the forecastle also firing at the pirates who had ensconced themselves in the forts amidships, which had been improvised out of old lumber, and so snug were they that but few shots took effect upon any of them.

But why were the pirates so quiet, only firing a few shots at intervals?

They were busy cutting through the covering of the hatch which had been securely locked with four large padlocks, and probably when they gained ingress to the hold they would plunder the ship, and then either scuttle her or burn her with all on board.

Suddenly, as the defenders in the cabin were speaking of this dreadful ending to their voyage, there came a tremendous crash, and the lumber fort (built over the main hatch), in which the pirates were gathered like birds in a nest, seemed to explode and fly in all directions.

Several of the black inmates were killed outright or mortally wounded, and the rest, about a dozen in number, appeared so panic-stricken that they did not know what to do or where to run for safety.

Seeing that something startling had happened to the nest of pirates, the inmates of the cabin and forecastle rushed out and attacked them on both sides. Bernard seized the pirate captain round the waist from behind, not wishing to kill him, as he might have done with his cutlass, and raising him partially from the deck, as he was a rather slim man, and Bernard, for a lad, extraordinarily strong, hurled him against the bulwarks with all his might. The man's head came in contact with the massive woodwork with a dull thud, and the villain lay at our young hero's feet an inanimate lump of humanity.

Seeing their leader killed, as they supposed, the rest of the crew threw down their arms and begged for mercy, which was granted; but the Englishmen's mercy was tempered with precaution, each man being searched for hidden weapons, bound and seated on deck with his back against the bulwarks; and a villainous set they looked, with their scarred and bleeding limbs and faces, and fierce, rolling eyes.

The crew were so busy in carrying down and caring for their comrades, securing the pirates and other urgent duties, that no one noticed that the pirate ship had parted from them, and was now some distance off on the star-board beam; but such was the case, and it astonished them greatly to account for the grappling irons giving way so easily as they appeared to have done; but their astonishment was still greater when they perceived the *William III.*'s sails being trimmed, and the dreaded vessel bearing down on them once more.

What could it mean ?

Surely if the five men left to take charge of her while the boarding party were engaged on *The Hunter*, had with the help of the wounded cast off the grappling irons, so as to escape when they saw the fate of their comrades, they would not be so foolish as to return and give themselves up to justice? Such a thing was past belief.

But while these ideas passed through the minds of Captain Rose and Mr. Doone, they were still more perplexed by hearing a right good English hurrah ! sent up from the deck of the pirate ship.

What *could* it all mean ?

They saw five men on her deck waving their arms, seemingly with delight, and behold they were white men !

Harding, the mate, put his helm over, so as to run alongside the *William III.*, and as the two vessels came together the five white men threw the grappnels aboard *The Hunter*, and in good English voices sang out for Captain Rose to shorten sail while they did the same.

In a few minutes they were just moving through the water side by side, and the five Englishmen stood grasping their countrymen's hands on the deck of *The Hunter*.

Who were they, and whence had they come ?

CHAPTER VII.

Repairs to Ship and Crew.—The Story of Robert Belton.—His Early Life and Voyages.—Truxillo.—Captured by the Poyais Indians.—Dusky Jacilla.—The Pirates Executed.—An Escape.—Visit to Agent No. 1.—The Tashtel Indians: Their Dress, Appearance, and Mode of Living.—Bartering for Peltries.

THE ships being in close contact by means of iron grapnels, it was easy to pass from one to the other, and without stopping to hear more than that their fellow countrymen were bound to the little town of Yerba Buena, in California (now a huge city), all hands set to work to carry out Captain Rose's orders.

First, their prisoners, upwards of a score in number, were attended to, which is to say, the wounded were taken care of and the others confined in irons below, as there were some desperate characters among them, including their leader, Juan Alfias.

The dead were laid upon the decks of their respective vessels, and for the present covered with sails. While some of the crew, aided by their allies from the *William III.*, were busy splicing severed ropes and patching torn sails, others set to work to repair the woodwork of *The Hunter*, and by nightfall everything was made snug above deck, while the wounded of both vessels were in good hands below.

At the evening meal, our friends were joined by the young man who appeared to be in authority over the white men of the *William III.*, who, towards the end of

the fight with the pirates, appeared to drop from the sky and succour those on *The Hunter*, when so hard pressed that, but for their timely aid, they would probably all have been slaughtered.

To make the young man's story as brief as possible, without spoiling its interest, we will epitomise the yarn he spun to Captain Rose and those present.

"My name is Robert Belton, and I was born in the Isle of Wight nearly twenty-three years since. When I was fourteen years of age, my father apprenticed me to the sea, for which I had a natural fondness, and it has proved both father and mother to me, for both my parents were drowned in a boat accident off Portsmouth, about seven years since. Although I have had many ups and downs in my short career, I cannot say the sea has been unkind to me, and I love it in all its moods. It is, as I say, like a mother; it is angry at times and chides, but then comes a time when the soft wind whispers through the rigging, and lulls me to sleep in my berth like a tired child, rocking me soothingly in its mighty arms; and the higher it tosses me, the more I enjoy it, feeling quite safe upon it, wherever I may be.

"I call it my father, because, so far it has provided me with bread—ay, and I might say now and again, with plum cake, for at times the sea has brought me plenty.

"When I was eighteen years of age I made a voyage to the West Indies, and liking the trade among the islands, volunteered to join a small vessel belonging to the owners to whom I was apprenticed, which sailed from island to island trading in various commodities. Here I met with many adventures, and did not return to England till my term of indenture had nearly expired.

"My first berth was as second mate of a vessel bound

to the Ionian Isles, and from thence we visited Algiers, Tunis, and Morocco. On my return to Southampton I joined the *Winged Star* as first mate, and sailed away again to the west, this time bound for Truxillo, in Central America, which we reached in safety, and there I met with an adventure which quite altered my course of life.

“Being fond of the gun I obtained leave of the skipper to take one of the crew, and enjoy two or three days’ run ashore in the woods. Wandering too far into the interior in search of game, we were captured by Poyais Indians, who took us off to their camp, which was beautifully situated on the banks of a river which emptied itself into the sea between two lofty mountains, at a distance of about seventy or eighty miles from Truxillo.

“The Poyais Indians were not at all harsh with us; in fact, but for a vigilant eye kept upon our movements, to see that we did not escape, we did pretty much as we liked.

“After three months of this life, during which we taught the Indians many of the things only known to white men, I lost my companion by the overturning of our canoe; although a good swimmer he never came to the surface, being probably dragged below by some monstrous shark, who fortunately took a greater fancy to him than to me.

“During the months of my captivity, I had the misfortune to attract the amorous eye of the chief’s daughter, who forthwith begged her father to give me to her for a husband. This high-handed proceeding, although probably quite conformable to their manners and customs, I resented, and for my pains received a week’s respite, in which to choose marriage or the alternative of being tortured to death, if I did not volunteer to accept the gracious offer made me by the chief’s only daughter.

“I must own I was on the horns of a dilemma and did not know what to do, so finally, to save my skin, made up my mind to accept the dusky belle; for, to do her justice, she was a very pretty girl, with a plump figure and a silky skin of the colour one sees among the inhabitants of the north coast of Africa, a beautiful warm cinnamon brown.

“On the very day, however, on which I was to give my consent to our nuptials, an event happened in our village which quite altered my fate, and that was the arrival of an armed party of Spaniards from Ocotol, a town about two hundred miles into the interior. I explained my position to the leader of the party, who had come to trade, and he laughed heartily at my want of business acumen in not closing with the chief’s offer to become my father-in-law, as he was reputedly rich, and his pretty Jacilla his only child.

“I begged that I might go with the Spaniard wherever he was travelling, and to further my desire he pretended that I had run away from his employ six months previously, and it was only on his promise to make me return to the Poyais village within six moons—that is, after I had served my time in his employ—that I was allowed to accompany him, much to Jacilla’s chagrin and disgust.

“From Ocotol, where I resided a month with my preserver, I wandered to the Bay of Amapala, on the Pacific Coast, which was but a distance of eighty miles, and easily performed in five days on foot.

“Wandering round the bay, I came to a small town near the foot of the Casiguina Volcano, at which I fell in with an English schooner, called the *William III.*, bound for California. She had a crew of eight Englishmen, and six negroes from the West Indies.

“I shipped as mate, but never had my name entered in

the ship's books, for that very night, while the skipper and four of the crew were ashore, that rascally fellow whom you hold prisoner, Juan Alflas, who is captain of a native trading craft, came aboard the *William III.*, with his native crew, and a crowd of negroes and mulattoes from a plantation, and carried the vessel off to sea.

"I and the other four Englishmen refused to help work the vessel, and were promptly bundled among the cargo in the hold. What the villain's project was in carrying off the vessel I can only surmise, and I believe his intention was to carry on the calling of a freebooter, or pirate, for the vessel was headed straight for the lonely Revilla-Gigedo Islands, which he probably intended to make his headquarters. Unfortunately for you, your vessel hove in sight about an hour after Alflas had sent a boat ashore to Socorro, for someone to pilot him in.

"He immediately stood after you, with what result you know only too well. From our prison in the hold we were able to look out occasionally during the fight and see what was going on, and when we discovered that in the last boarding *melée*, only five blacks had been left in charge of our vessel, we resolved to make a bold bid for liberty. We forced a hole in the bulkhead between the hold and the cabin and crawled through into the latter, where we found plenty of arms, which we seized and rushed on deck. The blacks taken by surprise, were quickly overpowered, two of them being shot and one cut down with an axe, while the other two surrendered.

"The pirates on your deck, protected as they were in the lumber fort, saw nothing of our capture of the *William III.*, and knew nothing of it till we fired two of her guns, loaded with anything that came handy, right into the nest of the scoundrels on your deck, which you recollect was the turning point of the battle, for you rushed

out and attacked them on both sides, just as we threw off the grapplings to prevent them regaining their own ship."

It may be supposed that the brave young Rob Belton and his friends were the recipients of much praise and heartfelt thanks from all on board *The Hunter*, and it was no more than their meed, for they had saved the lives of all.

Next day, the six dead men of *The Hunter* were sewn in canvas and consigned to the deep, Mr. Doone, in a faltering voice, reading the sea burial service over the poor fellows' remains. The dead of the enemy, to the number of twenty-three, were unceremoniously tumbled overboard, and, despite their lawless character, the same service was read over them as over the white men, for as Mr. Doone said, "They would all appear before one God and should therefore receive the same preparation."

On reaching Yerba Buena the pirates received a rough kind of trial, and were all sentenced to death. The dread sentence was carried out to each man, except one, who escaped, and that one was Juan Alfias.

Rob Belton decided to cast in his lot with the Hunterites, and shipped as second mate, *vice* Collett, killed off Socorro. The other four Englishmen had intended staying at Yerba Buena in the hope of obtaining employment or a ship home to England, but a very little persuasion caused them to join the ship's company. A half-bred interpreter, who knew the coast, was also entered on the ship's books.

After a week in port *The Hunter* proceeded on her rapidly shortening voyage, for another two or three days would see her at the mouth of the Umpqua River.

The *William III.* was left in the hands of the magistrate, a fussy little Spaniard, named Don Miguel Diaz, with the

understanding that, if she were claimed, she was to be given up to her rightful owners, otherwise she would remain Mr. Doone's property.

After leaving Yerba Buena everyone aboard *The Hunter* appeared to regain their wonted spirits. In the genial climate of the region in which they now found themselves, the wounded men of the crew found their wounds to be healing famously, for a fortnight had elapsed since their sanguinary fight with the pirate.

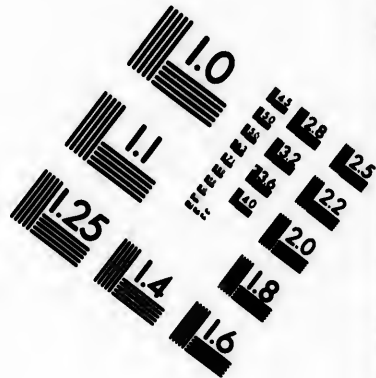
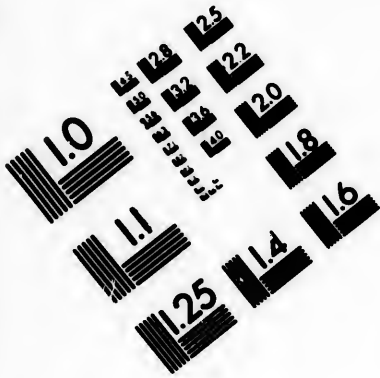
Mr. Doone was well and jolly again, and Rupert's injuries were nearly cured. His collar-bone had not actually snapped, but had received a severe fracture, and he still used a sling for his left arm. The gallant Captain walked his little quarter-deck as if nothing had happened in the way of a fight, and only three of the crew were still unable to attend to their duties.

As they sailed close in with the shore, along the coast of California, a sharp look out was kept for the signals of the four agents whom Captain Rose had put ashore on his previous homeward voyage, some sixteen months before. Three were to the south of the Umpqua River, and one a few miles to the north of it. They were left thus: No. 1, landed longitude $39^{\circ} 20'$, near a lofty mountain (now called Mount St. John); No. 2 in Humboldt Bay, at the mouth of Eel River; No. 3, about thirty miles south of Umpqua River, in a bay (now called Koos Bay); and No. 4 a day's journey north of the Umpqua.

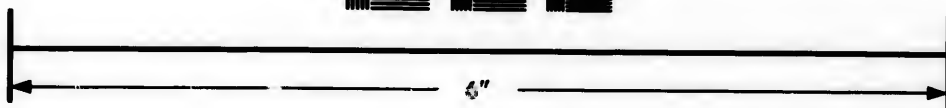
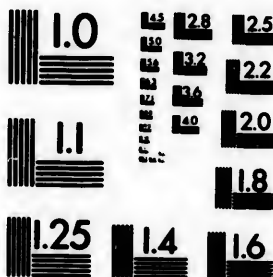
Early on the morning of September 20th, 1838, Captain Rose was apprised that the mountain to be watched for was in sight; its summit rising to a height of 8,000 feet, pierced quite through the clouds, which caused its base to be in a hazy gloom, whilst its peak was brilliantly illuminated by the morning sun.

The Hunter was sailed to within a quarter of a mile of





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the shore and a boat lowered, but before Captain Rose had stepped into it two large canoes were seen putting off from the beach, riding buoyantly over the long waves which are usually breaking upon the shore of the mighty Pacific. They were manned by Indians who paddled fearlessly up to "the big white canoe," as they called the ship. A rope was thrown them, and four of them scrambled on deck and shook hands with the Captain, whom they recognised at once as the "Blue Chief" (from the colour of his clothes), who had placed Pembo (the agent) ashore, to live with them till his return.

Through the interpreter, who spoke to the natives more by signs than with his tongue, they informed the Captain that Pembo was gone for two days' paddle in his canoe up the river, which they called by their native name of Kaluthe, and that he was expected back that day.

The chief invited the Captain ashore, and the skipper, giving him a present of an axe and some beads, accepted the invitation, indicating by signs that he would land after sleeping, that is, early the next morning.

Accordingly, after an early breakfast, the long boat was lowered, and the Captain, Bernard, four hands, and the interpreter landed, being welcomed on the shore by the chief, whose name was To-pa-na, and escorted to his cabin, built cosily in a cleft of the rocks, near the bank of a broad shallow river.

The pipe of peace was produced and smoked in silence, which usual ceremony and prelude to business having been gone through, To-pa-na informed his guests that Pembo was not far distant, as one of his dogs had come into camp an hour previous, with a certain token indicating "Peace—help," and that he had sent a large canoe, with a dozen of his people, up the river to see what was required.

While they sat in a circle and talked, a runner arrived to say that the canoes were in sight and would arrive very shortly.

Bernard was eager to jump up and run along the river bank to see the new-comers, but the Captain restrained him, and bade him keep his seat and his dignity, for it was a matter of courtesy to remain squatted while the chief kept that attitude.

Presently a great barking of dogs and clatter of voices proclaimed that Pembo had returned, but not a soul in the cabin stirred. Then the bear-robe, which did duty for a door, was pushed aside and Pembo entered. He saluted the Captain and those present respectfully and took his place in the circle, while the ceremony of puffing at the long stem of the calumet was indulged in in silence; that being finished everyone's tongue was loosened as if a spell had been removed.

The scene was now one of animation, pleasure being expressed on every face. Pembo was greatly liked by To-pa-na and his people, and at his request the Indians had had many hunts in the mountains for grizzlies and other bears, and had been very successful, so that many robes had been preserved pending the "Blue Chief's" arrival. Of deer skins they had a large number, also of that most valuable skin of all—the sea-otter.

The four men were ordered to pull back to the ship and bring off Mr. Doone with an assortment of trading stores.

While they were gone the Captain and Bernard had ample time to look about them and take note of their strange surroundings.

It struck them at once that these Digger Indians were not to be compared to Englishmen for physique, being neither so tall nor so strongly built. They wear but very

little clothing, both sexes seeming content with a kind of petticoat or fringe round their waists, made of stringy bark or long dried grass. All wear ear ornaments of a curious kind, which is simply the leg or wing bone of a pelican, about six inches in length, carved to the owner's fancy.

The hair of the men is fastened up in a net, both hair and net being retained in position by a wooden skewer, from the butt end of which flutters a bunch of gaudy feathers, taken either from the woodpecker (and dyed) or from the tail of the eagle.

They are noted for their treachery, and not at all pleasant in their manners and customs, dirt entering largely into their cookery and being allowed to accumulate upon their bodies.

The chief's hut in which they found themselves was the largest and best in the village, and was constructed in a very simple manner.

A cleft in some huge rocks, some twelve or fourteen feet wide, and about the same depth, had been selected for the site; into the earth, midway between the sides, a line of upright posts had been driven, serving as supports for the roof, which was composed of thick saplings lying horizontally upon the tops of the posts, with their ends firmly placed on the shoulders of the rocks. These, in turn, were covered over with large slabs of bark, held in place by huge fragments of rock. The front was closed in by a wall of plaited rushes, and between two stout upright poles, placed a yard apart to form the doorway, was suspended a robe from the back of a monstrous grizzly bear. In the centre of the floor a hole was dug, in which a fire was kept burning day and night, the smoke finding a vent through one of the numerous interstices of the

dwelling, or through what was supposed to do duty for a chimney—a hole in the roof.

Both men and women were exceedingly plain when not absolutely ugly, very dirty, and very curious as to the white men and their belongings.

Such were Bernard's mental notes on his first visit to an Indian encampment. He could not help noticing, however, that many of the children, who were stark naked, were very passable in looks, and one or two of them, with their roguish black eyes and glossy black hair, even pretty.

In a couple of hours the boat returned with Mr. Doone and the goods for trading, but for a long time no trade was done; not a skin was parted with, although from the amount of gesticulation used by the Indians, a looker-on might have thought the whole encampment was changing hands. The Tsashtels were exorbitant in their demands, wanting as many as four or five leaves of tobacco for a musk-rat skin, a far too high value on such a paltry article.

Pretending he could stay no longer among such people, Mr. Doone began to pack up his goods, and instruct the men to carry the bales to the boat, and with this ruse he was quite successful, and skins that had been priced at a blanket each were to be had for a pipeful of vermilion (paint-powder).

Now the women crowded round and bought coloured calico and mirrors in great quantity; brass bracelets were also in great demand among them; even the old women of seventy bedecked their persons as much as their grandchildren, and it was most ludicrous to see an old crone, in a state bordering on nudity, strutting about with brass bracelets on her wrists and ankles and a circular mirror

hauging in front of her bosom, as proud as any girl of seventeen.

The men had an eye to the useful as well as the beautiful, and bought red, blue, and yellow powder-paint, knives, axes, and fishhooks; but what most took their fancy appeared to be various articles of bright tinware, such as saucepans, mugs, and plates. One old fellow took a great fancy to a bread-grater, which he looked upon as a marvel when Pembo showed him how readily it would reduce dried roots to a powder. He willingly gave a sea-otter skin for it, and another for a little musical instrument made after the style of a dulcimer, with wires strained to various degrees of tension to produce the gamut of sound. That it was out of tune did not matter in the least to the savage; discord pleased him as well as harmony, plenty of noise was a *sine quâ non* with him.

Freshly caught fish and the roots of various plants were set before our friends, and each took his portion upon a strip of birch-bark instead of a plate. The fish—it was halibut—was delicious, and was washed down with pure, sparkling water, which fell in a cascade from a rocky ledge about one hundred yards from the village.

Thus, in bartering and feasting the day rapidly ran its course, and it was quite dusk when the party returned to *The Hunter* with their boat deeply laden with various skins and peltries.

Pembo, who had received a gun, powder and ball, twenty yards of red flannel, and various odds and ends, as a present for his faithful service, stayed at the encampment to persuade the Tsashtels to procure more skins before the winter set in, Captain Rose promising to call for him within two moons, and take him for the winter season to their headquarters, Fort Cornwall, on the Umpqua.

CHAPTER VIII.

A Pull up Eel River to find Agent No. 2.—An Indian Fort.—The Wounded Men.—Camp Cookery.—A Night Attack.—A Parley.—The Shadow of the Spear.—A Hand-to-Hand Fight.—Trading a Failure.

At daybreak *The Hunter* sailed, and in due course lay-to off the mouth of Eel River, where their second agent had been left. As nobody could be seen moving upon the shore, a boat was lowered, and its crew pulled to the mouth of the river, but not finding any signs of human beings beyond the remains of an encampment, returned.

The agent and Indians had apparently disappeared, but to make sure, Mr. Doone, the Captain, and four hands, all well armed, stepped into the boat and proceeded to the shore. They ascended the river for three or four miles, occasionally catching sight of an Indian, who slunk away or hid himself before they could draw near enough to hail him as friends.

Presently, in turning a bend of the river, they suddenly came in sight of a camp, completely stockaded for defence, and evidently occupied by a numerous company of defenders, for a great yell was raised as the boat was perceived by the Indians.

The men were ordered to lay on their oars and wait events, for the Indians might be belligerent and draw them into some ambush.

To ascertain if the red men were friends or foes Mr. Doone tied a white handkerchief upon his ramrod, and waved it aloft as a sign of peace. In a couple of minutes a canoe put off from the shore, and was swiftly paddled with the current towards the boat; in the bow stood a brave waving a long green branch above his head, which is a sign all the world over of a truce, friendship or peace.

When the canoe came alongside, the chief, who sat in the centre, extended his hand, English fashion, and shook hands with the Captain, who immediately recollected the red man by his great size; for he was a big, brawny fellow, with a peculiar face, made more peculiar by a strongly-marked scar on either cheek, which had been caused several years before by a thrust from a spear, during a little misunderstanding with another tribe.

Unfortunately, the interpreter had not come out with the boat, but Captain Rose, by the sign language, could understand that Juan Yoxah, the agent, was in bed in the stockaded encampment. He also understood the chief (Bal-bal-wets-gu) to invite them to the council-lodge for a smoke, refreshment, and pow-wow, or business talk, and they accordingly pulled on to the encampment.

Upon landing they were led to a cabin which stood next to that of the chief, and entering after their leader, they found their agent Yoxah and several Indians evidently ill, lying on beds of skins.

Yoxah welcomed the Captain as cordially as he was able, for it transpired that he was sorely wounded in an affray with a party of Shoshokies, who had pounced upon their summer encampment at the mouth of the Eel River, for the purpose of plundering them of their sea-otter skins, of which they had about fifty. Indian-like, each hunter had safely hidden his little hoard, and the enemy

only secured four of the skins that happened to be stretched upon the frames to dry in the sun and wind.

The fight, though brief, had been severe, and the Shoshokies had left five of their men behind, two of whom were severely wounded and three killed.

The Diggers had had one man killed, eight wounded, and two squaws carried off. The two prisoners were to be retained as hostages for the space of one moon, and then exchanged for the captured squaws; failing which they would be subjected to some kind of fiendish torture, and finally slaughtered.

All this had happened nearly a month previously, and the morrow would see the unhappy prisoners executed, unless the messengers who had been despatched to the Shoshokie village, nearly one hundred miles distant, brought back the squaws or a promise for their immediate delivery.

Mr. Doone examined the wounds of Yoxah and the Indians and found that the "medicine man," with his idiotic nostrums and spells, was keeping the places open, so that he might exhibit them to his comrades on the morrow, to excite pity for them and so secure more devilish tortures for the prisoners. He therefore sent three of the men back to the ship to fetch his medicine-chest and a stock of trading goods, also a request for Rupert, Bernard, and the interpreter to come ashore.

During the afternoon the boat returned, the two boys being very pleased to be on shore together, as this was Rupert's "first foot" on land since the fight off Socorro. He was now nearly well again, but his father forbade him using his left arm for another week or two.

Warm water was procured, the wounds of the sick men washed, a little disinfectant applied, for suppuration and festering had set in, and clean soft lint spread with sooth-

ing ointment applied. A draught of physic was then given to each man to clear the system, and they were returned to bed again.

. It was a strange sight to see the curiosity of the Indians and their anxiety to witness the ways of the white "medicine man"; the doorway and every chink in the matting of the sides of the cabin were crowded with the faces of those who had been forbidden to enter. All round the cabin the matting had been raised and a line of tuffed heads was exhibited, looking like a circle of large cocoa-nuts endowed with eyes. Not a word was spoken, but like a ring of ghosts every man looked silently on, deeply interested with all he saw.

Being by this time too late to think of trading, fires were lighted, pots slung, and slices of meat placed on the spits to broil. The boat was sent back with a letter to the mate—

"Do not expect us till dusk to-morrow. If wind freshens, heave anchor and run a mile up the river, where you will be snug and in deep water.—ROSE."

The camp presented a weird appearance when the sun had set in the distant horizon of water, the fire-glow dancing among the cabins and throwing its light upon the red skins of the savages, who cast grotesque shadows upon everything around. Dogs ran about everywhere, getting in people's way, and receiving the penalty of a kick with a loud yelp.

Women sat and pounded roots in the firelight, and served up the supper of well-cooked fish and smoky, half-raw meat, to their white guests, who, in return, gave presents of tobacco and pipes.

Sentinels were placed outside the camp and a vigilant watch kept, for being the last day of the "moon of grace" their enemies, the Shoshokies, might attack them in the

night to retake the prisoners and save them from the ignominious death which probably awaited them. More often than not the hour before dawn is selected by Indians to deliver their attack upon an enemy, and in this case no exception was made, for early in the morning one of the scouts was heard by a comrade to give a little scream, and looking over some scrub and bushes, which grew to a height of about four feet, he saw the poor fellow upon the ground, being scalped by a Shoshokie warrior in full war-paint. He had probably been tomahawked from behind, but the little scream he gave was sufficient for his alert comrade to hear, and hearing, to immediately arouse the whole camp.

Mr. Doone, Captain Rose, the boys and the sailors, immediately sprang up fully dressed and armed, and as arranged overnight in a little council held among themselves, clambered up some rocks which formed one side of the encampment, and ensconced themselves in a hollow with a natural breastwork of jagged rock before them.

By this time, with horrid yells, the Shoshokies had climbed the stockade, and were fighting hand to hand with the Diggers, who were much the more numerous party, but not of such good physique nor so well armed.

The camp was quickly turned into a perfect pandemonium, and the yells of the combatants, screams of the women and barking of dogs, all helped to make the scene a thrilling one to the party of Englishmen hidden among the rocks, who had a bird's-eye view of the whole proceedings. Although it was still dark, the light from the watch-fires threw a ruddy glare upon the dusky figures in rapid motion, the shadows from whom were of gigantic and fantastic form as they tossed and crossed and grew and diminished during the fight.

The outer stockade was gained by the first rush, but

the wily Diggers had foreseen that this might occur, and had erected a strong fort or citadel in the centre of the encampment, which, being of earth and pieces of rock, gave them excellent shelter. Most of them had retreated into this fortress, while others who had been unable to secure its kindly shelter were fighting either singly or in small groups, gradually retreating towards their comrades, who were, whenever an opportunity occurred, plying their arrows with good effect among the athletic Shoshokies.

Now and again a Digger would fall and be promptly scalped, but when one of the enemy bit the dust his opponent had no time to perform a like ghastly office upon him, being eager to join his friends inside the citadel.

By daybreak all had been driven into the fort except a dozen squaws and some twenty children, who had been captured for slaves and removed to the shelter of a clump of trees on the river bank, about half-a-mile distant, and there left in the custody of half-a-dozen Shoshokies, who also took care of the horses upon which the warriors had ridden from their distant camp. As there were nearly one hundred horses it was reasonable to infer that quite eighty men formed the attacking party, the remaining twenty being spare horses in case of loss or mishap, or to carry home the prisoners and booty they expected to capture.

Suddenly, at a signal from their chief, the Shoshokies hid themselves behind whatever cover they could find, and the battle seemed to be at an end, but that was far from being the case.

The chief, Na-ta-pa, advanced alone towards the fort, bearing a white feather upon a staff, as a signal that he wished to parley with the beleaguered.

The Digger chief, Bal-bal-wets-gu, stood upon the ramparts, and waved an albino antelope-skin as a sign

that he would confer, and a parley commenced, the substance of which was this.

Na-ta-pa affirmed that the two Digger squaws could not be given up, as two of his young braves wished to marry them, but that two horses should be exchanged for the two Shoshokie prisoners.

Bal-bal-wets-gu declined the terms, and informed his enemy that one of the young women was already his own wife, and he could not part with her upon any consideration.

Then commenced long speeches on either side, and finally, as the Shoshokie prisoners' release was refused, the two Digger squaws were brought forward, and Bal-bal-wets-gu was informed that if he did not deliver the two men before the sun caused the shadow of a spear, which he stuck upright in the ground, to touch a line which he drew with his finger, both the women would be slaughtered before the eyes of their friends.

The wretched women cowered at the foot of a post to which they were bound, and watched the shadow slowly approach the mark upon the soft earth; and as inch by inch it crept nearer, until but a hand's breadth of space remained, they raised both hands and voices in piteous supplication to their friends within, who could save them from *death* (by giving up the prisoners) but not from *captivity*, for their captors were determined to have the women at any cost.

An inch of space only remained between the shadow and the mark; and in a loud voice Na-ta-pa demanded the Shoshokie prisoners' release.

The prisoners were brought from the hole in the rocks in which they had been immured; and exhibited on the ramparts of the fort.

Bal-bal-wets-gu now spoke.

“Let Na-ta-pa give up my squaws and go in peace, and in two days these men shall be set free, although they each killed one of my braves, and deserve death; but we desire peace, and my word shall be kept, for Bal-bal-wets-gu would disdain to tell a lie even to save his own life.”

The shadow was now but half an inch from the mark, and the women, despite the stoical character usually ascribed to Indians, appeared delirious with despair at their impending fate.

Amid breathless silence the shadow at length actually touched the mark, and at a signal from their chief, two Shoshokie warriors stepped forth with uplifted tomahawks and approached the women, to carry out the dread orders of Na-ta-pa.

The women's heads were raised by the hair from the ground upon which they had fallen and their lives were about to be taken, when two reports rung out and reverberated among the rocks like claps of thunder, and, as if struck by lightning, the two executioners fell prone upon the bodies of their unscathed victims.

The Shoshokies were astonished, and paused in their intended rush upon the fort; but two, more energetic than the rest, stepped forward to their fallen comrades, and immediately paid the penalty of their intrepidity with their lives, for they, too, fell dead. Their comrades paused aghast, not knowing what to do next, and as they thus stood irresolute, the interpreter, prompted by Mr. Doone, called out to the Diggers to rush out and attack the Shoshokies, and the white men would help them.

With loud yells Bal-bal-wets-gu led his men forth, leaping over the earth-works and attacking the Shoshokies lustily. The six muskets of the white men were

repeatedly fired, and such terror did they cause among the enemy, who were quite unaccustomed to such weapons, that they incontinently turned and fled pell-mell, leaving the squaws behind them.

The elated Diggers pursued their enemies with implacable fury right to the spot where their horses were tethered, and so eager were the enemy to mount and ride away, that the women and children whom they had captured were quite forgotten. The yells and screeches of men, women, and children so frightened the horses that a stampede was caused, and many of them escaped, and a general flight was only averted by the fact of their being well secured to the branches and stems of the thicket in which they were hidden.

About thirty of the Shoshokies were able to secure horses and ride away, while at least twenty others made good their retreat upon foot; the remainder being either killed, wounded, or made prisoners. The chief Na-ta-pa was among those who escaped upon horseback, taking with him in his flight a pretty young squaw whose husband and brother he had killed in fair fight. He was a man of noble stature and presence, and seemed to bear a charmed life, for although both Rupert and Bernard fired at him at a distance of less than one hundred yards, they both missed him. When they had loaded and were about to fire again, he was engaged in a hand-to-hand fight with the two Diggers just mentioned, and they refrained from firing at so brave a man, when the odds were already two to one against him.

One of his enemies he slew with his spear, but before he could withdraw the weapon he was himself knocked down by the other, who wielded a formidable wooden club. The blow being ill-directed did not cripple him,

and before it could be repeated he had seized his opponent by the legs and dragged him to the ground, when with his powerful hands he nearly strangled him, and



THE PRISONERS WERE BROUGHT FORTH FOR TORTURE.

then seizing a spear which was lying near, transfixed him to the earth, leaving it standing upright in the body.

Then shouting his war-cry and repeatedly uttering his

name, he seized the Indian girl who was kneeling over the body of her husband, and springing into his saddle, galloped off defiantly to his home in the interior.

Such was the first experience of the Doones in savage warfare, and for two or three days afterwards the excitement in camp was so great, that nothing in the way of trade could be entered into.

Fifteen scalps had been taken ; quite a record for this particular tribe, consequently scalp dances and feasts had to be indulged in, and great messes of fish, meat, and roots eaten. Upwards of twenty horses had been taken alive and seven others, which had either been killed or wounded, were flayed and cut up for the feast.

All this, though unusually entertaining to the Diggers, excited no festive feelings in the breasts of the white men, but rather a sense of disgust. Every man, woman, and child seemed mad, and nothing but offensive sights and gluttony were to be seen on every side.

On the morning of the fourth day eight prisoners were brought forth for torture and execution, and although our white friends tried by all means in their power to obtain the pardon of the wretched Shoshokies, even by the gift of many presents, the Diggers were not to be baulked of their revenge, and the dancing preparatory to the torturing commenced. Seeing that nothing could save the horrid butchery that would shortly take place, the white party packed up and got the boat ready to take them back to the ship.

Before leaving, Captain Rose had an interview with Bal-bal-wets-gu, in which he informed him that he would shortly return and trade with him, probably before the next full moon.

CHAPTER IX.

Umpqua Head.—Oom-pa-nu greets the White Men.—Invitation to a Sea-Otter Hunt.—Notes on the Animal.—Four Modes of Capture.—The Hunt.—A Feast.—Mrs. Doone and Ruth introduced to Indian Life.

EARLY next morning *The Hunter* left Eel River, and sailed upon her last stage northward, to the Umpqua River, which was for a long time to be the home of the Doones.

It was a fine day with brilliant sunshine when the estuary of the Umpqua was reached, or rather the immense headland which, standing out boldly like some old Rhenish castle, guards the approach to the river. The abrupt cliff of rock, which is such a conspicuous object for many miles before it is reached, stands so far into the sea that it forms quite a cape, and makes the lower promontory which forms the southern shore of the estuary, appear quite insignificant by comparison, although the cliffs rise to an altitude approaching 200 feet. This promontory is of a crescent shape, forming a beautiful bay, whose sandy shore made it very enticing to the crew of *The Hunter*, raising in their minds memories of dear old Cornwall, with its rocks and bays, estuaries and sandy beaches; the climate, too, is not unlike that of the West of England, and like it, subject to heavy rains in the winter season, with very little frost; in summer the temperature is warm and bland.

So far, then, as climate and scenery was concerned, the Doones felt quite at home.

Almost before the anchor could be dropped in the bay, three or four very large canoes put off to greet the long-expected white men.

In the largest and most lavishly decorated one sat the chief Oom-pa-nu, a huge, evil-looking savage, but who had the character of being peaceful and friendly towards white men, of whom he had seen but those who accompanied Captain Rose in his first expedition.

The bulky form of the skin-clad chief soon appeared on the deck of *The Hunter*, and greeted the Captain very heartily by shaking hands and patting him on both shoulders as is their custom. With him came about thirty men, clad in their early winter dress of skins, which were preserved in a manner which did not prevent them giving off noxious smells; and this, added to the custom of dressing their hair with fish-oil, did not make the native presence at all agreeable.

Their curiosity was unbounded, and nothing was sacred from their vigilant eyes and nimble fingers; everything had to be looked at, felt and even smelled, before they restored it to its place. Unfortunately their curiosity in some cases led them to covet, and that in turn caused them to steal; so, in the end, all movable articles had to be locked up or put in the cabin away from the nimble fingers of the visitors.

Mr. Doone and the skipper produced a couple of long clay pipes, of the kind called *churchwardens*, and these did duty for the calumets, or pipes of peace. The slimness of the stems and their pure whiteness astonished the guests, and at the end of the smoke one of the wonderful pipes was presented to the chief, who cunningly signified his

admiration of the object to the interpreter in such a manner that, without actually asking, it was obvious that he wished to secure such a treasure.

In answer to inquiries, Oom-pa-nu expressed his willingness to trade with his white friends, who were for a long time to be his neighbours, but as this was a very great occasion, business could not be thought of for a day or two, the white men must take their ship up the river for a mile to a spot where the anchorage was safe, and come ashore as the guests of the chief, and hold a grand palaver and feast.

Being the beginning of October, the days were rapidly shortening, and the evenings, at times, becoming very cold, and soon the winter rains with occasional snow would set in, and the chief therefore proposed, on the morrow, to have the last grand sea-otter hunt before they prepared their winter quarters, a few miles up the river.

This was acquiesced in by the Doones and Captain Rose. *The Hunter* was accordingly sailed up the estuary to the point where it contracted to the mouth of the river, there she was anchored, and everything made snug for a stay of a day or two; after which she would sail up the Umpqua to their destination, Fort Cornwall, as the solitary hut was called, which was built on a peninsula at the bifurcation of two rivers, at a distance of about forty miles from the sea.

The boys, Mr. Doone, Robert Belton, and the interpreter, formed the party who were to witness the sea-otter hunt, and they were afloat in the long-boat at day-break, rowed by four seamen. Provisions and water were taken in the boat, and as the first rays of the sun shot over the hills in the east, leaving them silhouetted against the purple sky, a number of canoes were observed putting off from the shore, in the foremost of which they

could see the chief waving a kind of flag as a signal to hurry up.

They soon joined the procession, which quickly paddled seaward, and at the chief's request Rupert was taken into his canoe, while Bernard stepped in the canoe of a minor chief, who had parted company with his nose, that necessary organ having been sliced off in a foray some years since. Bernard elected to accompany this man because, as he afterwards said, he was probably the very ugliest of an ugly tribe, and if he could only get used to him, many of the others would appear quite good looking by the simple force of comparison.

A few words anent the sea-otter may not be out of place here, and we will describe the animal before the hunt commences.

The sea-otter differs in several respects from the common otter, and in some points approximates to the form of the seal.

It is a large animal, measuring about four feet from nose to tip of tail and sometimes more. Its fur is dark brown, but mixed with many grey hairs which are longer and stiffer than the rest. The face greatly resembles that of the seal, and its small fore-paws those of the cat, but it has very large and powerful hind feet webbed like those of a duck.

It is found all along the western coast of North America, from Alaska to the middle of California, but favours the colder regions more than the warm.

The sea-otter is of a gregarious disposition, roving in bands of twenty, thirty, fifty, and even a hundred. Its motion in the water is like that of a seal, a gliding, undulating sweep above and below the surface. Its favourite position is to float on its back, and in this position it carries its young, eats and even sleeps. Of all fur-bearing animals, the

skin of the sea-otter is the most valuable, and consequently is greatly sought after. There are several modes of capturing the animal, viz., clubbing, spear-surrounding, surf-shooting, and netting.

The clubbing is performed by the Indians, after heavy gales, when the otters take shelter on the outlying rocks, where they lie with their heads buried in the kelp-weed, and fall a prey to the natives' clubs before they are aware of their danger. This is the most dangerous method, as the canoes have to follow as quickly as possible after the tail of the storm has passed, and while the sea is still very rough; it is not therefore often resorted to.

Surf-shooting is carried out by parties of Indians in their canoes, or bidarkies, who surround the rocks, and shoot the animals with their arrows, either as they take the water, or having taken the water, when they appear above the surface to breathe. As a rule this method is not over successful, as an otter is so quick in the water that it is difficult to get a fair aim at one, especially with the comparatively slow flight of the native arrows (as compared to the bullets from modern rifles).

In the canoe in which Bernard was a guest were several otter nets, made of sinews, very cleverly knotted together. They were about six yards long and four yards deep, and he was surprised to see in what a simple manner they were used by the Indians.

About four miles from the shore was a long line of rocks, which, on approach, were found to be covered with thick beds of living kelp-weed, upon which four of the natives landed, and in the most likely places spread the nets without any fixing or tying, except that just here and there, a few fronds of the weed were loosely tied or woven through the meshes, near the edges.

These nets would be visited very early next day, to see if anything had been caught. The sea-otter is a stupid animal when among the nets, for its feet become entangled and it has not the sense to disengage them, and after a few feeble wriggles gives in, and on the approach of the hunter is quietly knocked on the head, and taken ashore.

The large canoe was now paddled back to the others, which were at least two miles away, and having rejoined them, the whole eighteen spread out in a line, at some distance apart, to watch for otters and commence the hunt. Each canoe or bidarkie carried two men, except that in which sat the chief, and the equally large one in which Bernard had just visited the kelp rocks; each of these carried eight or nine occupants, and were more for war than for hunting or fishing purposes.

The canoes were paddled very quietly along, at about one hundred yards distance from each other, when presently a silent signal was passed along to the chief, that a sleeping otter was lying ahead. Upon being notified of this, he pointed his spear to the object, just discernible, about half-a-mile away, and silently, but rapidly, the canoes surrounded the unsuspecting animal, forming a circle round it about four or five hundred yards in diameter; then obeying another signal from the chief, one canoe dashed out of the circle and approached the otter, which was floating asleep, on its back, and had arrived within fifty yards of it, when, like a flash it dived, and the canoe was quietly paddled to its place of disappearance, and halted there.

After an anxious wait, and vigilant watching of a quarter of an hour, the otter rose just outside the circle of canoes, and the silence was immediately broken by

everyone yelling with all his might, while those in the nearest canoe threw their spears, and beat the water with their paddles, the other canoes in the meanwhile forming a fresh circle round the spot at which the otter last dived.

Rupert and Bernard shouted and yelled in imitation of the Indians, and noted that each succeeding dive was of shorter and shorter duration, because the Indians terrified the animal before it could regain its breath. The end was, that in an hour the otter's respiration had become so impaired, and its body so filled with deleterious gases, that it actually could not dive, and was quickly speared and thrown into the chief's canoe.

Sometimes two or three were sighted at once, and the canoes broke up into smaller circles, helping each other whenever they could, but sometimes, by reason of their wonderful swimming and diving powers, the animals escaped from these smaller circles, and got safely away from the hunters.

During the day, five otters were taken, and four seals, and at dusk the canoes laden with the hungry, yelling, excited Indians returned to their encampment on the banks of the Umpqua.

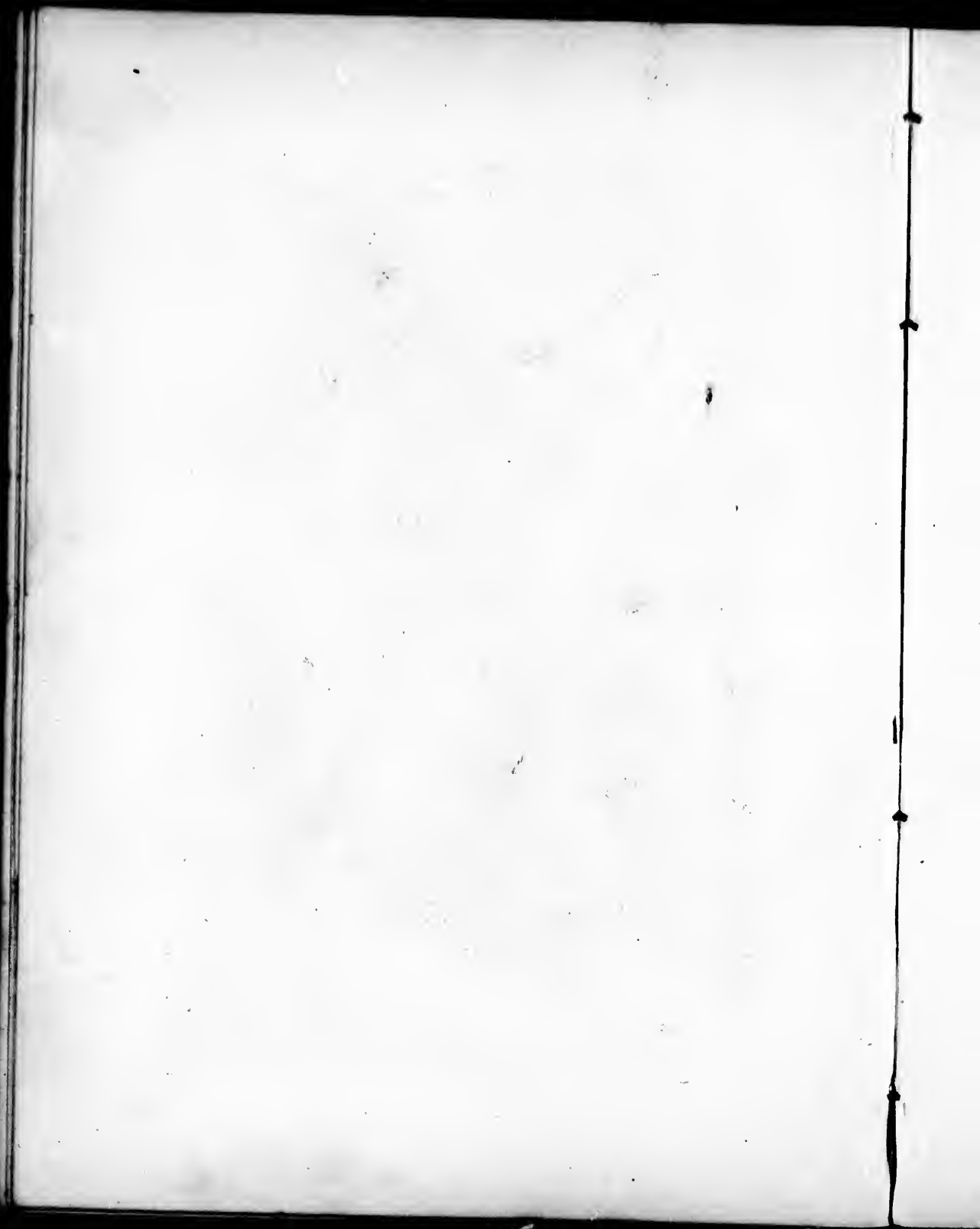
The next two days were given up to feasting and dancing, and here Mrs. Doone and Ruth had their first introduction to Indian life.

To tell the truth, they were more than half afraid of the Redskins, who, to the number of upwards of two hundred, endeavoured, in their uncouth style, to make the white ladies welcome to their firesides and wigwams.

Poor Ruth, at first, felt quite bewildered at the sights and sounds around her, especially when Oom-pa-nu, thinking to show her an especial mark of his royal favour, took up a junk of deer meat which was broiling on a stick over



OOM-PA-NU INTRODUCED HIS FAVOURITE SQUAW.



the fire, and cutting off a long strip of the reeking half-cooked flesh, presented it to her upon a strip of clean bark. Poor Ruth took the proffered gift, and was nearly sick at the sight, and not knowing what to do with it, placed it on the ground at her feet, and bowed repeatedly to the chief, who was astonished to see his gift placed on the ground, instead of being carried to the recipient's mouth, where he expected to see the tit-bit worried and mangled until it had disappeared down Ruth's throat, leaving her face covered with smiles, to say nothing of blacks from the embers and grease.

The interpreter soon put matters right, and by-and-by Oom-pa-nu, at Ruth's request, introduced his favourite squaw.

She was certainly not bad looking, but her face was painted a bright scarlet, and her hair was so anointed with rancid fish-oil, that she could be smelt before she actually came into view. Ruth shook her by the hand, and in so doing received some of the vermilion and grease, with which the lady was bedaubed, which caused her brothers to laugh most heartily; they offered to paint and feather her up in the same way as Uliba (as Mrs. Chief was called), but Ruth declined this honour, and, at the suggestion of her father, gave Uliba a small hand mirror and got rid of her.

After a couple of days of this savage festivity, the white people had had quite sufficient to last them a while, so the next day, after vainly endeavouring to barter with the savages, who were too excited to undertake business, *The Hunter* sailed up the Umpqua River for their new home.

CHAPTER X.

Up the Umpqua River.—Fort Cornwall and Fowey Pool described.—
First Trip Ashore.—A Successful Day.—The Fort and Store com-
menced.—*The Hunter* Sails.

If the reader happens to have a map of Western America, he will perceive upon looking at what is now the State of Oregon, but which was at the time of our heroes' visit, an uncivilised waste, peopled only by savages, and owned by nobody but the aborigines; that the River Umpqua is in comparison to the mighty streams of the Columbia, Snake, Mississippi, Missouri, and other rivers quite insignificant. It rises among some hills between the Cascade and Rogue Mountains, and runs westward some seventy miles, then due north about eighty, and finally, before reaching the sea, tends westward again for another forty or fifty miles: it is, to give a better idea of its size, about such another river as our Thames. It has several branches, from forty to sixty miles long, which all help to swell the current till it glides swiftly into the sea at Umpqua Head, where in recent years a fine town has sprung up.

Those aboard *The Hunter* were very pleased with the scenery as they sailed up the river, which for twenty-five miles from its mouth was from a mile to half-a-mile in breadth, and of great depth, by reason of the tremendous floods which annually sweep down from the mountains and scour out the bed of the river by their impetuosity.

Captain Rose sailed his craft very slowly up the river

for fear of snags or sandbanks, which might or might not be met with. So slowly did they proceed, as a swift current ran against them, that after stemming the flood for nine hours they had run but twenty-four miles, and under the lee of an overhanging forest which crowned the precipitous cliffs at this particular spot, they cast anchor for the night.

Next day everyone was up at daybreak, an early breakfast consumed, and a start made for their destination.

Hour after hour passed pleasantly enough to the Doones, as they were delighted with the scenery, each bend of the river producing fresh charms and splendid views. Rocks, cliffs, woods, and hills in great variety formed an endless panorama, while here and there on either side glimpses were obtained of the lofty peaks of the Coast Range and Rogue Mountains, which lost themselves far away in the blue distance.

At length, towards the middle of the afternoon, the river, which for some distance had been but a quarter of a mile wide, suddenly expanded into quite a large lake, at the eastern end of which the Umpqua turned abruptly to the south, while a tributary continued to the east.

The boys could not restrain giving a hearty cheer as the Captain pointed out to them a little wooden shanty, standing upon what appeared to be an island, and informed them that that was their future home—Fort Cornwall. The crew took up the cheering and made the rocks echo with their happy shouts, as *The Hunter*, now having more sailing room, tacked across the lake, and at length came to an anchor within a cable's length of Fort Cornwall, as the wretched little hut was named, in four fathoms of water.

Their vessel had been perceived by the half-breed left in charge of the hut directly she rounded the distant bend of

the river, and he and two Indians who lived with him quickly came aboard the big canoe and reported "all well."

Of course, everyone was eager to go ashore after such a long voyage, it had lasted from the end of April to the 10th of October (just five-and-a-half months), but as it would be getting dark in about two hours, the skipper ordered all hands to make everything snug above and below board, promising all of them a holiday ashore on the morrow.

The boys were up before daybreak in the morning, and while they are waiting for their father to accompany them ashore we will take a glance at their future domain.

The Hunter lay in a beautiful expanse of water, almost expansive enough to have the term "lake" applied to it; but it was not exactly a lake, but the broadening out of the confluence of two rivers. The Umpqua, as we have stated, rises in the south, runs with many twists and turns due north, and then abruptly breaks off and tends due west to the sea.

The smaller stream, called Deer River, takes its rise in the Cascade mountains, which lie at a mean distance of one hundred miles from the coast, and flowing west, falls into the Umpqua, at what Captain Rose had christened Fowey Pool.

At the bifurcation of the two rivers, a small elevated peninsula ran out boldly into the pool, its higher end being towards the west. The isthmus which connected this remarkable piece of land with the mainland was very low, probably not more than four or five feet above the ordinary level of the pool, but when the winter floods came down from the mountains, pouring with giant might and foaming impetuosity, the little isthmus was quite submerged, and Fort Cornwall isolated from the mainland.

The piece of land forming the island or peninsula (according to whether it were flood time or summer) was of an oval form, being about 300 yards from E. to W. and 200 from N. to S. From the narrow neck of the isthmus the island sloped gradually upward for about 250 yards, at which distance it had attained a general elevation of about 25 to 30 feet, and from that point an abrupt rise of from 10 to 20 feet took place, rising higher as the west-end of the island was reached, so that at the extremity were some bold cliffs, 50 or 60 feet high, which sank straight down into the water on their western face.

Bernard maintained that from where they were standing, upon the deck of their vessel, that the island gave a very good miniature representation of Gibraltar; but Rupert, in whom no poetry could be found, likened it to an old shoe very high at the back and having a very pointed toe.

At the break of the ground, which formed a capital shelter, stood a rough log hut some 12 feet square, round which a tall palisading of fir branches, pointed at the ends, had been erected. This was Fort Cornwall, most grand in name, but extremely humble in appearance, yet sufficient for the wants of the half-breed and his two Indian comrades, Ba-me-no and Ra-pa-tal.

Mr. Doone having joined his sons, they jumped into the jolly-boat and pulled to the island, where they found Simola, the half-breed, standing at a little apology for a landing-stage, ready to hand them ashore.

The boys frisked about like a couple of young goats; flying from one place to another, climbing the rocks at the west-end, and shouting to the men on *The Hunter* that it was "the jolliest place in the world," and asking

them to hurry on with breakfast so that they might get it over and come ashore.

Down the steep sides of the cliffs the lads scrambled, shouting into the numerous caves and crevices which the winter floods had worn with their sweeping waters, and they were not satisfied till they had made a complete circuit of the island, a distance of but little more than half-a-mile.

Mr. Doone was enchanted with the position of the island, which contained, according to his surmise, from eight to ten acres; he immediately perceived what a naturally strong position it was, and one which might easily be made almost impregnable against marauding Indians or others.

To the north, across the Deer River, rose the jagged summits of the Coast Mountains, which, in parts, attain a height of upwards of a mile.

To the south, across the Pool, was an immense forest running far up the sides of another lofty range of mountains, and broken here and there by bare hills of naked rock, which, seen in the morning sun, had the effect of several bald-headed old gentlemen looking over the top of a thickly planted hedge.

To the east was a belt of trees, neither of great height nor numerous, but just enough to screen off a rolling prairie, which, from the cliffs above the hut, could be followed with the eye till it lost itself in the blue haze which hung like a curtain around the feet of the Cascade mountains, whose lofty crests were quite visible, although nearly one hundred miles away. These crests were three in number, called the Three Sisters, and rise to an elevation of 9,000 feet.

The Cascade Range runs from Lake Klamath, in the south, to the banks of the Columbia River, three hundred

miles northward, and contains some of the finest and most picturesque mountains on the American Continent.

Mount Jefferson is 10,200 feet high and Mount Hood 11,225 feet. This range of mountains, which completely shuts in the lovely valley of the Willamette, possessed at the time of this story only one known pass, and even that fraught with so many dangers that it was seldom threaded, except during the summer months, as the deep snow drifts and piercing, cold winds rendered it impassable from November to April.

By-and-by a hail from the ship proclaimed that breakfast was ready, and feeling a keen appetite had been given them by their morning stroll, our friends were soon discussing the good things set forth in the cabin of *The Hunter*.

At eight o'clock, a dozen of the crew in charge of Bilton and Simola went ashore, on the south side of the river, accompanied by Rupert and Bernard, all of them with guns and provisions enough for the day, and having instructions to return at dusk.

They landed on the south side of the Pool, and were quickly lost in the shadow of the great primeval forest.

The remainder of the crew—two or three old hands, and one or two sick—remained for a quiet stroll about the island. Mr. and Mrs. Doone, Ruth and the Captain, spent the day on the island also, the two leaders concocting plans for their immediate and future welfare, and this was the result of their deliberations :

It was agreed that no more fitting locality could be found for their new home than the island, and that on the morrow they would commence the erection of a strong wooden fort, a house, store, and sundry sheds and conveniences. There was no time to be lost in carrying out these desirable works,

because the rainy season would commence very shortly, followed by heavy falls of snow as the weather became colder, and it was therefore arranged that the Doone family, the ship's carpenter, and two hands, should land upon the island and take possession as soon as a couple of sheds could be erected to give them and the goods shelter.

For this purpose Captain Rose would stay for a week, and then make a trip to visit his agents, and gather what furs and information he could for his next visit in the spring. He would return to Fowey Pool not later than the 25th of November.

In the evening, soon after dusk, the shore-party returned, tired, happy, and successful. They brought with them a number of wild turkeys, a bighorn, and a fine grizzly bear which had fallen to the musket of Bernard, who was exceedingly anxious that it should be skinned so that he might have the robe pegged out and preserved. The claws he wanted as a trophy to hang round his neck à la Indian.

The two Indians, Ra pa-tal and Bar-me-no, who had made themselves part and parcel of the post, soon initiated the boys into the mode of skinning and cutting up a bear. They also showed how to cut pegs to fasten the edges of the skins to the ground to dry it, and in due course to go through the entire formula of preparing the skin in the Indian manner, until from being as hard and dry as a deal board, it became, in a few days, as pliable and soft as a piece of thick cloth.

On the day after the hunting the whole crew took the boats and crossed to the forest on the south side of the bay, where they landed with ropes, axes, and the usual paraphernalia for felling trees. They were instructed to

cut down firs whose trunks were from six to nine inches in diameter at the base.

They could find no trees of this description at a less distance than half-a-mile from the shore, where a considerable eminence was crowned with a wood of fine pine-trees, most of them much too large for the purpose of house-building; but selecting the young trees they set to work with a will, and with axe and saw had cut down several score of trees by nightfall. They lightened their labours considerably by song and jest, and made the woods echo with the noise of their tools and the sound of their merry voices. Now and again a shot would be fired, as some strange bird out of sheer curiosity came to peep at them, and at times pay the penalty of its temerity.

During the day two or three wandering Indians came and looked at them, but did not venture very near, being frightened at the reports of the guns occasionally fired.

The half-breed Simola spoke to them, but they could not be prevailed upon to approach nearer the white men than one hundred yards, and the boys were quite willing that they should keep their distance, for they were doubtless outcasts from their tribe and not to be trusted.

"Wait," said Simola, "till the Klamaths arrive, either within the next fortnight or after the winter, then I will show you some fine men among them. They will pitch camp on the bank of the river, in a clearing of the forest, and then you will have an opportunity of seeing as fine a tribe as any on the continent. They are brave and honest, very truthful, and anxious to be near the white men."

After this eulogy, it leaked out that Simola's mother was a Klamath, which explained why he should so exalt

this particular tribe; and small blame to him for speaking well of his mother's relatives.

At dusk they returned home, for by that name was *The Hunter* endeared to them, and informed the skipper of the number of trees they had felled, and next day were sent to bring them to the island. This, however, they found a very difficult task, for a pathway had to be cut for quite half-a-mile through the forest to enable them to drag the great trees to the shore. So great was the labour that, although about twenty-five men—white and natives—were employed, it was not till the end of the fourth day that the trees were dislimbed, dragged to the shore, made into rafts, and finally hauled across, amid much rejoicing, to the landing-place on the island.

The next two or three days were memorable and busy ones, and the sound of the saw, axe, and hammer, mingled with the creaking of blocks and the "Yo-heave-ho" of the sailors getting up the cargo from below and taking it ashore, were continually heard.

Work as they would, the week passed all too rapidly, and was ended long before the roofs were on the large store sheds which the men were building. It was, therefore, decided that everyone should work on the island for three or four days longer, and although this was extended to a week, everything was still in a very backward state when the time came for *The Hunter* to sail.

The work of building was so far advanced that a four-roomed house had been constructed for the Doones, with its back to the cliff at the west of the island; on the left of it a store and men's house of two stories; on the right stood the original hut and two partially built stores, and in front another large store of two floors, the upper of which was to be used as a fort and mounted with four-

pounders, which the Captain had had put ashore from the vessel. Everything was in a very unfinished state when, on November 1st, Captain Rose embarked for a three weeks' cruise along the coast, to look up his agents before the winter set in, promising to return by the 25th.

The Doones, a carpenter, two sailors, Simola and the two Mandan Indians were left behind as occupants of the new Fort Cornwall.

To the flag which the boys displayed on the new flag-staff, *The Hunter* dipped her colours as she slowly swept seaward with the tide. Alas for her and her brave crew! What a deal may befall in but a brief period! Events may quickly take place when least expected, which completely alters the career of a whole community, as we shall see.

CHAPTER XI.

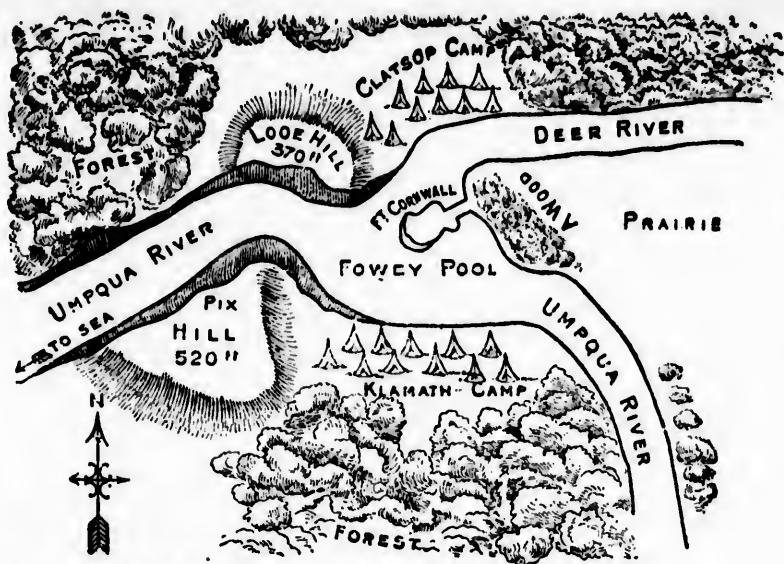
The Building Proceeds.—A Surprise Party of Klamaths.—Another of Tacon and Umpquas.—A Description of them and their Bidarkies.—Bighorn Mutton.—A Canoe Expedition.—A Snug Camp.—*The Hunter* found.

AFTER the departure of *The Hunter*, those left on the island were by no means idle, employing every moment of daylight from dawn till dark in the completion of their homestead and fort, so that the days passed very rapidly, and, it may be added, very pleasantly; this was also the case with the nights, for hard work is usually rewarded with the much-needed deep and tranquil sleep.

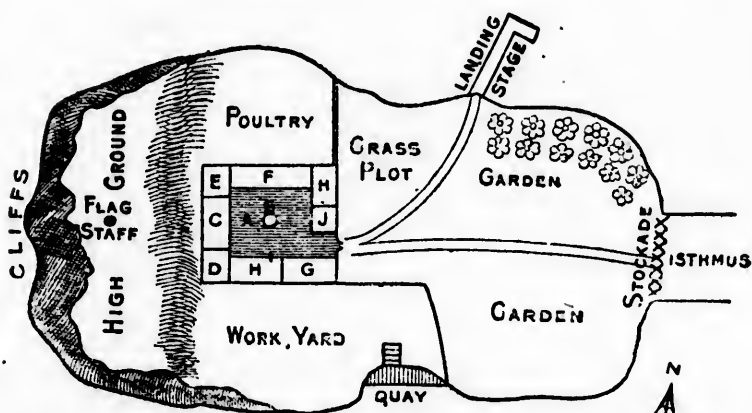
Only two or three days after the departure of their friends, the Doones were surprised to see a number of large canoes quietly floating down the river towards them. There were at least twenty of them, and each had several occupants. The appearance of such a formidable flotilla naturally caused some alarm; seeing which, Simola allayed the fear by explaining that he was expecting the party, who were his friends, the Klamaths.

Mr. Doone was somewhat perplexed at this avowal, thinking there might be treachery in it, but as Simola had such an excellent character, he said but little to him upon the subject, beyond warning him that no Indian was to set foot on the island without special permission.

Both cannon were loaded and stood in the gateway of



MAP OF REGION AROUND FORT CORNWALL.



- A. Courtyard. F Mens Quarters.
 B. Well. G. Mens Berths
 C. Womens Large Room. H. Fur Stores.
 D. do. 2 Bed Rooms one above other. J. Bastion with Guns
 E. Kitchen.

PLAN OF ISLAND

FORT CORNWALL AND MAP OF DISTRICT.



the Fort, ready for immediate use, and small arms placed handy in case of an attack.

Simola smiled at the precautions, and informed Mr. Doone that he would answer with his life that no harm should befall the white men from his friends, but rather that they would be a protection and guard to the fort during the whole winter, while their hunters would keep the little community supplied with fish, game, and venison in return for any little presents that might be given them.

Mr. Doone could scarcely credit Simola's assurance that a large tribe of Indians would come many days' journey for the sake of the few presents they were likely to obtain for their services with the white men. To all outward appearance he took Simola's assurances for truth, but in his heart could scarcely believe the half-breed, nor did his reflections help him in the matter, as he remembered that Indians usually *do* move to snug quarters for the winter, have an insatiable curiosity to see white men and their belongings, and, after all, *might* be of a friendly and even helpful disposition.

Being in much perplexity he secretly kept a strict watch upon Simola, but could not detect the slightest cause for the assumption that he might be a traitor; and as he appeared to be an honest man, he treated him as such and trusted him, but was prudent withal.

At the lower part of the island, not far above where it joined the causeway leading to the mainland, a stockade was erected, and no more than four Indians were allowed on the island at the same time; and fine strapping fellows they were, who helped in many ways to further the completion of the fort, and anything else that was required of them, while the hunters of the tribe procured an unlimited supply of provisions from river, forest, and prairie.

While the Indians were at work upon the island (as unintentional hostages), Rupert and Bernard made several trips to the Klamath camp on the south shore of the pool. It was snugly placed amid a clearing of the forest, which surrounded it on all sides, except where the river skirted it to the north. The lodges and cabins were picturesquely placed in favouring sites among the rocks and hillocks, and at night the cooking fires threw their ruddy glare upon the waters, and made the encampment, from the island, look quite like a civilised village. There were forty-five men and lads, about twenty women, and perhaps thirty or forty children—about one hundred in all. The men were mostly above the average height, strong and athletic, fairly well clothed in deer and other skins, and had with them about twenty horses which had come by another route. The women were far inferior to the men both in physique and personal appearance; their good looks, where any were present, being marred by their habit of smearing their faces and persons with bands of red and white clay.

Clay cooking-pots they had in plenty, but beyond those their culinary utensils were *nil*.

Our heroes, on more than one occasion, went out with hunting parties into the forest and among the nearer hills, never coming back empty handed, for it was a splendid game country.

By the 20th of November the fort and buildings were rapidly approaching completion, and the Doones were looking forward to the return of their friends; but there was yet another little surprise in store for them in the descent of six large canoes, or rather *ascent*, for the huge clumsy vessels came from seaward.

Simola went out to meet the new arrivals, to learn

from whence they came and whither they were going, holding in his hand a branch of fir as a sign of peace.

He paddled among the canoes, and after a deal of palaver and gesticulation returned to the island, while the canoes drew up on the north shore of the pool, and the goods, women, children, and dogs were unceremoniously tumbled out on the strand, while the great canoes were laboriously hauled up above the water level, and the Indians made every sign of encamping.

On his return Simola informed Mr. Doone that they were a tribe of Clatsops, who had their winter quarters a few miles up the Deer River; but hearing that white men had taken up quarters on the island, had resolved to winter near them, that they might help the pale faces in any way they possibly could.

More brotherly love! more disinterested friendship!

What could it all mean?

Mr. Doone could not answer his own question satisfactorily, so surmised that sociability was the custom of the country, but for fear that other ends might be hidden under this great profession of loyalty and goodwill, he kept the Fort in true military style—closing the gate of the stockade at dusk in the evening and not opening it till an hour after daylight in the morning.

The Clatsop friends had come from the coast, where they had resided during the summer, some fifty miles north of the Umpqua mouth. They were Tacon and Umpqua Indians, but we shall in this narrative call them Clatsops, as they were really of that tribe though having distinct tribal differences.

Their canoes were between forty and fifty feet long, cut out of a single tree, either white cedar or fir, and capable of carrying five-and-twenty persons. These bidarkies have

gunwales which flare outward, so as to throw off the breaking waves, and the stem and stern rising several feet above the waterline are decorated with grotesque birds, men, and animals, some of which Ruth took great interest in. She copied many of the most curious into her book, for patterns of her embroidery work, as future presents for her English friends.

In managing their canoes the Clatsops, kneeling two and two along the bottom, sitting on their heels, and wielding single-bladed paddles, from four to five feet long, sweep along the surface of the water in a very graceful manner.

These savages will venture fearlessly in their apparently unstable canoes on the roughest and most tempestuous seas, which they ride upon like seafowl. Should a sea throw the canoe upon its side and threaten to overturn it, those on the weather side lean right over the gunwale, thrust their paddles deep into the wave, catch the water, and force it under the canoe, and by this action not only regain an equilibrium, but give their bark a vigorous drive ahead.

The Clatsops are by no means a prepossessing people, being somewhat short in stature, and from constantly squatting in their canoes become ill-shaped and crook-legged. They have thick ankles and large, broad, flat feet. Not a nice picture certainly, and to this may be added the information that they have very insufficient clothing, and are dirty in their persons and habits; so that it will be seen that the Doones had not a very nice set of savages for their neighbours. They had one good quality, however, and that was, they were not given to quarrelling with other tribes, but were like all other Indians sly, crafty, and traitorous when they wished to gain any

particular end. The Tacons numbered about forty and the Umpquas eighty.

Such were the Clatsops and Klamaths, who had constituted themselves friends and neighbours of the Doones.

The 25th of November arrived, and with it the commencement of the rainy season, but although the boys were paddled several miles down the river, nothing was to be seen of *The Hunter*. Next day brought no ship, nor the next, and the white folk of Fort Cornwall began to grow more and more uneasy, surmising that Captain Rose had met with some misadventure with his ship, which might have run upon some unseen rocks and become a wreck.

A council was held, and it was agreed that if *The Hunter* had not returned by December 2nd, an expedition should sail to the mouth of the Umpqua River to ascertain if anything could be seen or heard of the overdue vessel.

The days passed lingeringly away, but not a glint of the lofty masts of *The Hunter* appeared, and on the 3rd of December the expedition started for the Umpqua Head.

Two of the largest Clatsop canoes were requisitioned, each with a crew of fourteen natives of the Umpqua tribe, as paddle-men. Provisions were put aboard, and on the morning of the 3rd the bidarkies were paddled down the river. Rupert, three white sailors, fourteen Umpquas, and four Klamaths were in one canoe, all fully armed, and Bernard, Simola, Ra-pa-tal and Bar-me-no, twelve Umpquas, and six Klamaths in the other, forty-four in all.

It was dark when they reached the estuary after a hard paddle of ten hours, and had they not had the tide with them for six hours it would have taken much longer. They landed, lit several large fires, and erected shelter huts of boughs and boulders; and while their evening meal, of

which they were in great need, was cooking, they tried ineffectually to dry their garments, for they had been completely drenched by the heavy rain which had fallen nearly all day.

The boys and other white men made themselves a very fair hut of three rock walls, some boughs for roof and a piece of a sail which they had brought with them. The Indians, used to open-air life, wrapped themselves in their blankets, and curled up under the lee of the canoes, which were drawn out of the water, or else with their feet towards a fire and their heads tucked under their blankets, slept soundly like so many huge dogs.

The morning broke fair, but very cold, and the Indians did not look at all gay with their damp feathers and smudged face ornaments of coloured clay, but they were cheerful enough, and accompanied Bernard inland, to point out a spot where he might obtain a shot at a big-horn. He did better, for he obtained *two* of these strange animals, whose flesh is as fine in flavour as the finest Welsh mutton.

The camp presented an animated scene as the Indians prepared breakfast, but although the redskins ate heartily of the mutton, it must be confessed the boys had not much stomach for it, as it looked very uninviting, being cut into long flat strips and hung over the smoky fire. Some parts of it were done fairly well, other parts nearly raw, and all of it smoky, oily, and mangled.

Savage ways have a romantic touch about them in books, but when one is brought into personal contact with the sons of the wilderness, much has to be encountered which is decidedly unpleasant.

They embarked and proceeded to the headland, and although they strained their eyes to the north and south,

nothing could be seen of *The Hunter*. As the sea was fairly smooth it was agreed to coast southward to the mouth of the Eel River, where Captain Rose's native agent might be able to give them some account of the vessel and her crew.

The skill with which the Clatsops managed the canoes was marvellous, and the timing of their paddles excited the boys' admiration; so precise and in unison were they in their movements, that the least word from the steersman was followed out by every man, as if the whole crew had but one brain between them.

The distance from the Umpqua River to the Eel River is about two hundred and fifty miles, a most formidable task for a couple of canoes to undertake, and at the end of the first day when they went ashore into an inlet for the night, they had only covered about thirty miles, despite their continuous paddling.

A council was therefore held, and as it would probably take them eight days to reach Eel River, it was deemed imprudent to attempt it at a time of year when storms and foul weather might be expected; besides which, Mr. Doone was quite without aid, and had ordered the canoes to be *back* at the Fort in eight days at latest.

It was at length proposed that they should paddle as far south as they could on the morrow, keeping a sharp look out for *The Hunter*, and if she did not make her appearance by the finish of breakfast on the fourth day out, they were to return.

The sailors, aided by Rupert and his brothers, sat late that night fashioning two sails from the large piece of sailcloth the boys had brought with them as a kind of protecting awning for them to sleep under.

Next day they were up at sunrise, breakfasted, and

away early. The sails helped the paddlers greatly, and the wind being N.W. was in their favour. They passed thousands of seals lying on the outlying rocks and swimming about with a graceful undulating motion; two or three sea-otters were also espied, but they were on a voyage of discovery and not on a hunting expedition, so the meek-eyed beasts were left unmolested.

It was calculated that they ran at least fifty miles that day, and towards dusk they noticed some twinkling lights on shore, which they took to be fires; they therefore made for a large opening which lay upon this side of the fires as they proved rightly to be on closer inspection, and landed in a sheltered nook between two large rocky cliffs. It was now nearly dark, and they lit their own fires in such a position that they could not be seen by those whose fires were at the head of the bay.

While supper was being prepared two scouts were sent to reconnoitre, who quickly discovered that they were the camp fires of a large party of Digger Indians. They numbered about eighty men, and having no women with them, showed that peace was not altogether their design in being camped where they were.

Two sentinels were placed to guard the encampment during the night, others taking their places during the hours of darkness, at intervals of two hours.

How strange were the surroundings of the boys when they woke in the night! Great rocky cliffs towered above them, and the twinkling stars looked coldly down as they lay gazing around at the sleeping forms of the Indians, whose coloured blankets could just be discerned as their wearers slumbered around half-a-dozen fires, which shed a fitful light upon their recumbent forms grouped in strange attitudes. The waters of the bay looked inky

black, with here and there a faint touch of silver as a ripple caught and reflected the light from the pale stars above.

Morning dawned, and the boys and their companions awoke. None were allowed to leave the camp for fear of being seen by the Diggers, who might not be friendly. Two spies were again sent out to reconnoitre, and on their return informed the boys, through Simola, that the Diggers had been on a plundering expedition, and had captured a great quantity of spoil, among which were several bales of blankets, which they were about to divide.

The question at once arose, "From whence could they get *bales* of blankets? Could they possibly have been received in barter from *The Hunter*?"

To set matters at rest, Simola, accompanied by the two Manadans, Bar-me-no and Ra-pa-tal, volunteered to go boldly to the Digger camp and see how matters stood, the others were in the meantime to keep themselves closely hidden, and only to venture out if Simola fired his musket.

The trio set off, but had not been gone ten minutes when Simola came running back alone, quite out of breath with excitement.

"I have seen *The Hunter*!" he exclaimed.

"Where?" said the brothers in a breath, before he could explain himself further.

"Not half-a-mile from here," the half-breed replied, "but she is burnt and deserted! Follow me closely, so as not to be seen."

CHAPTER XII.

A Mystery.—Land Pirates.—Stalking a Camp.—The Signal.—A Battle.
—The Fate of Captain Rose.—A Cave Dwelling.—Tug of War.—
Wrestling.—Friends Meet.—A Bear Adventure.—A Madman in a
Canoe.—At Death's Door.—Work on the Island.

CALLING the men to strike camp quickly, Simola ordered the canoes to be pushed off and everyone to embark.

By his orders the canoes were paddled round the point which had prevented them from being seen by the Diggers, and there, full in view, lay the hull of *The Hunter*, burnt nearly to the water's edge.

The brothers could scarcely believe their eyes, but on approaching the dismal wreck they could discern the half-obliterated white letters *T—UNT—R*.

Here was a mystery! What did it all mean?

Where were gallant Captain Rose and his crew?

The interior of the hull was a mass of blackened *débris*—chaotic—indefinable.

Who had set fire to their beloved old ship?

Had her crew been overcome and killed, or had she been accidentally stranded, and being irreparably injured, set on fire by the Captain?

Who could tell?

But stay; what are those lumps on the sandy shore which look so strangely like human beings?

They paddle towards them, and, alas, recognise the

remains of four of *The Hunter's* crew. They are mangled, burnt and blackened, but their tattered clothing unmistakably proclaims their identity.

The white men were aghast with horror, while their Indian allies looked on in wonder.

What should be done? was the next question, and again Simola came to the rescue by offering to go, attended by the two Mandans, who spoke the language better than he, to the Digger camp and seek an explanation.

After making arrangements as to certain signals, Simola departed with his comrades, and while he was making slow progress toward the Digger camp, by keeping along the rugged rocky shore, Rupert carried out a plan which was suggested to him by the sight of the corpses of his former companions.

It seemed perfectly plain to him that a robbery attended with fatal violence had taken place, or the blankets and other goods would not have been in the hands of the savages at the head of the bay; if such were the case he intended to attempt the recovery of the stolen property and the punishment of the delinquents.

The plan hit upon by Simola and Rupert was that the former should visit the enemy's camp and ascertain if they were friends or foes, and if the latter, whether they were guilty of treachery to their friends aboard *The Hunter*. If friends, he would climb the rock at the head of the bay and wave a pine-branch as a signal for his friends to approach; but if they were enemies he would fire his musket, making as an excuse to the chief the pretence of signalling to some of his canoe-men to bring up a supply of "firewater," of which all Indians are inordinately fond. Then, after sending a man forward

with a large bottle, Rupert was to follow, under cover, with his whole force, and fall on the unsuspecting wretches who had treacherously slain the white crew.

After Simola had departed, Rupert ordered all but two men to enter the canoes again, and with these two, who were to act as decoys, he left a large bottle of trade gin.

The canoes were quietly paddled back to their last night's halting-place, where the crews, disembarking, proceeded to the rear of the enemy's camp by making a long detour inland among the rocks and tangled masses of wild shrubs, lianas, and trailing undergrowth. It was very slow and unpleasant work, even to the Indians, but they presently came to a dry, or nearly dry, watercourse, along the margin of which they walked, jumped, and tumbled faster than amid the tangled underwood.

Luckily Indian palavers are long-winded affairs, and Simola, being a half-breed, enjoyed the pride of being principal in a long talk, so did not hurry matters, or our heroes and their men would not have had time to secure the commanding position overlooking the camp of the unsuspecting savages, who, heedless of all precaution, in the fallacious sense of their security, had not a single picket posted around the camp in case of a surprise.

Two hours had elapsed since they started from the canoes, during which time but a couple of miles had been traversed, which was a proof of the rugged and trackless nature of the district.

From their position behind a thicket the brothers could look down upon the skin and bark lodges of the Diggers, and anxiously awaited the preconcerted signal of peace or war.

It came at length.

Simola, haranguing with the chief and two or three other head men, walked to the big rock and coolly fired his musket as a signal for the "firewater" to be brought, and as coolly loaded his piece again and strode back to the circle of natives, who were seated on the ground, anticipating a grand carouse.

More talk followed, pending the arrival of the "firewater."

Rupert scarcely knew whether to fire at the treacherous Diggers now, or when the spirit arrived, but quickly decided to strike while the enemy was quiet and unsuspecting, as they were quite double his own force in number.

Placing his silent moccasined Indians in front, with instructions to fire two flights of arrows at the enemy, on his giving the signal, and then rush in with their tomahawks and knives; he and his brother, the carpenter, and the two sailors, constituted themselves a kind of rear guard, which was posted where a path led between two rocks to the right of the camp.

The signal was a volley from the white men's guns, delivered at the group of headmen standing near Simola, and right good execution it did, for three of the four fell to the ground, while Simola brained the fourth with a blow from his rifle.

Sixty arrows immediately after flew silently among the surprised Digger warriors, and then from their ambush the thirty Clatsops and Klamaths dashed among them, and a fierce hand-to-hand struggle ensued, in which, after the first shock, the Diggers being more numerous, held their own, till, with a loud hurrah, the white men, with loaded muskets, dashed from their hiding-place into the thick of the enemy, and with their unexpected appearance turned the tide of battle, for the Diggers fled in all directions,

evidently thinking that the sailors whom they had slain a day or two before had returned to life to take vengeance



THEIR UNEXPECTED APPEARANCE TURNED THE TIDE OF BATTLE.

upon them for their treachery. Throwing down their discharged muskets, the white men pursued the enemy,

and with pistol and cutlass made sad havoc among the retreating foe.

All was soon over, and a search instituted through the camp for anything that would give a clue to what had really befallen the late crew of *The Hunter*.

Simola had pretended to be friendly with the Diggers, and from the chief had obtained a recital of what he called a battle with the white men on the great canoe. He said one of the white men had killed the chief's son, and his death being resented, a fight had taken place, the crew all killed, and the ship, after being plundered, run aground and burnt.

Knowing the capacity of Indians for lying, no one could say how much of this story was true, but of two things there remained no doubt: that some at least of her crew had been killed, and the ship burnt and plundered.

A great store of goods was found which had belonged to *The Hunter*, and also a rather large stock of sea-otter, seal and deer skins, which appeared that a trading transaction had led to some disturbance, which had ended in a dreadful catastrophe to the white men, who were outnumbered five to one, and probably taken unawares.

As Bernard was searching among the goods in the chief's lodge, he came across a relic which caused him to sit down and indulge in an agony of weeping, for he had discovered his uncle's clothing, which proved that he, too, was numbered with the dead.

It was a sad day for the boys, and their martial triumph was quite overshadowed by grief at their discovery. That Captain Rose and his brave men had perished now appeared quite certain, and the boys were beside themselves with grief. Here was a realisation of their hopes of happiness and adventure in a far land!

The latter they certainly did not lack, but the former seemed to have left them for ever.

Simola suggested a feast upon the enemy's provender, and to this Rupert acquiesced, knowing it would be the very thing to please his Indian allies.

Four men were despatched to bring the canoes to the rocks at the foot of the camp, and four more posted as sentinels for fear of a return of the Diggers, of which there was but little probability; but precaution is nowhere more needful than in dealing with the red man.

Four others were detailed to collect wood and build fires; and yet four more to drag the dead into a deep dell, for their ghastly wounds and contorted features were not calculated to add to one's appetite.

Upwards of twenty Diggers were found dead, and no doubt a great many wounded had been carried off by their comrades, as is the custom in savage warfare.

Two Clatsops and a Klamath were killed, and three Clatsops and the carpenter severely wounded. "Chips," as Jack Fleming, the carpenter, was, from his trade, called, was one of those lively fellows who sees the humorous side of everything; and although he was so severely wounded that he could not stand, having an arrow wound in his thigh, which completely pierced it, and a spear thrust through his foot, yet he was full of humour as well as pain.

He vowed the savages knew he was a Hampshire hog (he was born at Lymington) or they would not have hamstrung him as they do pigs. "Besides," said he, "I know that old fellow with the big spear wanted my 'trotter,' or why did he aim his harpoon at my foot, bad luck to him?"

Cheerfulness was Jack's strong trait, a characteristic in

many a bold "Jack," both in and out of her Majesty's navy; and it is that inborn cheerfulness that makes the English sailor what he is, a straightforward, happy-go-lucky messmate.

The wounded were carefully tended and laid in the bottoms of the canoes, and the fish and flesh being cooked, a grand feast was held; after which a war dance had to be indulged in by the Klamaths and Clatsops, in which they worked themselves up to a perfect frenzy, reciting songs of their prowess, in which they referred to themselves as having wiped out the whole Digger race; and as they gesticulated and danced, with horrid yells of triumph they waved aloft the bloody scalps of the enemy.

While this saturnalia was progressing, the brothers and Simola concocted their plans for the return journey, and soon after noon the recovered goods and the piles of skins were placed in the canoes, and preparations made for the voyage home.

Everything being ready to start, four or five Umpquas took brands from the fires, and, with fiendish yells, set light to the various lodges and cabins which composed the village, thus completing their work of killing, spoiling, and desolating the treacherous Diggers.

They found the sea much rougher than on the outward trip, but the sails helped to steady the canoes considerably, as the wind, having backed a little to the west, was still somewhat favourable to their progress.

By nightfall they had made but twenty miles, and in landing had great difficulty in getting the canoes ashore, as they were now very deeply laden, and no estuary or friendly bay gave them the opportunity of landing in smooth water.

By dint of great skill they succeeded in getting safely ashore, but in doing so much of the cargo was saturated with sea-water; but even that was better than a capsize, in which everything would probably have been lost.

As they landed it commenced to rain, but some large caves gave them excellent shelter, some of them being so large that the canoes, after being unladen, were carried into them out of the rain for the men to sleep in. Drift-wood is very plentiful all along the coast, and some of the drier pieces being cut up with tomahawks, big fires were lighted and supper soon under weigh.

During the night the wind greatly increased, and when dawn broke such a sea was presented to view, that launching the bidarkies was out of the question. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to make the best of their situation till the gale blew itself out and the sea moderated.

Although the weather was cold and wet, yet the surroundings of the boys were so strange that they (apart from the knowledge of their uncle's death) quite enjoyed the company of their strange companions. How different to their quiet humdrum life in their native Cornish village! There, all was peace and order, law and security. Here, war, bloodshed, no law and no security, was the order of things. The life was new to them, and was exceedingly strange. They were leaders of a band of Indians! They felt very important, quite heroes; indeed they felt what they were—a couple of sturdy English lads, not likely to let trifles knock them under when there was anything to be taken in hand.

The Indians played strange gambling games, and then showed feats of skill with their bows and arrows and their tomahawks, chatted round the great fires, and recited tales

of love, war and adventure, which, according to Simola's interpretation, required to be swallowed with large pinches of salt.

On the second day the wind dropped, but the rain descended in a deluge, and although the sea moderated a little, it was still too much agitated to think of launching their long, frail *bidarkies*, so they spent the day in all kinds of games, and among others, feats of strength were introduced, at which the Englishman proved more than a match for the red men.

A tug of war between three white men and four red men caused the Clatsops to become very excited, and some of them even betted their blankets on the result. Indians are so fond of gambling that they will sometimes stake horses, arms, and even their squaws in some foolish game of chance.

The two boys and Freeman, one of the sailors, who was a very heavy man, weighed about forty stone, while their four opponents would probably be some two or three stone more, but what the Englishmen lacked in weight they balanced in strength and knowledge of hauling on ropes. It was to be "best two out of three pulls," and in the first pull the white men had the advantage from the outset, and won in three or four minutes from the word being given to "haul."

This was too sudden a victory, however, to produce much excitement, so Rupert gave his comrades the wink to prolong the struggle, even if they were getting the best of it; but four heavier men were opposed to them in the next bout, and the struggle was really a good one; but slowly and surely the rope came in till the Englishmen had nearly secured victory, when Rupert, amid deafening yells, slipped and lost his hold of the rope.

Their opponents quickly hauled the two whites over the line and won the bout.

For the third and final tussle the excitement was intense, as the same four redskins came up to the rope. The Indians yelled, danced, smacked hands in token of the acceptance of a bet, and shrieked with delight when the red men gained a few inches of rope, so that the cave resembled pandemonium.

Cries, ejaculations, fierce looks, and yells of delight made the whole thing very exciting, and every inch of rope gained one way or other was greeted with loud shouts from the partisans of either side. The bout lasted a long time, and then, by a preconcerted little oh! the Englishmen suddenly slacked the rope, which caused two of the redskins to lose their footing; this was fatal to their success, for amid a perfect storm of yells and shouts of laughter, they were drawn over the line by the three perspiring white men.

Wrestling on a floor of skins and blankets gave sturdy Bernard an opportunity of showing an amount of strength and skill which fairly astonished the natives, who were amazed and delighted at his prowess. He rose in their estimation as one most worthy of being a chief, and they christened him on the spot "Big Bear."

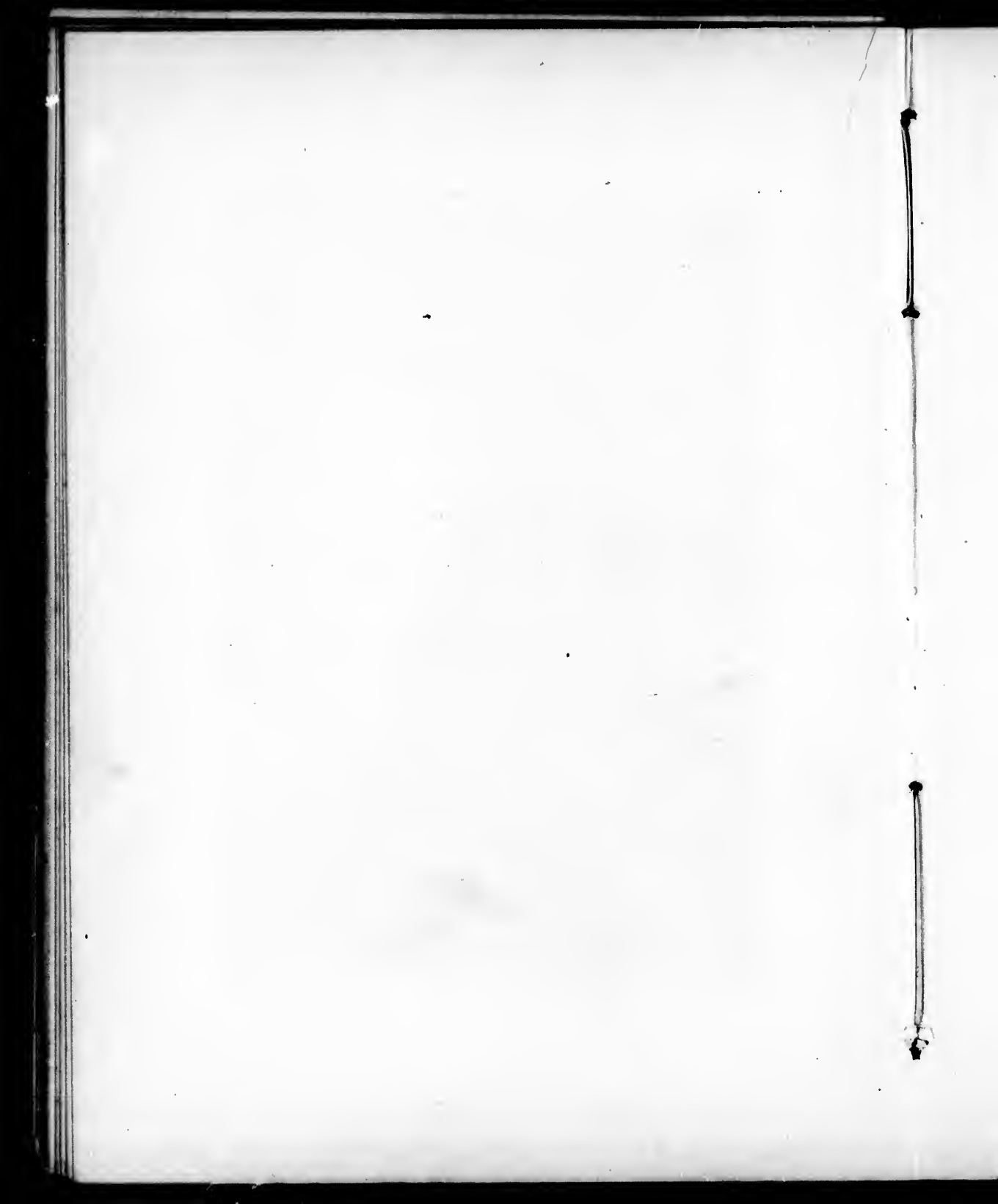
The outlook at night was propitious for a start next day, as the rain having ceased, and wind gone down, the sea was rapidly calming.

Big fires were made, and with Ra-pa-tal guarding the mouth of the cave, all were soon wrapped in their blankets and peaceful slumber.

The morning was very fine; and anxious to make up for lost time, they made a very hurried breakfast, and



RA-PA-TAL GUARDING THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE.



were afloat soon after the sun had shown himself upon the tips of the hills.

The occupants of Fort Cornwall would no doubt be dreadfully anxious as to what had happened to them, as well as for the fate of *The Hunter*, of which they were at present quite ignorant. This was the day on which they should have returned to the fort, and here were they more than a hundred miles away, with a rough sea before them. There was no help for it, however, so they took turns at paddling with the Indians, both to keep themselves warm and to help in lessening the number of miles to their home.

Another night came and another landing was made at the mouth of a river, this time in a calm bay. As usual, they had a big meal, and men after a nine hours' paddle on the sea *can* eat a big meal, one that would simply astonish a town dweller, however hard he may work. A long paddle in the keen sea air made these men have appetites like wild animals; they become ravenous and eat like wolves, and after their gorge, like wolves, they slept.

In savage life there are no set times for meals, for they go upon a journey till they are *really* hungry, and then they *eat* as if they had not had a meal for a week, and did not anticipate partaking of another for a like period.

Next morning, in dull, threatening weather, the two canoes were manned, and another stage of the return journey commenced. When once on the sea the men seemed to rouse themselves, and to a dreary monotonous chant kept splendid time with their paddles, making the canoes travel at great speed. Just as a horse will accomplish a homeward journey quicker than the outward one,

so did these Indians seem to gain energy the nearer they got to the mouth of the Umpqua River.

In the middle of the afternoon one of the men lying forward in the leading canoe gave a cry and pointed ahead. Sweeping the horizon with his telescope, Rupert brought into view a large canoe, but at so great a distance that, although he could see that it was full of men, yet he could not tell which way it was moving.

This telescope, it must be noted, was a "great medicine" to the Indians, and they looked upon it as something supernatural, and would not upon any consideration touch it, for fear something evil should happen to them. On one occasion when Bernard had been using it he omitted to put the leather cap on the large end, but an Indian who dare not approach too closely, asked him to "Shut telescope eye—eye bad medicine—make Injun quick die."

Half-an-hour more at the paddles revealed the fact that the canoe was approaching them rapidly, and another half-hour brought them so close that Rupert recognised the canoe as belonging to the Clatsops, who had evidently come all this distance, some seventy miles, to meet them.

The greeting at meeting was very hearty, if yells and yelps enough to deafen one can be taken as a criterion. It was soon discovered that the canoe had been sent by Mr. Doone as a kind of forlorn hope, to gather news either of *The Hunter* or his sons.

The chatter among the re-united Indians was more like what one would expect to hear from the sudden meeting of forty or fifty females, than from a tribe of supposedly reserved and stoical Indians.

When they landed for the night at the entrance of the Umpqua it was quite dark, but these sons of the wilder-

ness paddled as unerringly to their usual landing-place as if it had been broad daylight; and what the boys took to be a case of seeing, like cats, in the dark, was not due to greater visual power than that possessed by white men, but to the fact that the natives knew every rock and rugged gnarled tree in the estuary, and the distance from object to object, so it was really observation rather than eyesight that guided them.

When they commenced the ascent of the Umpqua next day, they found that owing to the recent rains the river had risen considerably during their absence, and was flowing seaward with great velocity, retarding their progress so much that it was doubtful if they would reach Fort Cornwall in two days, whereas it only took them one day to descend the river.

Strangely enough they met with two adventures on the river, one on the first day with a bear, and on the second with a mishap, which was near costing a couple of lives.

The first incident was, that at a distance, some object was noticed coming rapidly down the river towards them, perched upon a floating tree-trunk that had broken adrift, and which the Indians pronounced to be a man, who was perhaps trying to get across the stream by this means, as he appeared to be using a paddle on one side of his strange bark only.

Bernard with his wonderful "long eye," as the Clatsops called the telescope, put quite a different construction on the occupant of the log, for he could see that it was an animal—either a bear or a panther.

As it approached it was seen that it was a medium-sized specimen of the former, and what appeared to be a paddle was in reality a branch which flapped up and down in the water with the rolling of the log.

Quickly a dozen arrows were fitted to as many bows and launched at the animal, who showed his great white fangs and growled at the archers, for three of the arrows found a billet in various parts of his carcase. By the time other arrows were notched to the strings, the bear was quite close, and of the twelve arrows discharged only two or three this time missed their mark, the rest burying themselves in various parts of the now furious animal, who, losing his footing slipped off the log, and commenced to swim towards the nearest bidarkie.

Not one of the arrows which struck him proved immediately fatal, but the blood-tinted water showed that he had been very severely, if not mortally, wounded.

Rupert and Bernard sat quietly with their muskets across their knees, wishing to see the Indian mode of finishing the shaggy swimmer, whose tenacity of life is even greater than that of the nine-lived cat.

The bear reached the canoe, and had actually got both his forepaws over the gunnel, when the chief, who had restrained his men from further attack upon bruin, aimed a blow at its chest with his lance, but by some means accidentally struck the gunnel of the canoe, from which it glanced, and the bear catching the shaft in its mouth, gave it such a jerk that the chief, who was a man of considerable age, fell overboard, completely on the bear's back. The bear immediately released his great paws from the canoe, and turned to claw his aggressor, whose face was a perfect study of horror at the sudden turn which things had taken. In a moment, both the brothers sprang from their seats and fired at the animal, one of the bullets fortunately completely penetrating its skull and killing it on the instant. The chief was picked up much the worse for his icy bath and sudden shock, but none the worse for

the bear, who had not had sufficient time to carry out its fell intentions.

On the next day a more serious incident occurred. One of the Clatsops who had been wounded in the head by a tomahawk, during the fight with the Diggers, appeared to go suddenly mad, for he commenced to howl like a dog, and behave in such a violent manner that two of his tribesmen were told to hold him, so that he did not leap out of the bidarkie. He was a powerful young fellow, and after a few minutes of perfect calmness, suddenly seized hold of one of his guards and tumbled him out of the canoe, and before anyone could prevent him, flung his arms round the second and jumped overboard with him also.

The first swam to another canoe and was picked up, but the madman and his friend disappeared beneath the chilly surface, bobbing up again some twenty yards lower down the river, struggling frantically; the madman screaming and yelling as well as he was able, and the other calling in gasps for help.

The canoes were turned as quickly as possible, or rather the men faced about, and followed the struggling men who were battling violently, sometimes under water and sometimes above. Then the madman appeared to throttle his opponent, for he ceased to struggle, and every one looked upon him as past help; but a few seconds after, a canoe shot alongside the exultant madman, and the brother of the drowned man, leaning over the bow of the canoe, with a terrific blow of his tomahawk clove the madman's skull, who sank with the apparently dead body of his tribesman locked fast in his arms.

Like lightning the brother sprang overboard, and dived beneath the rushing water, bringing both the bodies to the surface half a minute after, when they were instantly

seized and dragged into the canoe. So locked were they with their death grip of each other, that considerable force had to be used to part them.

Rupert ordered the canoes ashore, had a fire lighted, administered brandy, bled and chafed the apparently drowned brother; had hot stones applied to his spine, armpits, and feet, and used every means in his power for an hour, when to the astonishment of all present returning animation became apparent, and finally the man recovered. Bernard was from his wrestling powers stiled "Big Bear," and Rupert was now stiled "White Wonder," for the Indians fully believed he had raised a dead man to life, ascribing miraculous power to his skill and the efficacy of the flask of pale brown liquid.

On a fine frosty morning the last stage of the eventful voyage was commenced, and by noon the three canoes came in sight of Fort Cornwall, and were immediately perceived by those on watch, the flag being hoisted to welcome their arrival.

Mr. Doone came down to the landing stage to meet his long absent boys, and before they spoke a word saw by the expression on their faces that something of a startling nature had occurred.

They walked up to the house together, and there related the sad fate of their uncle and the crew of *The Hunter*. Mr. Doone was dumbfounded; the death of Captain Rose came upon him with terrible severity, and left him and his family in a peculiarly awkward predicament.

The Captain and he had come out to the wilds of Western America to trade together as partners for a couple of years, and now, on the very threshold of their career, both ship and partner had been taken from him, leaving him and his family upon an island, surrounded by

savage men, who might at any moment turn upon him and his family and exterminate them. No means of flight was left them, as although ships might at long intervals pass the mouth of the Umpqua, not one by the merest chance ever entered the river.

A long, wild winter was before them, and they were not at all used to roughing it; neither were they used to the manners and customs of their friendly but savage neighbours, whose enmity they might incur by some simple act of omission, as easily as by the commission of something distasteful to them.

"Now, dad," said Rupert, with eyes which spoke of hope and the confidence of youth, "I think you take a much too sombre view of our case. Why, really, we are not so badly off after all. We have a very strong position on this island, a good house, stores, and a substantial little fort; provisions and water are plentiful, and so far, both the Clatsops and Klamaths have proved themselves very friendly and useful to us, and why should they ever be otherwise?"

"I, for one," chimed in Bernard, his clear blue eyes sparkling with health, "vote them a jolly set of fellows; you should have seen them pitch into those horrid Diggers and chastise them for us; and look at the long canoe voyage they undertook at your suggestion, without any thought of reward; why I should not mind trusting myself anywhere, either on sea or land, with them, neither, I am sure, would Rupert."

"Not I," answered his brother; "in fact this winter I hope to have some big hunts with them for elk and grizzlies if father will spare me."

"Well, boys, things may turn out brighter than they appear to me just now, and certainly our position might

be worse; at all events, we are comfortably housed and want for nothing, so we must not meet possible trouble half way."

"Come, William," Mrs. Doone soothingly remarked, "you must not take my poor brother's death so much to heart, Ruth and the boys and myself are still left to your care; and as the boys say, brighter days may yet be in store for us, so cheer up, dear husband, for their sakes and mine!"

But Mrs. Doone's face belied her words, for as she spoke the tears welled in her eyes, and coursed down her cheeks, as she thought of the terrible death of her beloved and only brother.

Ruth sat at her father's side with her head pillowed on his breast; and altogether the family gathering was a very sad one.

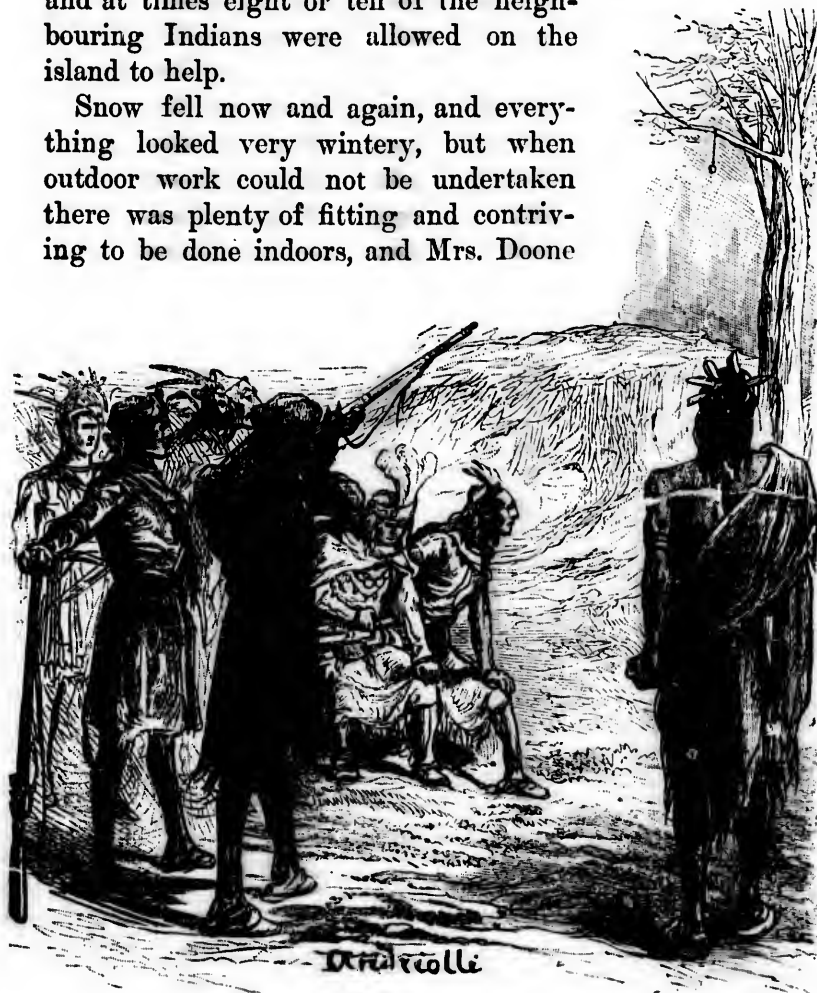
For a long time no one spoke, each appeared absorbed with his or her own thoughts, till, with the vigour and brightness of youth, Rupert broke the silence.

"Now, dad, let us try and forget our sorrow by employing our minds and our energies. Let us finish our buildings and the fort and stockade, making ourselves snug and secure for the winter. There are yourself and 'Chips,' and the two seamen, and Bernard and I, besides Simola and the two Mandan Indians—nine in all; strong and hearty, except Freeman (whose wounds will, however, soon have healed), and surely if any disturbance took place with our neighbours, we could with our muskets and cannon hold our own against any odds! Still, we will not talk of that, though we must always be prepared for emergencies.

"Come, let us set to work and finish the house and fort, then the men's house, and lastly the stores."

Accordingly, on fine days everyone worked with a will, and at times eight or ten of the neighbouring Indians were allowed on the island to help.

Snow fell now and again, and everything looked very wintery, but when outdoor work could not be undertaken there was plenty of fitting and contriving to be done indoors, and Mrs. Doone



THE BOYS ASSIDUOUSLY PRACTISED SHOOTING.

and Ruth in their departments were as busy as the men. To help them, three or four young squaws were regularly

engaged at the fort, sewing, making, mending, washing, and cooking; for Mrs. Doone soon made them understand what was required of them, and taught them how to do many things, especially to braid their raven hair without using fish oil!

In the long evenings Simola acted as schoolmaster, teaching the white men the Klamath language, and a chosen few of the Klamaths were taught English.

The boys assiduously practised shooting, and would sometimes give an exhibition of their skill before the Clatsops, their old chief being particularly fond of witnessing them hit any small article suspended from the branch of a tree, with a single bullet. Both Rupert and Bernard became so expert that they could send a bullet through a soft leather ball about the size of a man's fist, hanging from a branch at fifty yards' distance, three times out of four.

Thus the days went pleasantly by, till nearly Christmas, and nothing of any moment occurred, except petty quarrels among the Indians, which their chiefs quickly decided and adjusted.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Novel Means of Signalling.—The Remnants of a Crew.—A Tragic Story.—A Peaceful Beginning ends in a Kick.—A Threat of Revenge.—Danger Apprehended.—The Chief gives a Signal.—A Fearful Fight against Odds.—Death of both Red and White Chiefs.—A Dash for Life.—The White Man's Revenge and Heroic Death.

ONE bright frosty day towards Christmas, one of those clear, cold, healthy days, with a serene blue sky and keen air which brought the colour to the faces of the white men, and made the Indians anxious to go on the hunting path, a commotion was observed in the Klamath village, where a great bustle was taking place. Rupert and Bernard, who were on the island, signalled over to Simola, who was among the Klamaths, "What is amiss?"

This was done by means of flags and two copies of an English dictionary; one at the fort and the other in a box by the Klamath flagstaff. A box, by the way, which appeared so uncanny to the Indians, that they never approached it very closely. The volume they called "the talking papers."

The mode of signalling was very simple, being accomplished in this manner:

First, flags were used to indicate the page in which the word could be found. Thus 1—6—3 denoted the number of the page. Next the number of the word from the top of the column was indicated, and as there were two

columns, if the flags were hoisted straightway to the mast-head it was indication of the *first* column, but if on their way to the truck they were dipped it meant *column two*.

Small words were omitted; thus the question under notice, What is amiss? was signalled "What amiss," *is* being understood. This signal saved a pull or paddle of half-a-mile across the swift flowing river.

The startling answer signalled was:

"White men arrived."

Mr. Doone and Bernard quickly leaped into the boat with the two sailors, and pulled across to the Klamath camp, and upon landing were hurried off to the chief's lodge, where, to their surprise, they found three haggard, exhausted white men, reclining by the side of the big fire of logs which burned in the centre of the wigwam.

They were so exhausted that they could scarcely speak, and so much altered in appearance, that Mr. Doone and his son did not recognise them as having formed part of the crew of *The Hunter*, but such they were. The boatswain Polton, a sailor named Pendrick, and the young mate Robert Belton (who with his apparently charmed life had again escaped death by a miracle) were the sole survivors of the hapless crew.

They were too weak to be moved, so Mr. Doone sent stores from the fort, and visited them twice a day for three days, by which time they were sufficiently recovered to be able to leave the lodge of the kind old chief, Sekkona, and cross over to the fort.

Once among their white friends they picked up wonderfully, and as Fleming, the carpenter, remarked, "You could see them aswelling visibly before the naked eye." So one might almost have done, for the skeleton frames put on flesh at a great rate, but of course long before this

time Belton had told his story, and we will here recapitulate the principal portion of it from the time *The Hunter* sailed from the island.

“On leaving Fort Cornwall, we dropped steadily down with the tide to the mouth of the river, and moored there for the night; proceeding next morning southward along the coast, visiting the farthest agent in due course, and trading with the Indians for peltries; and so we came back northward, staying for a day or two at likely places for trading. At length we came to a very pretty bay, at the head of which we discerned smoke arising from several fires, denoting the presence of Indians, and that suggested *trade*; so we anchored for the night, and at daybreak sent the boat into the bay to take soundings; but directly it rounded the high rocks, the Indians caught sight of it, and soon surrounded it with their canoes. They appeared very peaceable fellows, although noisy, and curious to a degree.

“Some were allowed aboard *The Hunter*, and by means of signs, and sounding with a long ash pole, they showed us that there was plenty of water, even at the sides of the haven, which was most beautiful in its surroundings, even at this time of the year; in the summer months it must be a veritable fairyland. The trees hang quite over the cliffs and cast their reflections in the smooth sea water, and the rocks are festooned and covered with pretty creeping plants, which, when in full bloom, must look very beautiful indeed.

“Captain Rose was on deck, and on the chief, named Bun-de-pah, being introduced to him, they shook hands in the European fashion, for somehow these Diggers have learned how to bid a white man welcome in his own style; and after a present of refreshment to the principal men,

it was intimated that the Captain was willing to trade with the natives.

"The natives signified their willingness to barter their peltries and furs, and a couple of canoes were dispatched to the village to bring back an assortment.

"In a short time they returned, and the Captain ordered a collection of goods to be spread on deck; blankets, tin-ware, knives, fish-hooks, paints, and mirrors, were all there in great variety.

"They were duly inspected by the savages, but not a stroke of business was done, for the Diggers proved to be very Jews in their dealings, and required twice or thrice the value of the peltries which they brought on board, which were the commonest and worst skins they possessed, reserving the better kinds for subsequent barter.

"Captain Rose endured the impudence of the savages for a long time, till at last, wearied with such lengthy wrangling, he took a musty old deerskin which Bun-de-pah offered him and banged it about the old fellow's ears, and finally expedited his descent into his canoe with a good hearty kick in the rear.

"The old chap was beside himself with passion, and went off breathing terrible threats of vengeance upon the white men generally, and their chief in particular.

"I did not like the look of matters at all, and begged the Captain to up anchor and put to sea, for the savages out-numbered us ten to one, besides, there was little business to be done with such a horde of Shylocks.

"The Captain only laughed, and pointing to the four cannon and the arm chest, expressed an opinion that he could mow the naked savages down like wheat if they ventured on his deck without his consent.

"Towards evening I renewed my entreaties for him to

leave the haven, but in vain, he only asked me not to mention such a cowardly thing to him again, and finding that he was getting very angry with me I left him and went below.

“On the following morning at dawn, while the Captain and I were still asleep, a canoe came alongside steered by the old chief, Bun-de-pah, who had apparently swallowed his humiliation, and signified his wish to do business with the Captain on his own terms, as he thought that after all, the white chief, as he styled Captain Rose, would know more about prices than he did.

“The second mate who had charge of the deck watch told him he could not wake the Captain yet, as he went to bed very tired. The savages were content to wait, and, as they appeared to be unarmed, were allowed to come on deck. Another canoe presently succeeded the first, the occupants of which were also permitted on deck.

“By-and-by other canoes surrounded the ship, and the Indians began to climb aboard on all sides, which caused the mate to become alarmed, and fearing that treachery was abroad, he called the Captain and myself.

“Sailors do not take long to perform their toilettes, and accordingly, in two minutes, we were both on deck among the thronging savages. The interpreter came up to me and whispered that he was afraid that the short cloaks of skin which many of the natives had donned, were simply worn for the purpose of concealing weapons of some kind.

“Hearing this, I approached the Captain and urged him to clear the ship and get away; but although he had at first made light of my advice, he quickly noticed the increasing number of canoes around the ship, and began to scent danger. Thereupon he ordered some of the crew to

heave up the anchor, while others were sent aloft to shake loose the sails preparatory to sailing.

"Bun-de-pah at this change of front offered to barter skins with the Captain, prompted, apparently, by the speedy departure of the ship, and a hurried trade was accordingly commenced. The principal articles bargained for by the savages were knives and axes, and in a very short time every savage was armed with one or the other.

"The anchor was now nearly apeak, the sails hung from the yards, and in a loud and authoritative voice the Captain ordered the ship to be cleared of the redskins.

"A peculiar cry was at this moment given by the dusky chief, which was evidently a preconcerted signal, for immediately a yell went up on every side, and the savages, brandishing war-clubs and knives, made a sudden rush upon their marked victims.

"The first who fell was Johnson, the clerk, who, while leaning over a bale of blankets bargaining for a pair of worked moccasins, was stabbed in the back, and, staggering to his feet, fell with a crash down the companion stairs.

"The sailmaker, who was sitting on the taffrail, sprang to his feet, but was immediately knocked backwards into the water over the stern, when the men guarding the canoes quickly killed him with their paddles as he endeavoured to swim ashore.

"Captain Rose in the meantime made a desperate fight against fearful odds. He was, as you know, a powerful and resolute man, but he was unarmed, having come on deck like the rest of us, quite unprepared. Bun-de-pah at the outset singled him out as his own particular prey, and rushed upon him with a formidable tomahawk. The Captain, seeing the turn matters had taken, had time to draw out his large case-knife from the sheath, and with

one terrific blow laid the redskin chief dead at his feet. Seeing this, several of the stoutest warriors attacked the gallant skipper at the same time, but he defended himself with great vigour, and dealt crippling and ripping blows right and left, strewing the quarter-deck with wounded and slain. He shouted to me to try and get to the cabin and procure firearms, but I was fully employed in guarding myself against three yelling demons.

"Seeing that I was quite hemmed in, he started forward himself, fighting his way towards the cabin, but his foes were too numerous for him, and, covered with wounds and faint from loss of blood, he leaned against the mizzen-mast, when a savage from behind dealt him a blow upon the head with a war-club, which brought him to his knees, and thence, another blow laid him prone upon the deck, where he was hacked with knives and thrown overboard.

"Seeing the Captain killed, and all the rest on deck either dead or at the point of death, I killed the two nearest of my foes with a war-club I had picked up, and, dodging the third, made a dash for the shrouds, which I reached safely, and quickly joined the seven men who had been sent aloft to unfurl the sails.

"From aloft the aspect of the deck was terrible: dying and dead men, pools of blood, and broken weapons, covered the white planks from bows to stern, and the sight to us was the more terrible from the fact that we were all unarmed (I had dropped my club when I sprang up the shrouds), and appeared to have no chance whatever of escaping with life.

"Our only hope of saving either our lives or the ship was to descend the rigging suddenly, and make a desperate dash for the cabin, where we could arm ourselves and

soon clear the deck of the redskins. At a given signal we proceeded to let ourselves down the running rigging, but, alas, the attempt was only partially successful, for one poor fellow fell in the attempt, and was immediately dispatched; another received a mortal stab in the back as he was descending, and a third, Dick Day, the armourer, was clubbed just as he was going down the hatchway.

"The other four of us reached the cabin safely, where we found the clerk, Johnson, still alive, but mortally wounded. We quickly barricaded the cabin door, cut holes through the top panels, and, as quickly as we could load them, fired the muskets among the thronging savages, who quickly vacated the deck and tumbled helter-skelter into their canoes.

"Having so far rid the ship of our fierce antagonists, we cast loose the deck guns, which were loaded, and fired among the retreating canoes with such effect that we sunk one and cut another completely in two; probably we did not kill or hurt many of the occupants, as the water was all alive with black heads making rapidly for the shore.

"We loaded one gun with nails, but it is doubtful if the charge did much execution among the natives, as, by the time the gun was fired, the range was too great. Many having arrived on shore had hidden among the rocks, but the number of carcasses floating in the haven told its tale of carnage.

"During the day not an Indian was seen afloat, their respect for our guns being too great; neither were we molested during the ensuing night as we anticipated we should have been.

"Of all our crew of eighteen, only we four and the interpreter remained alive, and he was with the Diggers

on shore, not as a prisoner but as a friend ; and it was from this man that I gained my knowledge of what transpired after we left the ship, in the longboat (about an hour before daylight). I will tell you what happened as near as I can in his own words, premising the story by stating that Johnson, the clerk, knowing death was upon him, refused to quit the ship.

“ When the day dawned *The Hunter* still lay at anchor in the bay, her unfurled sails flapping idly in the wind ; this the Indians did not expect, as they apprehended that the ‘big canoe’ would have sailed away in the night. After a time, as no one appeared on deck, one or two canoes stole out to reconnoitre, and as no one showed themselves upon *The Hunter*, they grew bolder, and took the interpreter in the largest canoe to parley with the palefaces.

“ Circling round the ship, they paddled their canoes nearer and nearer, till, when quite close alongside, poor Johnson made his appearance on deck, more dead than alive. He made signs of peace, and invited them aboard, but it was a long time before they ventured to comply.

“ At length two or three bold fellows climbed up the forechains and gained the deck, only to find that the clerk had gone below again. A signal was now given, and other canoes were urged forward, keen upon boarding and plundering the prize, so that the decks were soon cumbered with savages all intent on plunder. Many were on the sides of the vessel, and a great many alongside in the war canoes, when, without the least warning, with a loud roar the vessel blew into a thousand pieces. Arms, legs, trunks and heads hurtled through the air, and dreadful havoc was made in the surrounding canoes.

“ The interpreter, who was at the forepart of the ship,

and consequently at the opposite end to that at which the explosion actually occurred, was thrown into the water, having sustained but little injury.

“According to his statement the bay presented a dreadful spectacle after the explosion, and but little of the ship remained, and that little took fire and drifted towards the shore, where it grounded and burnt itself out. The bay was covered with fragments of the vessel and of the canoes; and, while some of the Indians swam madly for the shore, others, struggling in their death agonies, screamed and sank for ever. Those who were near the shore, and had escaped death or injury, were aghast and stupefied at the extent of the catastrophe, and with frantic haste landed and hid themselves.

“Upwards of a hundred were killed outright, and many more horribly mutilated. The lamentations and wailing in the village was indescribable, and what had one day been a community of two hundred and fifty warriors, could not on the next muster one hundred.

“Such was the tragic and heroic death of Johnson, the clerk, who acted the part of an avenger, and perished amid a holocaust of his savage enemies.”

CHAPTER XIV.

Escape in the Longboat.—A Terrible Sea.—A Sad Predicament.—A Cave Sanctuary.—Fire from a Pistol.—The Dead Seal.—The Interpreter's Death.—The Tramp Commenced.—A Cudgel brings Food.—Lost in the Wilderness.—Despair.—Red Men to the Rescue.—Home!

RESUMING his narrative Belton said :

“When we left the ship's side, it being still dark, we steered for the open sea, intending, if possible, to make our way northward along the coast, till we reached the Umpqua River. However, we were doomed to terrible disappointment, for directly we rounded the headland we found such a sea running that we dare not venture upon it, neither dare we return to the bay, as we should assuredly fall into the hands of the Diggers, who would torture us in some diabolical manner before finally slaughtering us.

“We gradually drifted southward, being momentarily in peril of being swamped, but managed to edge in nearer to the shore, till we were about three miles along the coast. Fearing we should ship a sea and founder, we agreed to attempt a landing—a most hazardous thing to do, but we had really no other choice.

“All went well till we were within a couple of hundred yards of the shore, when a following sea pooped the boat and sank her, rolling us out over the bows as she went down.

“Fortunately we were all fair swimmers, but near the

shore the breakers were a perfect chaos, and swimming was out of the question; we could only struggle amid the foaming, rolling tow of the broken billows till we were all presently thrown on shore.

“Polton and Pendrick were able to scramble above high-water-mark, but I was so exhausted and full of water that I could not stand or walk to save myself, even after the send of the wave had driven me ashore, and although I frantically dug my toes and fingers into the yielding sand, in an endeavour to anchor myself as it were against the back-tow, I could not gain sufficient hold to prevent myself being again torn back by the rush of water, and hurled once more into the sea.

“I was now so spent that I gave myself up for lost, when a friendly billow caught me, and with incredible swiftness hurled me once more on shore, when Polton and Pendrick seized me and dragged me safely above the whirl and strife of the seething sea.

“Then I fainted.

“Recovering after a long period of unconsciousness, I inquired for Tremanny, the cook, the fourth of our party. My friends pointed to a heap of seaweed in the corner of the cave in which we were located.

“It served as a pall for the body of poor Tremanny, who had been drowned and cast ashore.

“Only we three remained of the crew of the fated *Hunter*. We were in dreadful straits, being without food or water, our clothes saturated with brine, and we knew neither whither to go nor what to do, besides which the weather was very cold and inclement. We were in fear the Indians might discover us, and if they did a fearful death would certainly await us.

“We passed the day in gathering together pieces of

driftwood which had been cast up at different times by the sea, with which to make ourselves dry sleeping places of some kind on the higher rocks at the far end of the dripping cave, and, taking off our sodden garments, hung them up to dry, keeping ourselves warm as best we could, for we had no means of obtaining a light to kindle a fire, or rather were not aware of it till late in the afternoon, when Polton suddenly asked me if the pistol I had in my pocket was loaded.

“I could not but help smile at his query, remembering that the pistol, although loaded, had been in my pocket during my swim. I told him it was loaded, but that the powder would be quite wet, and the weapon therefore useless for defence.

“‘Yes, yes; I know that,’ said he; ‘but we can obtain a light with it, and when it is quite dark make a fire, dry our clothes, and warm ourselves, which will be at least comforting.’

“We drew the charge of powder, and, with a strip of my shirt, made a kind of slow match, and hung it up to dry, joyful at our anticipation of a fire during the night: the smoke by day would probably have betrayed our whereabouts.

“Our chief concern was now for food; water we obtained from a rill which trickled down the rocky side of the cave, and, forming a pool, brimmed over and lost itself seaward in the sand.

“Our slow match and the flint of my pistol gave us the desired means of kindling a fire, and while one kept guard at the mouth of the cave the others slept. A pile of sand was gathered together near the fire for the purpose of smothering it should any signs of an approaching enemy be heard or seen.

“Morning found us in a famished state, and we spent the next day in making some rough traps from wood and strips of our clothing, intending to set them a little way inland after dark, to endeavour to catch some small animals to provide us with sustenance during our tramp to Fort Cornwall, which, by following the coast, we hoped to succeed in doing.

“During the day a dead seal was washed ashore near the mouth of the cave, but we dare not go out and bring it in before dark for fear of being discovered. We gazed upon the seal as upon a great treasure, for it meant to us food, and probably life.

“We were tantalised with two fears as we eagerly watched the waves playing with it; one was that the sea, which had given it to us, might as easily snatch it away, and the other that if we did secure it after dark it might be in a state unfit for human food.

“Darkness appeared to be a long time setting in that night, but we waited and waited patiently till it had quite closed in, and then I ventured forth and drew the great creature to my comrades in the cave. As Providence would have it, it was perfectly fresh, and, as we each possessed our jack-knives, we soon skinned it and cut it up. The blubber we used as fuel, and the flesh we cut into thick steaks, and hung on slips of wood to cook for food.

“We had tasted no food for about fifty-five hours, and could not wait for the meat to be cooked, but ever and anon helped ourselves to portions that appeared cooked, or rather, less raw than the bulk. We ate the horrid semi-raw seal flesh with avidity, and I may almost say, relish; and when we could eat no more for that meal, we cooked about twenty pounds for future use. This took us far into the night, and we sat in council while the meat was cooking.

“During the next day we were to prepare ourselves for flight during the ensuing night, and intended to sleep as much as possible, so as to gain vigour for our long tramp.

“During the early morning we were alarmed to hear the sound of guns being fired, and, after listening some time, surmised that the Diggers must have been quarrelling among themselves, or else trying the muskets they had obtained from the ship.

“We remained within the cave in great fear, and all was quiet till late in the afternoon, when we saw a man coming along the beach towards us, keeping in the shadow of the cliff where it was practicable. He appeared very feeble, and occasionally staggered as if he would fall. To our astonishment we soon made him out to be the Interpreter. No one else was in sight, and when he was within a hundred yards of the mouth of the cave he seated himself on a rock as if his strength was spent, and loosing his shirt in front commenced to bathe his breast, by which we took it that he had been wounded.

“He seemed in such sorry plight that at last my humanity overcame my fear, and creeping stealthily along by the cliffs, I approached and silently motioned him to follow me. He staggered to his feet, and when he reached me I assisted him to the cave, where we attended to his wound and gave him some water; the seal meat he would not touch.

“Poor fellow, his hours were numbered, and even to speak was a great effort to him, his wound having evidently injured his lungs. He told us of the fate of *The Hunter*, and of the explosion causing the death of scores of the savages, but what surprised us most was the news that a couple of canoes had arrived in the Bay that morning, containing Rupert and Bernard Doone, some other white men, and about forty Indians. It was the

firing of this party we had heard, and had we only have known we could have returned to the Bay and you would have taken us back to Fort Cornwall. It was now too late for us to think of venturing back to the Bay, as the interpreter told us the canoes had gone northward a short time after thrashing the redskins.

“On interrogating the poor fellow, it appeared that he had not shown himself to the white men, for fear they might imagine he was an accomplice of the Diggers in their attack on the ship; neither had he a real opportunity, for the Diggers watched him closely as if suspecting that he had by some means brought the two canoes upon the scene.

“Finally, when the attack took place, one of the Diggers, suspecting him of treachery, had plunged his knife into his breast, leaving him for dead. He only recovered consciousness in time to see the two large canoes putting to sea. He followed to the shore, but failing to attract attention from the receding vessels, had, not knowing whither to bend his steps, staggered towards our cave. An hour after this recital vomiting of blood commenced, and soon the poor fellow succumbed. We buried him in a hole dug in the sand, close to our old comrade who was lost in the attempt to swim ashore.

“We waited patiently in our cave until we reckoned the Diggers had retired for the night, and then, each with a thick cudgel cut from the driftwood, and a good supply of cooked seal flesh, started for Fort Cornwall. Our little wooden traps we left behind unvisited, so cannot say if any foolish animals were caught in the clumsy contrivances, or no.

“Less than an hour brought us to the entrance to the haven, where lay the blackened bones of *The Hunter*, and

from the beach we could see the watch fires of the remnant of the Diggers, who had returned after you had paddled away to sea. We dare not approach their camp, for fear of watchful sentries, but slinging our provision of seal flesh round our necks, plunged into the cold sea, and swam across to the opposite point, a distance of about five hundred yards. We all reached the shore safely, but had to help Polton for the last hundred yards, as having a larger share of seal meat than we, it floated about his neck and face and impeded his movements. Polton is endowed with a voracious appetite, which renders him capable of consuming as much as two ordinary men; thus it nearly came to pass that his big appetite cost him his life.

“Being safely across, we made the best of our way northward over the rock-strewn beach, trotting whenever we came to an open stretch of sand, partly to keep ourselves warm, and partly to put as many miles as possible between ourselves and the Diggers, who, if they saw our footprints, might follow and track us down.

“Walking in wet clothes we found dreadful work, as the salt water chafed our limbs to such an extent as to excoriate the skin in many places. Resting at times, we kept pegging away till dawn, when we lighted a fire between some rocks, by means of the pistol and slow match, the latter of which I bound round my head when swimming in the inlet. Here we dried our clothes, had a hearty meal, rested for nearly three hours, which greatly refreshed us, and about ten o'clock we started north again.

“By the next night, we reckoned ourselves safe from pursuit, and found comfortable quarters in a woody dell near the shore. Our meat was all consumed on the second

day, and we began to feel very tired and weary, so much so, that we decided to attempt a short cut by taking a N.E. route across the interior, instead of making the much longer, but more certain, journey along the coast, and up the Umpqua River. Our rash decision, however, almost proved fatal, for during the next four days we travelled over country of the worst description, trackless and tangled; we had frequently to make long detours to avoid almost impenetrable forest, and rocky chasms.

"It rained on two or three days, and we quite lost ourselves, and, being foodless, began to despair of seeing white faces again, when, by a lucky shot with his cudgel, Pendrick happened to break the leg of a small deer, as it rushed past us at a distance of a few yards. Then, although on three legs, we had much trouble in catching the animal, but when we did we killed and skinned it, drinking its blood, and eating the flesh raw, as our craving for food was such that we could not bring ourselves to wait while it was being cooked.

"I expected we should all have been ill after such a ghoulish meal, but the contrary was the case, for we felt wonderfully refreshed. We stripped the bones, and put the meat in the deer skin, taking turns to carry it, but on the third day after killing the animal, the meat was all eaten, and again hungry and hopeless, we stumbled onward, scarcely knowing whither. We were now completely lost.

"Day after day passed, and except for an occasional snake, and two squirrels, we had nothing to eat but bark, and at last Pendrick informed us he could go no further; Polton also gave in, saying we might as well die there, as a few miles further on. We were completely lost in the forest, and I, like the others, thinking it was no use to

struggle further against fate, sat down on a fallen tree to await death. Our clothes hung in rags about us, and our bodies were by this time reduced to skeletons, and as Pendrick and Polton lay on the sward beside me, they looked so still, and thin, and white, that I looked upon them as dead men.

"I sat some time ruminating whether to push forward without them, as I still had strength enough to stagger onward, or stay and die with them, when from behind a tree an Indian stepped forth, and with bent bow and notched arrow approached us. I held up my hands to show I was unarmed, and felt so shaken at the sight of the native, that my strength failed, and I fell backward over the log on which I sat.

"When I came to, my friends were sitting on the ground eating, while on all sides we were surrounded by the swarthy faces of Indians, who, by their leathern dresses, we knew were not Diggers.

"They gave me food; some dried salmon and bear meat, of which I consumed a small quantity. Feeling a little revived, I made out from their signs that they were friends, and would take us to some white men, who lived a few miles off. They were a hunting party, and took it in turns to carry us, pick-a-back, up to their camp, from which, across the water (our eyes could scarcely believe the sight), we beheld Fort Cornwall, with the dear old Union Jack waving above it!

* * * * *

"That, Mr. Doone, is the history of our troubles since we parted from you at the beginning of November."

Ruth and Mrs. Doone, did all they could for the poor fellows, and when Christmas Day arrived no one enjoyed the merry time more than Belton, Polton and Pendrick.

CHAPTER XV.

The Tenants of the Fort.—A Western Hurricane.—The Bidarkie Over-
set.—Doones to the Rescue.—Two Clatsops Drowned.—A Strange
Burial.—Constructing a Bidarkie.—Felling a Giant Tree.—Some
Artistic Carving and Weird Painting.

THERE were now quite a strong party of whites in residence at the Fort, and perhaps it will be as well to refresh our memories with their names. They were—Mr. Doone, his wife, daughter, and two sons; Belton, the mate; Fleming, the carpenter; Polton and Pendrick, Freeman and Adams; eleven in all. Besides these were Simola, the half-breed, and the two Manaidan Indians, Ra-pa-tal and Bar-me-no, who, for some reason, had wandered several hundred miles from their home.

These were the occupants of the Fort, but during the day several Clatsops or Klamaths and their squaws found either employment at, or received permission to be at the Fort.

During early winter the buildings were finished, and when the weather proved propitious, hunting parties were formed to make expeditions with the Indians. These parties were accompanied by four white men on each occasion, never more nor less, as Mr. Doone considered five white men quite few enough to remain for the defence of the Fort, in case of sudden surprise.

The store sheds, altogether, contained rather a fine collection of furs, and the Indians were constantly overhaul-

ing them to see that they were in good preservation. Some had been collected on the voyage up the coast, some bartered from the Clatsops and Klamaths, and a fine haul made from the Diggers, and brought up in the two long canoes.

During the winter the boys thoroughly enjoyed themselves among their Indian friends, and we will now see how they occupied their time.

One day in January the sky became very overcast, and the thermometer was low—some 40 degrees—scarcely low enough for snow, yet there was a peculiar stillness in the air, which portended that something out of the common was about to happen. The birds understood the strange light and the calm atmosphere, and hurried away to shelter in the forest.

“What is the matter, Simola?” asked Bernard, “are we going to have snow, or why is the sun so hidden?”

“No snow,” replied the half-breed, “but big wind, great wind from sea. Wind pull up tree and wigwam like feather.”

An hour went by, during which the darkness dispersed, and then a sighing wind crept up from the sea, followed by a booming noise in the distance.

Everything had been made snug at the Fort, and the wigwams of the Indians on either side of the river, which were not in sheltered places, were struck, and the poles laid over rocks, the covering skins placed over them, and then great stones laid upon them to hold all firm. Under these rude shelters the Indians with their squaws and children crept to await the storm, for they knew from experience what was approaching.

They had not long to wait, for with a sudden blast it swept down the valley of the river with a loud rumbling

like thunder, and the rain poured down with a heavy rush, and in such torrents as we in England never see. It came down steadily for a few moments, then, suddenly the wind would take it and beat it down so fiercely upon the river that the water appeared to boil. The trees bowed to the blast, losing limbs and branches here and there, which were snapped off and sent whirling into the river.

The hurricane came in such palpable form that each shock made the log buildings of the Fort tremble, and greatly alarmed Ruth and her mother; but Mr. Doone assured them of the strength of the buildings, and, having faith in his knowledge and words, their fear was somewhat allayed.

The flag-pole, which stood in an unsheltered position, rocked greatly, and then suddenly snapped off two feet from the ground. No further damage occurred to alarm the tenants of the Fort for a long time, but how it fared with their neighbours they could not tell, as the deluge of rain formed an impenetrable curtain at no great distance from the Fort.

At midday, just as dinner was announced, a tremendous gust of rushing wind took the great wooden gates of the Fort and wrenched them from their hinges, but no one dare venture out to secure them, so violent was the storm.

The waters of the Umpqua towards evening rose so much that the isthmus was covered, and the island completely isolated from the mainland.

The storm at length spent its strength, and all in the Fort retired thankfully to bed.

At daylight the wind had died completely away, but the rain had not ceased, although it was much less in volume. The boys climbed into the upper room of the bastion to take a look around, and to their surprise they

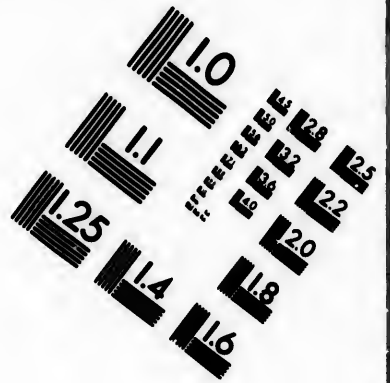
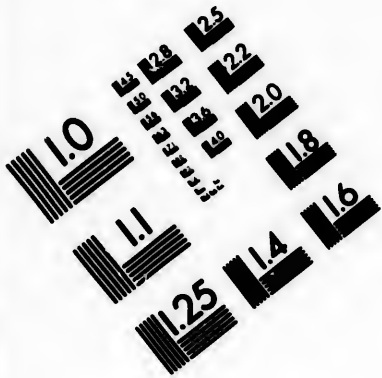
saw one of the Clatsop bidarkies making for the island. It was managed with consummate skill, and the great tree bolls and branches floating in the river avoided in a most masterly manner. Rupert called to his father to come up, which Mr. Doone did, very pleased to see the friendly redskins coming to pay him a visit, probably to ascertain if any damage had been done to the buildings by the storm, and if so to offer their aid in setting matters right.



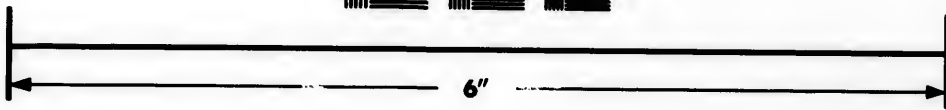
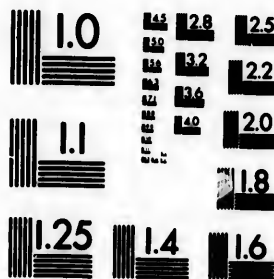
THE CLATSOP CANOE WAS COMPLETELY SMASHED.

While he was speaking to the boys, and when the canoe was within fifty yards of the landing-place, or where the landing had been (for it was completely demolished by the rushing, *debris*-laden river), the Clatsop canoe was completely smashed in by an immense fir-tree, which dashed against it with the force of a battering-ram, while the paddles were avoiding a tangle of big boughs and other floating dangers.





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The dozen Indian occupants of the bidarkie were immediately thrown into the water, and began to strike out in various directions. The three Doones, shouting to the other members of the Fort, seized coils of rope and rushed to the rescue. Three of the Clatsops had seized hold of the log which had caused the accident, another had clambered upon the mass of floating *débris*, and all were being carried seaward in the whirl of rushing flood-water.

The other eight were attempting to reach the island, but the current being so strong they made but little headway. Fastening ropes round their bodies, Bernard, Rapa-tal, and Bar-me-no were soon in the water, the shore ends of the ropes being grasped by Mr. Doone, Rupert, and others, and paid out so that the swimmers could reach the struggling men. Then each having securely seized his man, they were quickly drawn safely to land.

Again the trio entered the water, and after a great struggle, during which extra ropes had to be bent on, three more Clatsops were safely landed.

Both rescued and rescuers were now completely exhausted, and the ropes being unfastened, Rupert and Simola attempted the saving of the other two fast tiring Indians who, instead of nearing the island, were steadily losing ground from the force of the current.

Longer ropes were procured, but the whirling tide had swept the poor Clatsops beyond the grasp of their would-be rescuers, and the drifting, broken branches so impeded their movements that they were presently drowned before the eyes of their rescued comrades and the white men.

Rupert and Simola were drawn ashore in an exhausted condition, having sustained many contusions while struggling to the help of the redskins.

The Klamaths had witnessed the catastrophe and could

be seen running down the opposite bank of the river, bent on aiding the men who were drifting down towards the sea. Two of the Clatsops had mounted the fir log and were using branches as paddles, the other, who had probably been injured, hanging on behind like a human rudder.

Just before rounding the bend of the river the log had been navigated so close to the bank that the Klamaths were seen to throw hide ropes to the men and drag them ashore, witnessing which, those at the Fort sent up loud cheers.

The fourth man, seated on his ark of rubbish, was carried out of sight round the bend, but as the Klamaths were in full pursuit of the unwilling sailor, little fear was entertained for his safety.

During the morning the whole party of Klamaths returned to their village and reported "all well," inferring that all the men had been rescued. It was afterwards found that one of them had had his leg broken; it was the one who hung so grimly to the butt of the floating tree.

The Clatsops recovered the bodies of their comrades a couple of days after the disaster, and the white men, being as a mark of favour invited to the burial, went to witness the ceremony.

The dead Indians were fully dressed in their deer-skin garments, their faces painted, and the bodies each placed in a small canoe. Each corpse was then fully accoutred with bow and arrows, knife, and fishing spear, his paddle placed beside him, and a supply of food stood at his head, that he might not starve while on his way to the "happy hunting ground."

The friends then took their leave of the poor bedaubed corpses, dropping many little tokens and trinkets of affec-

tion into the canoes, which were each hoisted upon the shoulders of four sturdy men, and a long procession formed.

The wailing and howling of both men and women was incessant, and to the accompaniment of dismal chants, and the monotonous thumping of hide drums, the dead Clatsops were conveyed to their last resting-place. The burial ground was a peculiarly situated rock, which jutted out into the river, some half-mile from the village. It was quite a bold promontory, about sixty feet high, and upon the top of this the canoes were deposited upon stakes driven into the ground, and there left for the immediate relatives to weep over.

It was a very affecting sight to see the old chief of the Clatsops sitting upon a throne-like rock, dressed in full regalia, and with his white locks surmounted by a curious kind of bead and feather crown, blessing the relatives of the dead men before they took their places in the funeral *cortège*. The whole scene was very earnest and impressive.

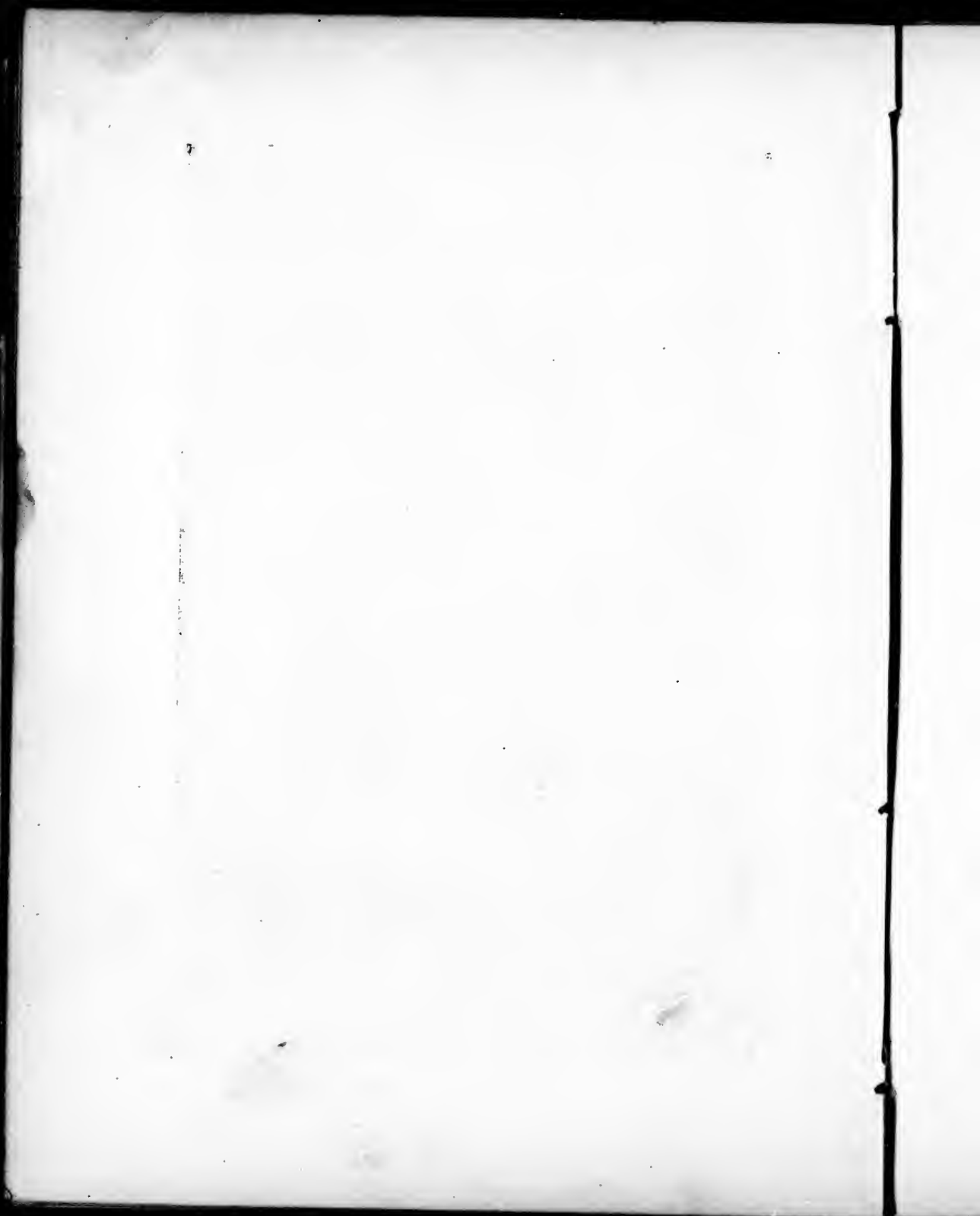
Numerous other sepulchral canoes showed that this was the usual burying-place of the Clatsops. Round these canoes poles were placed, which were festooned with bead and grass trappings, from which depended many trinkets such as Indians love; but so sacred are these burial places held by other tribes, that nothing is ever stolen from them for fear of evil spirits pursuing and punishing the thieves in some way.

For some days after the ceremony, at sunrise and sunset, the relatives of the deceased men would repair to the vicinity of the canoes, singing dirges and giving vent to loud wailings and lamentations, which, heard at a distance, had a very weird effect.

Such was the class of funeral which the white men



BLES-ING THE RELATIVES OF THE DEAD MEN.



attended, and right glad were they to leave the dreadful place, for the exhalations from the numerous defunct redskins did not add purity to the atmosphere, which was tainted for some distance.

A few days after the funeral, the supreme chief of the Clatsops, Kamsla (Oom-pa-na was chief of the Tacon tribe) announced to the boys that his men were about to construct a long canoe, or bidarkie, to replace the lost one, and invited them to stay with him while it was being made, and Mr. Doone's consent having been obtained, the boys went off joyfully to the Clatsop village.

Instead of one, two canoes were constructed, one for sea and another for river work. The former was undertaken first. Going two or three miles inland they came to a place where some very fine pine trees grew, some of those in the rough uplands being majestic with their deciduous foliage, and gigantic in size, reaching upwards of 250 feet in height and of proportionate thickness. One or two patriarchs were probably nearer 300 feet than 200, but these were much too large for the purpose required.

Selecting a fine straight pine of about 120 feet in height and 6 feet in diameter near the ground, the Indians set to work with their hatchets to cut it down. Four men worked at one time at the monstrous trunk, others taking turn in relays, but so great was the task before them that when darkness came the great pine still stood erect, though a deep and broad gash encircled its stately trunk.

Props about twelve or fourteen feet long were now placed all round the base, and the upper ends firmly notched into the thick bark, the lower ends being planted firmly

in the ground so as to support the monarch. Again the Indians plied their axes, this time by torchlight, until the slenderness of the supporting stem made it dangerous to continue, for fear the tree might fall and crush the cutters.

During the day huge heaps of brushwood had been collected, and this was now placed round the boll of the tree, under the props, and when the whole space between the tree and props had been entirely filled, Kamsla applied his torch at various points till the whole pine was a mass of flame.

It was a weird sight to see the Indians—men, women and children—running about in the ruddy glow of fire and torch, which made the near tree stems stand out in bold relief, while those at a little distance looked like great red granite pillars, marking the boundary of an outer world of Erebean darkness.

Everyone gave the wounded tree a very wide berth, but watched the great red tongues writhing round the poles and catching the dry bark many feet up, and making miniature fires in many places, while in dense volumes the white smoke rolled upward among the limbs of the surrounding trees, and hung among the feathery branches in slowly-moving clouds, forming a kind of glowing, ruddy canopy over the onlookers.

After a long wait many of the props burnt through, and then, suddenly, without a moment's warning, the doomed tree gave a nod, and, with a sudden jerk, slipped straight downward into the fire, causing myriads of sparks and much burning *débris* to float aloft; then, with a hissing crash, it fell headlong to the earth, bringing with it boughs and lesser tree-tops, and losing twenty or thirty feet of its own summit as it fell. The Indians set

up a yell as the gigantic spar measured its length on mother earth, for the first part of their task was accomplished—they had obtained their timber.

For the next fortnight, all the able-bodied men and women worked upon the tree-trunk to fashion it into a canoe. Day and night the work never ceased. Fire and axe were plied continually, both being used to form the outer shape and to hollow out the interior.

The boys were very interested to note the skill with which the men built their fires on different portions of the tree-trunk for the purpose of hollowing it out. As soon as the fire had burnt a good-sized hole, it was rolled forward, there to continue its burning, while the spot upon which it had just rested was hacked out with rude axes and knives.

A select party—the artists of the tribe—in the meantime busied themselves in carving what they were pleased to call a bear's head for the prow of the canoe. It was certainly a clever piece of work, and had some grotesque likeness to a grizzly with exaggerated eyes and teeth, and a neck about four feet long lavishly covered with an intricate barbaric pattern.

Hauling the new canoe to the river was a work of great labour, as, for a distance of nearly two miles, a path had to be cut wide enough to take the big rollers upon which the vessel was transported. It was a great success, and floated beautifully, being propelled by twenty paddles, beside a bowman and steersman.

While this great canoe was being made in the forest, another was made in the village by the old men and women. This was for river work, and was about thirty feet long and nearly five wide.

A frame of pliable wood was first put together with

fastenings of deer thongs and sinews, over which long smooth sections of birch bark, which required great care in detaching from the trees, was sewed with long strands of fibre, which the squaws procured from the roots of the spruce trees. When all was properly fastened, every seam and crack was payed over with pine resin, which at certain times of the year exudes from the trees in large quantities.

The canoe was so light that it could be carried on the shoulders of four men, and so strong that when afloat it would carry a cargo of between two and three tons. Eight men formed her crew, a bowman, six middlemen with paddles, and a steersman.

To finish their *Argo* Mr. Doone gave them a pot each of blue, yellow, and red paints, which Rupert applied so artistically that the whole tribe were lost in admiration. He painted eyes and fins and great scales upon it, so that when afloat it looked like some huge, gaudy, marine monster, such as one reads of in fairy tales. The chief was so pleased with the decoration that he gave Rupert a very fine mantle of sealskins as a mark of his appreciation.

CHAPTER XVI.

A Grand Hunting Expedition.—Canoes carried Sixty Miles.—Queer Umbrellas.—Source of the Willamette.—A Callapuya Cemetery.—The Callapuya Village.—A Shot in the Dark.—A Fine Breakfast.—The Ahshta or Bighorn.—Washing Sheep.—A Fall.—The Grizzly Bear described and encountered.—A Novel Weapon.—Flight.—An Uncomfortable Night.—The Bear in his Lair.—The Pit of Death entered.—Bruin's Fight and Defeat.—A Deer Drive.—A Fine Day's Sport.—The Hunt concluded.

IN the early part of March a stir was made in the Clatsop camp, a great hunting party was being formed for a hunt in the Coast Range Mountains, towards the north. The party consisted of Kamsla and nine men, and being on friendly terms with each other, five Klamaths were invited, and gladly joined the party. Belton, Rupert, Bernard, Fleming, and Ra-pa-tal also joined the expedition, which was to be away a month. Kamsla, the leader of the party, was a fine, athletic man, and his very presence relieved Mr. Doone of anxiety for his sons' safety.

The weather was now becoming much milder, with an occasional cold or wet day, but certain signs indicated to the Indians an early and warm spring, as the grass began to grow and the buds of certain shrubs to swell preparatory to bursting into leaf.

Four light canoes were taken, and each man was well armed and provided for sleeping in the open air, bivouac-ing wherever they might happen to be. Each canoe was to carry five persons besides the equipment.

Everyone in both camps turned out to see the party depart, and some of the young bucks tramped the first ten miles with them, carrying the four canoes between them. Four loops of wampum were attached to the gunnels of the canoes, through which the paddles were thrust, and formed capital bearers for the shoulders of four men when travelling. Although twenty feet long and three and a-half feet broad, each canoe only weighed about one hundred pounds, while the impedimenta of weapons, cooking pots, blankets, &c., would bring the weight up to about two hundred and forty pounds; quite enough when it is pointed out that the river they were to paddle upon was nearly sixty miles to the north-east, and the nearest point being its source, they would have to follow the mere brook till it became sufficiently wide and deep to float the light bark canoes.

There were no trails, and in parts scarcely a deer track, so primitive was this land of the lordly pine and craggy sierra. Hills, dales, rocky defiles, forests, ravines and swamps had to be traversed before the Willamette River could be reached, but as time was their own they had no great need to hurry.

Soon after noon the party of young bloods who had accompanied them set out upon their homeward journey, yelling and yelping in their peculiar fashion, and making the woods and rocks ring with their noise. Many children had followed the whole ten miles, some of them not a dozen years old, and now they faced the return ten miles with perfect unconcern, so inured to fatigue from babyhood are these sons of the wilderness.

Rupert and Bernard fairly revelled in the wild life they lived, for the atmosphere of those distant regions was so pure and invigorating that it acted like wine upon the

spirits of the young Englishmen. The same may be said of Belton, for he was but three years Rupert's senior. Fleming, late ship's carpenter, now hunter and trapper, was the comic man of the party, and although on the wrong side of forty, was as lively and hearty as any man in the troop—never tired, always cheery, ready to go anywhere or do anything; such was "Chips."

For three days the party travelled on very happily, carrying their canoes on their shoulders where the ground was level, hauling them up over the rocks when they came to abrupt places, and paddling them over when they came to any of the numerous small lakes among the valleys at the feet of the mountains round which they had to tramp.

Two small deer were killed by Indian arrows, while a fine elk, after being stalked by the boys for a whole morning, escaped, much to the regret of the whole party.

The fourth day was a very wet one; in fact, such a deluge of rain descended that they halted and turned their canoes upside down, forming a square with them, and covered them with pine branches: they made rude but very effective shelter huts.

They were jolly enough in their strange dwellings, and smoking, song singing, and tale telling passed the day away very comfortably. The white men sang a number of sea-songs, with rousing choruses, which greatly delighted the Indians, who in turn sang some of theirs, which Fleming averred had "as much tune in them as the clack of a mill-wheel, while the vigour and fortissimo rendering of some of their refrains would have been enough to deafen the said miller or drive him mad."

Late on the fifth day they encamped by the side of a most beautifully and romantically situated lake, which Kamsla said was the source of the river *Williamette*: it

flowed due north about two hundred and fifty miles before falling into the Columbia River at a distance of about one hundred miles from the sea.

The Willamette was both shallow and narrow for several miles, and abounded in rocks, so it was not till the noon of the sixth day that they were able to launch their canoes with any degree of safety. The heavy rain of the fourth day had caused the river to attain a considerable velocity, so that very little work with the paddles was required, except by the steersman, who had to be very wary lest some rock or partly submerged snag might bring the voyage to an untimely end.

On a high piece of ground, on the left bank of the river, the boys noticed an Indian burying-ground, which they visited. Here the dead were laid to rest in lean-to huts, made of rough logs, in one end of which a hole was left for the purpose of placing food for the deceased, presumably to help to sustain him on his journey to the Happy Valley, where the Indians' paradise is supposed to be. Poles were erected near the head of each grave, and on these hung the decaying remains of trinkets and weapons which had once belonged to the tenants of the graves.

The place of sepulture seemed to have been neglected for many years, but what appeared strange to the boys was the presence of "tombstones." These were slabs of wood or stone, upon which were cut a number of hieroglyphics of heads, hands, weapons, dots, lines, animals, and what-not. These the Indians could read as well as a white man could a book.

Here is one that Bernard noted in his pocket-book. Commencing at top was the figure of a deer upside down, on either side of which were a number of short horizontal lines; next, below, came the head of a bear; then a toma-

hawk with three perpendicular lines to its right, and three fuzzy-looking things on the left, &c., &c.

This was the interpretation of the strange signs.

The deer was the dead man's crest, or *token*, as the Indians call their family badge, and, being inverted, signified the death of the bearer. The horizontal lines denoted war parties led to *actual* combat. The tomahawk and three perpendicular lines pointed to the fact of three wounds having been received. The head of the grizzly showed that the defunct warrior had slain one with his own hand, and the three fuzzy objects were three scalps taken in battle.

What more could a monument in Westminster Abbey tell of a dead warrior than this rudely-carved slab of stone in an Indian grave-ground? It was a bare, truthful epitome of the man's career, without any lying laudation to make the dead man appear more than he really had been.

Some of the graves were very small, and upon peeping into the interior a dog's skull was in most cases seen. These were the graves of infants, and the dog's skull was placed there because the dead child, being so young, could not find its way to the Place of Souls in the Happy Valley; but the dog who can find his way anywhere, even in the dark, could easily guide it to its destination!

To the left of the river rose the towering heights of the Coast Mountains, among which the party intended to hunt. At intervals rivers flowed into the parent stream from between the mountains both right and left, and by-and-by they came to one on the left larger than the rest, up which the canoes were headed, and by night they reached the farthest navigable point of this river, which swelled out into a small lake of twenty or thirty acres in area, above which loomed the grim black form of

a fine mountain, which was one of a range running north and south as far as the eye could reach. The sides of the mountain were covered with trees for some distance up, beyond which, straggling bushes and mossy rocks gradually led to barren peaks.

On high ground, by the bank of the lake, surrounded and sheltered by a wall of rocks, stood an Indian encampment, composed of about twenty lodges, from which roughly-hewn steps led down to the beautifully pellucid water.

Kamslá asked for the chief, who presently came down and invited everyone ashore in a hearty manner, especially the white men, whom he had heard were on the Umpqua. He immediately recognised Rupert and Bernard from the personal description that had reached him from Indians, who had handed it on verbally from one to the other till it had reached his ears. Indian news travels from tribe to tribe very quickly, and here was an instance of personal description being carried from mouth to mouth a distance of at least one hundred miles in a most correct manner. Although Indians are not particularly noted for truth, yet when they convey any intelligence of this kind it is usually done without any embellishment being inserted for the sake of picturesqueness.

Now, suppose the description of a family were conveyed *viva-voce* a hundred miles in England, what would it be like after it had passed from mouth to mouth among a few old gossips? Take the statement, "The Doones are a fine family, father and sons being all six feet in height." No. 2 gossip says, "I hear the Doones are big men, much over six feet." No. 3, "They tell me the Doones are nearly six and a-half feet high." No. 4, "What a fine family the Doones are; somewhere between six and seven feet high, I hear." No. 5, "I am told those giant Doones are all seven feet high," &c., &c. So that, with a few

more transmissions, Gog and Magog would appear children to them.

Leaving the canoes on the lake in custody of the tribe of fishing Indians, the hunters, taking all they required with them, pushed forward on foot to the mountains, which appeared to recede as they advanced. It is a peculiar illusion, that when the atmosphere is very clear, distant elevations look much nearer than is really the case. Although the band walked steadily onward for several hours, the foot of the mountain was still some miles distant when they made their camp-fires for the night.

Four fires were lighted, and after supper everyone turned in early, so as to be up with the eagle in the morning, for in this far country the lark is unknown.

Two men kept watch during the night, tramping round the sleepers in a monotonous circle, one going to the right and the other to the left; being relieved about every two hours.

Towards morning, while it was still quite dark, one of the Indians on guard gently touched Rupert and awoke him, meantime pointing steadily with his finger into the blackness of the night. Rupert, half asleep, blinked and winked, but could see nothing for a minute, but presently he perceived the bright eyes of some animal looking fixedly at him. He knew it was a large animal by the distance apart of the two green, glistening orbs.

Here was a chance that must not be missed.

Kneeling down, he took a long, steady aim with his musket, right between the scintillating eyes, and fired.

On the instant the eyes disappeared, and at the same time both white and red men sprang to their feet in alarm, clutching the weapons which always lie beside their owner when sleeping in the open.

Rupert cried out, "All right, comrades, do not be

alarmed; I have fired at some large animal and fancy I have killed it."

He was about to spring forward to make a rush for the spot where the animal had stood, but Kamsla, seeing his movement, seized him by the arm to restrain him from running into unseen danger.

"No go quick," he said, "perhaps bear no dead; kill white man!"

Kamsla was right; hurry in cases of this kind often leads to fatal results, and as the whole party slowly advanced to the spot pointed out, a great bellowing and hubbub suddenly commenced some fifty yards to the right. Everyone was now fully excited, and many of the Indians rushed to the fire and seized brands, and with them ran forward to ascertain the cause of the disturbance.

It was a fine elk, caught by the antlers between the branches of a low-growing tree. Rupert had fired too low, the bullet taking him in the chest, but the wound appeared very slight, to judge by the tremendous efforts the animal was making to escape from bondage.

Seeing the helplessness of the elk, the Indians closed in with him, and while one gave him a well-directed blow upon the head with a club, which dazed him, another sprang in and cut the throat of the fine fellow, thus securing his hide free from spear and arrow holes.

There was no more sleep that night; the huge deer was skinned, and in half-an-hour juicy steaks were being broiled over the embers, which, when done, formed a most substantial meal, such as men require who have a dozen hours' mountaineering before them.

During the day several herds of deer were seen in the valleys, but too far off for a shot, and they were in no way molested, being reserved for the downward trail.

Their first quest was the Bighorn or Ahsahta, which the boys had heard described as a kind of sheep, but they were agreeably disappointed to find that it was much more in the form of a deer, except its head, which resembled that of a sheep, its horns being twisted lower than its nose. It has short hair, like that of a deer, but of the colour of wool, and its movements very much remind one of a goat, bounding and leaping from the crags with wonderful agility and surefootedness; so much so, that it seems a perfect pleasure for them to seek the most rugged and frightful situations; this is probably for the sake of security both against human beings and wolves.

The Indians consider the flesh a great delicacy, and prefer it to the flesh of any other animal. It must be sought for among its mountain fastnesses at the highest point of vegetation, as it very rarely descends the mountains, except in unusually severe weather during winter.

The swift-footed fellows could be seen high up upon the mountains, peeping over the rocks at their would-be destroyers, and must have enjoyed the panting and puffing of the two-legged beings if they had any sense of pride in their own capabilities, or any vein of humour to laugh at the awkward movements of the human race.

The white men, not being used to mountaineering, soon lost their breath, and their legs trembled with the exertion, so that the Indians gradually outpaced them, and dividing into two parties, made a wide detour, signalling to our heroes to keep where they were.

By this manœuvre the ahsahtas were to a certain extent surrounded, and the Clatsops, crawling behind rocks and scrubby bushes, now and again obtained a shot with their powerful bows, and two or three of the mountain sheep fell to their arrows.

Belton and Bernard saw three ahsahtas grazing on a kind of hanging bank of grass, at the end of a shelf of rock, just wide enough for one person to walk along at a time.

They moved quietly along the rocky ledge, so as to obtain a shot before the animals could bound away.

Presently they came to a spot where they could take aim without being seen, just at the far end of the rocky ledge.

"Take the end one," whispered Bernard, "and I will fire at another." Bang! bang! went the two guns, and an ahsahta fell dead, but the other two immediately sprang towards them, no doubt intending to make for the path, which appeared the only means of getting to or from the green spring herbage upon which they were browsing.

The young men had guessed the intentions of the animals correctly, but in imagining they had only to stand on the path to turn the frightened animals back, they were very much out of their reckoning, for being used to dash across the rocky ledge and up the mountain side on the slightest sound of alarm, they essayed to do the same now.

Away they came, and dashing round the corner, took both Belton and Bernard by surprise, and before either could draw a knife the great horns came sweeping along, and not having room to pass Belton's legs, caught in his trousers; Bernard gave a grab at the animal's head, and then all three lost their balance and fell over the rocky ledge into the valley below.

Luckily the side of the declivity was well covered with shrubby plants, which, while breaking the full force of the fall, were not strong enough to actually stop three such heavy objects, as they came clutching and tumbling

over each other, till they finally plunged into a great bed of nettles at the bottom.

As it happened, Rupert and Fleming, with two or three red men, were witnesses of this *contretemps*, and roared with laughter, vowing afterwards that they could not tell who won the race down hill, for there was such a mixture of arms, legs, boots, and hoofs, men and mutton, that they all appeared to land at the same time.

Bernard found himself cuddling the sheep, who made desperate struggles to escape, and the foothold being precarious the match was very even. The ahsahta did not appear to be hurt in the least, but Bernard was bleeding from mouth and nose, while Belton lay stunned several yards lower down.

Catching sight of his brother running towards him, Bernard held on like grim death, shouting for aid at the top of his voice. The great beast was so strong that he dare not lose his hold to clutch his hunting knife even for a minute, and ever and anon he received a blow from the hoofs of the animal that made him wince again, as the hard pedal integuments came in contact with his shin.

Rupert soon put an end to the struggle by a deep blow with his hunting knife just behind the animal's shoulder. Then, receiving an assurance from Bernard that he was all right, he again burst out laughing at the hardy hunter who had nearly been killed by a baa-lamb, as he called it. His face and shirt were covered with blood from his face and nose, which decoration, added to a countenance stung all over by nettles, made him indeed look a remarkable object.

Fleming and the Indians had, in the meantime, rushed to Belton's assistance, and had found him quite unconscious, but by dashing water in his face they quickly

brought him to. He must have struck his head against a stone in his descent, for there was a large lump upon it which effectually prevented him from wearing his cap for the rest of the day. He felt sick and shaken, but both young men were all the better after a good supper off their dead enemy, followed by a long night's rest.

Thus ended their first day's ahsahta hunting, a somewhat unique and slightly humiliating one, for all had their laugh at them, but being good-tempered fellows they were not a bit put out by it.

The measurements of Bernard's capture were as follows:—Nose to base of tail, 65 inches; length of tail, 5 inches; girth of body, 53 inches; height, 46 inches; the horn 44 inches long and 15 inches in circumference at the base. It was a male, and an unusually fine specimen.

During the succeeding days, animals of various kinds were killed, from the common muskrat to the lordly elk, but no signs of a grizzly had so far been seen, that is, of the animal himself, although there was frequent evidence of his recent presence, both in the discovery of his lair and his huge footprints. As none of the latter were recent, it was no use following them up, especially as they crossed and recrossed in varying directions, which, even to the Indians, would make the trail difficult if not impossible to follow up.

The grizzly bear is the only really formidable animal of these regions, and is the favourite theme of hunters in their nocturnal yarns of adventure among the Rockies. He grows to an enormous size, and makes battle in a terrible manner if closely assailed, only relinquishing the fight at death. If wounded, his rage becomes frantic, and he will pursue his adversary with great spirit and fierceness, and as his speed is greater than that of a man,

the natives either hunt him on horseback, where the nature of the ground permits them to do so, or in his rugged fastnesses set log traps for him with great success.

In attacking he stands on his hind legs, looking a most ferocious monster, and as he can spring several feet, his attack is as deadly as that of any animal in the world.

Woe to the horse or rider who comes within reach of his terrible claws, which are sometimes nine inches long, for they sweep and tear through flesh and bone. His hug is also terrible; one fair hug being enough to kill the strongest man.

He lives in caves or holes in the mountains, under the roots or fallen trunks of trees, and in various places which are difficult of access.

He is omnivorous in his eating, and very fond of fruits, honey, beech mast, acorns, and roots; which latter are easily dug up by his fork-like fore-claws. He will sometimes kill a very large deer weighing several hundred pounds, and drag the carcass home to his den a mile away.

His tenacity of life is wonderful, and unless he gets a direct shot through the heart or head, the wound is rarely mortal. Indians have fired their arrows at him till he has looked like a porcupine, but even then they have not touched a vital part, and he has eventually escaped.

Such is a sketch of the animal our heroes so longed to encounter.

Fleming was the first to make the acquaintance of a grizzly, and in a very unpleasant manner.

One day he was not very well, and as one man was always left to guard the camp and cook for the party who were hunting, he had volunteered to be that one. During the afternoon he felt better, and was engaged in frying some slices of deer meat, when he heard a

sniffing sound behind him, and upon looking hurriedly round, there was a huge grizzly, advancing with silent footsteps upon him.

The frying-pan was in his hand, but his gun being some distance off, the useful culinary article was his only weapon; he pluckily waited until bruin was nearly up to him, and then, taking aim at the monster's artful beady little eyes, flung frying-pan and meat at him, hoping to blind or hinder the animal, while he made good his retreat.

Alas, his aim was inaccurate, and the boiling fat landed on the bear's forehead and neck, sending him into a violent rage at being treated so inhospitably.

Down hill being easier than up, Fleming fled valley-wards for his life, taking such gigantic steps as he had never in his life taken before, with the bear in hot pursuit.

To his joy, Fleming found he could outrun the bear, who had apparently injured one of his feet, so after going half-a-mile or so, being pumped out with his exertions, he hid behind a rock. It was no use; bruin's nose very quickly found him out.

Again the ex-carpenter fled for his life, and this time hid among some bushes, and for half-an-hour listened for any sound from his pursuer, but heard none.

He was beginning to congratulate himself upon his fortunate escape when the bear again discovered him, and this time the poor fellow was at his wits' end to know what to do, but off he ran again towards some large pine trees which grew a long way down the mountain side, and when he reached a suitable one, panting, tired, and terrified, he climbed it and fixed himself in a fork.

He had heard the Indians say that grizzlies seldom, if ever, climb, and taking their words for gospel, made himself as comfortable as possible on the forking branch.

In half-an-hour his enemy was at the foot of the tree of refuge, looking up at the carpenter and licking his great chaps as if anticipating the unusual luxury of dining off a white man.

Fleming hollowed and yelled to the full extent of his lungs, but the sighing of the wind through the pine



THEY WERE SOON ON THE TRAIL OF THE BEAR.

needles was the only reply. There the unfortunate man sat all night, numbed with cold and famished with hunger. His sickness of the previous day had vanished: Dr. Bruin had completely cured him.

When day broke, to his great delight the bear had gone,

and before he dared venture from his perch he heard the wild yells of the Clatsops who were searching for him.

An hour afterwards he was sitting quietly in camp eating and telling his story to his friends, who had imagined all kinds of dreadful things when they returned to the camp and found it deserted.

The tale of the treed hunter caused much merriment, and after breakfast, which for once had been a late one, the party set off to find, and if possible kill, the cause of poor Fleming's bad night's adventure. Although he had not had any sleep he was as alert as any of the party, and shouldering his gun trudged off with the rest.

Going to the tree, which was at once dubbed "Fleming's Bunk," both from the fact of his running to it for succour, and of its being his bunk or resting-place for the night, the Indians were soon on the trail of the bear, following a track of which the white men saw nothing except in soft spots. After half-an-hour the trail led into a rocky defile, and there the red men said the grizzly would be found; but to go down into such a rock-formed amphitheatre would have been like entering a grave, for it would certainly mean death. The Indians tried to entice the bear from his cave with lumps of half-cooked deer meat, which they threw to the entrance, but in vain; bruin would not respond to their invitation to dine.

Seeing this, Fleming grew impatient, and, as the little valley was surrounded with men, he quietly slipped down a crumbly path, unheeding the cries of his friends to return, and coolly walked to the mouth of the cave. He was very alert, however, having his gun cocked and ready before him. As he halted at the entrance a loud roar proclaimed the fact that his enemy of the previous night was at home, and following his roar the animal emerged

from his lair, and stood on his hind legs, offering a fair aim. Fleming fired, and the ball struck the animal fairly in the chest, causing him to emit a loud howl; then, dropping on all fours, he sprang towards Fleming, who turned and fled.

Bang! Bang! Bang! went the guns of Belton and the boys, and a flight of arrows was delivered by the redskins, but all this fusilade did not stop the bear, though two bullets and half-a-dozen arrows found their billet in his huge carcase.

Fleming rushed for the gulley which he had descended, but his foot slipped, and, to the horror of all, down he rolled to meet the furious bear, but the animal, maddened by more well-aimed arrows, did not for some reason touch him as he lay face downward upon the ground, but looked upwards to ascertain whence the arrows came.

Seeing there was yet a chance of saving their old comrade, Rupert and three Klamaths scrambled cautiously down to tackle the bear at close quarters.

One of the Klamaths made a tremendous blow at the animal's head with his tomahawk and missed, but the bear, catching him in the stomach with his cruel claws, completely disembowelled him.

Rupert was more fortunate, for, approaching the monster from behind, he drove a spear completely through its body, but before he had time to withdraw it for another thrust, the bear swung round, completely upsetting him upon his back, and as he fell placed his great paw on his chest, and was about to gnaw at him, when a well-directed shot from Belton struck the animal in the head and made him stagger. Blood was now flowing from bruise in a dozen places, and by a timely rush from all sides with spears and axes the hunters soon laid him dead across the body of Rupert, who fainted under the immense weight.

Fleming and the others soon pulled the carcass from the inanimate Rupert, who was covered with blood, but he had fainted from the pressure of the bear's weight, more than from any actual hurt, and was soon on his feet again, although his nerves were terribly shaken for some time after.

The unfortunate Klamath was buried hard by, and the camp removed to the place of the bear fight; so that that evening, although they slept on the field of victory, yet it was a dearly-bought one, and wailing and chanting were carried on by the Klamath's comrades all night.

The collection of skins was now carried down to the valley, and a guard placed over it, while the remaining eighteen men of the party indulged in a final piece of sport among the deer.

This was to be a deer drive and would take two days to perform. The party was divided into two companies, one of twelve and the other of six hunters. The latter took possession of a pretty little valley, completely shut in on three sides by rocky hills, except where a river flowed through a gorge at the further extremity.

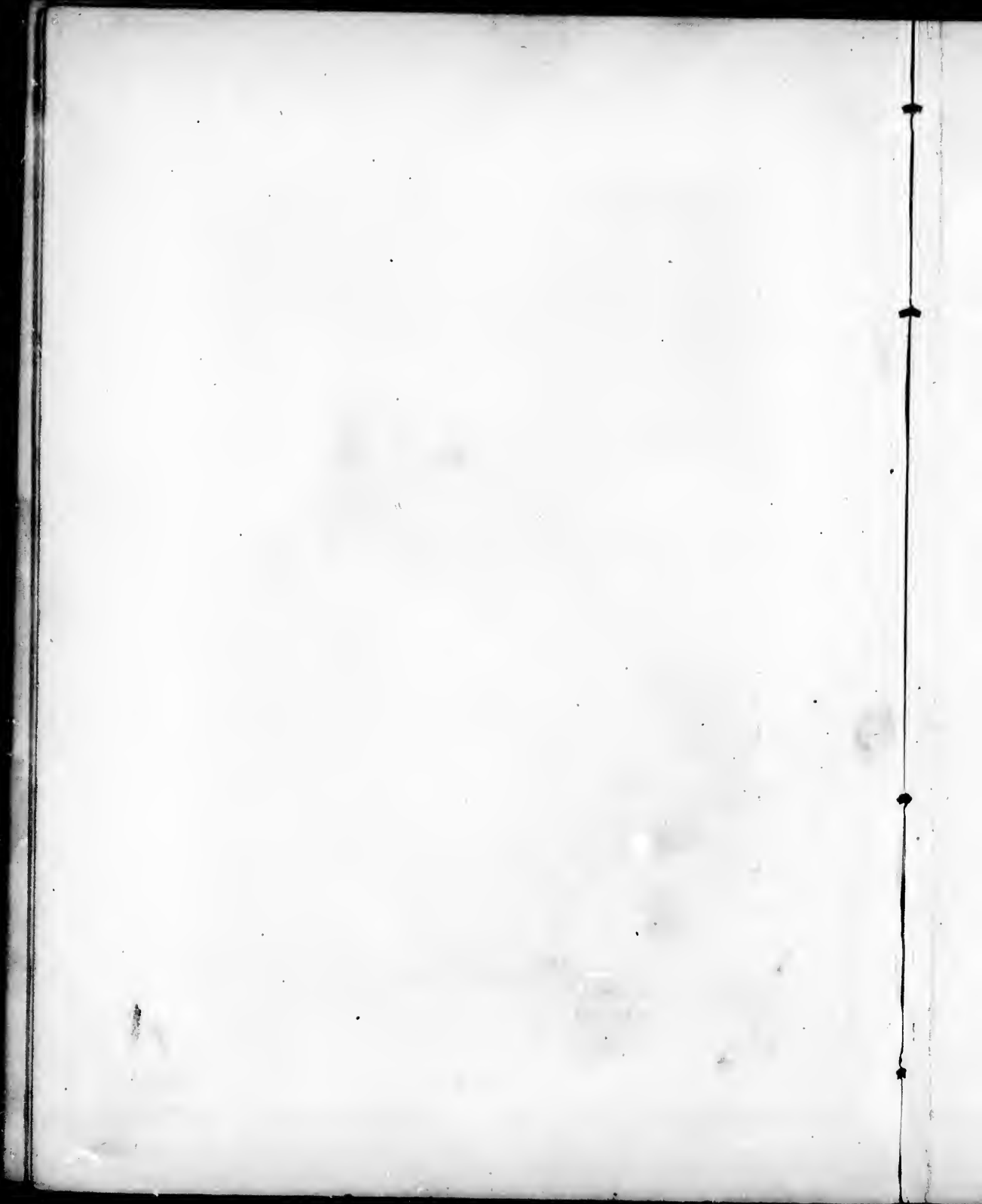
The duty of the six men was to place themselves on the edges of the valley, to keep hidden from view, and to mark the position of the deer as they entered.

The twelve men spread themselves out, about three hundred yards apart, but were to make no noise, especially the white men, who were not to fire a shot on any account.

They advanced quietly all day in a crescent form, showing themselves occasionally to the startled deer, who naturally ran from them towards the cul-de-sac in which the rest of the party was concealed. By dusk the driving party formed a cordon across the entrance of the valley,



QUIETLY DRAWING HIS KNIFE.



which was not more than a quarter of a mile wide, so that the men were now only some thirty or forty yards apart. In these positions they laid down and kept watch, so that nothing should pass them in the night. At daybreak a loud whistle was heard from Kamsla, and the hunt commenced. The six men in ambush, four white and the two Mandans, now commenced to fire as rapidly as they could load, and upon any signs of the deer trying to break through, the twelve beaters set up such discordant yells, and made such wild gesticulations, that the poor gentle creatures were driven back into the valley.

Being bewildered, they ran round the valley at a great pace, and as they came in range of musket or bow, so they were shot down, till in a perfect frenzy an old buck made a dash for liberty by breaking through the Indians who guarded the entrance, and, being followed by the others, they broke the blockade and the hunt ended; but not before thirty-one head had bitten the dust, including half-a-dozen fine elk, twenty black tails, three wild hogs, and two goats.

Skinning the animals took the entire day, and on the following they packed up their heavy burdens of skins, and started for the lake on which their canoes had been left, having enjoyed a fortnight's very successful hunting.

The party slept the next night at the foot of the mountains, the two brothers sleeping a little apart, as was their custom, and this habit came near costing Rupert his life.

He had not yet recovered from his adventure with the bear, and slept very heavily, and as they were in a supposedly friendly district, no watch was kept.

For some reason, at daybreak, Bernard awoke in great perturbation, and looking towards his brother, who was sleeping soundly a few yards off, saw to his horror an

Indian rise from behind the trunk of a tree, upon which his brother's head was supported.

The rascal leaned forward to glance at the sleeper, quietly drawing his knife as he did so, and was about to use it with deadly effect upon Rupert, when Bernard, unobserved by the savage, drew a pistol and shot him through the head.

The camp was alive in a moment, and the dead Indian scrutinised.

"He Callapuya," said Kamsla, "he bad man. All Callapuya bad man. We watch Callapuya, or they kill white man and Klamaths too."

And Kamsla was right, as events quickly proved.

What awoke Bernard he never knew, but his experience of saving his brother's life was one of those occult incidents of a psychological character which have never yet been clearly demonstrated.

We know that between certain individuals there is some unknown psychological affinity, but what causes it or how it is transmitted no one can explain satisfactorily.

Bernard dreamed of peril—his mind was upset, and he could not sleep—something of dire import awoke him—he opened his eyes, and in the nick of time shot the Callapuya. They were the facts of the case, but what caused the dream and awakening no one can tell!

CHAPTER XVII.

Back to the Lake.—A Callapuya Dinner-Party.—The Stolen Deer Skins.—A Skirmish.—The Village Fired.—Afloat again.—An Ambush.—Stalking the Robbers.—An Indian Game.—The Gamblers Interrupted.—“Pay back the Arrow.”—Wounded Remain at Source of Williamette.—Scalps and their Preparations.—The Scalp Dance.—Its Terrible Effect.

THEY found the population of the little Indian encampment greatly increased on their return to the lake, for it now mustered about thirty lodges. Their canoes were quite safe, and were soon packed with the skins and impedimenta of the party, which unfortunately lacked one man at the steering paddle of the fourth canoe; the brave fellow who had perished in endeavouring to succour Fleming.

Thinking to save as much time as possible, the hunting party wished to bid the Callapuyas good-bye and start at once on their homeward journey, but the old chief would hear nothing of it. They must stop, he said, that night, and have a hunting feast, and on the morrow they should proceed on their way.

Might is right in the wilderness, and there was nothing for it but to stay as they were desired.

Meat was very plentiful, and the old chief sent his young men to a neighbouring swamp to shoot some geese and ducks, which they did, and the whole afternoon was taken up with the preparation and cooking of much food.

The great feast commenced at dusk, and continued with great gluttony far into the night. "The hunting dance" was performed by a number of the Callapuyas, who borrowed several deer-skins to clothe themselves for the occasion, and everything passed off satisfactorily.

In the morning the hunters, who were anxious to commence their long return journey, breakfasted early and prepared to start, but on asking for the deerskins in which the dancers had been dressed the previous night, the old chief endeavoured to make out that they were a gift, and the young men who had danced in them had gone off to snare quail.

Kamsla pointed out that he considered such conduct a breach of hospitality, and that either the deer-skins or something of equivalent value must be given to his friends the white men. This request produced a deal of palaver, and it soon became apparent that all was not right—possible treachery was contemplated.

Rupert placed two men in each canoe, cautioning them to look out for any kind of surprise, while he and the remainder, all on the *qui vive*, remained in a group upon the brow of the cliff overhanging the river.

While a great deal of heated argument was proceeding between Kamsla and the old chief, it was noticed that a great many of the redskins belonging to the village were absent. This in itself was enough to cause alarm, as it appeared evident that some treachery was afoot, and, as if to confirm this, Belton cried out from one of the canoes that the stores had been ransacked during the night, and a number of tin and iron cooking vessels, knives, &c., stolen.

Kamsla taxed the old chief with this robbery, and the old villain having no excuse to offer drew his knife, and

would have stabbed his accuser to the heart, but seeing the turn things were taking, Bernard had covered the chief with a pistol concealed beneath the poncho he was wearing (it was raining), and as the old chief stepped forward to take Kamsla's life, he fell dead at the latter's feet, shot clean through the body.

The Callapuyas, who were all armed, drew round the little band in a threatening manner, but the guns of the white men acted as a check upon their advance, or they would have doubtless slaughtered the whole band of hunters. Slowly the band retreated to the canoes, but upon embarking several arrows were fired at them, happily without seriously hurting any one.

Upon this Kamsla begged the white men to shoot one or two of the traitors as an example of their power, or they would all be murdered before they could get far down the river.

A couple more arrows now came from the village, one of which passed through both cheeks of a Clatsop, who knelt in a canoe with the steering paddle in his hand. The arrow would have gone quite through but for the feathers, which were wet with the man's blood.

At this, four shots were fired among the cowardly thieves on shore, and two of them fell mortally wounded. The rest fled precipitately in all directions, hiding themselves in any available place.

Kamsla now ordered the canoes to put back, and, leaping ashore with his men, ran up the slope and commenced *lex talionis*, by ransacking the chief's and two or three other lodges. This was not done without opposition, and two Clatsops were killed by arrows, and Kamsla himself wounded in the thigh.

The white men who had leaped ashore to aid their red

allies fired whenever they saw a head pop up from behind a rock, and if they did not do much execution they at least held the enemy in check while their village was being looted to compensate for what they themselves had stolen.

The plunder having been conveyed to the canoes, the usual finishing touch of Indian warfare was carried out, namely, the village given over to the flames.

With all haste the excited hunters scrambled down the rocks, and the canoes were pushed off, the plunder having been distributed between the canoes, which now only carried seventeen men.

After leaving the lake the country was very flat for three or four miles, but the river was prettily fringed with reeds and rushes, over which a kind of willow hung its graceful, frond-like boughs, now green with the young spring leaves.

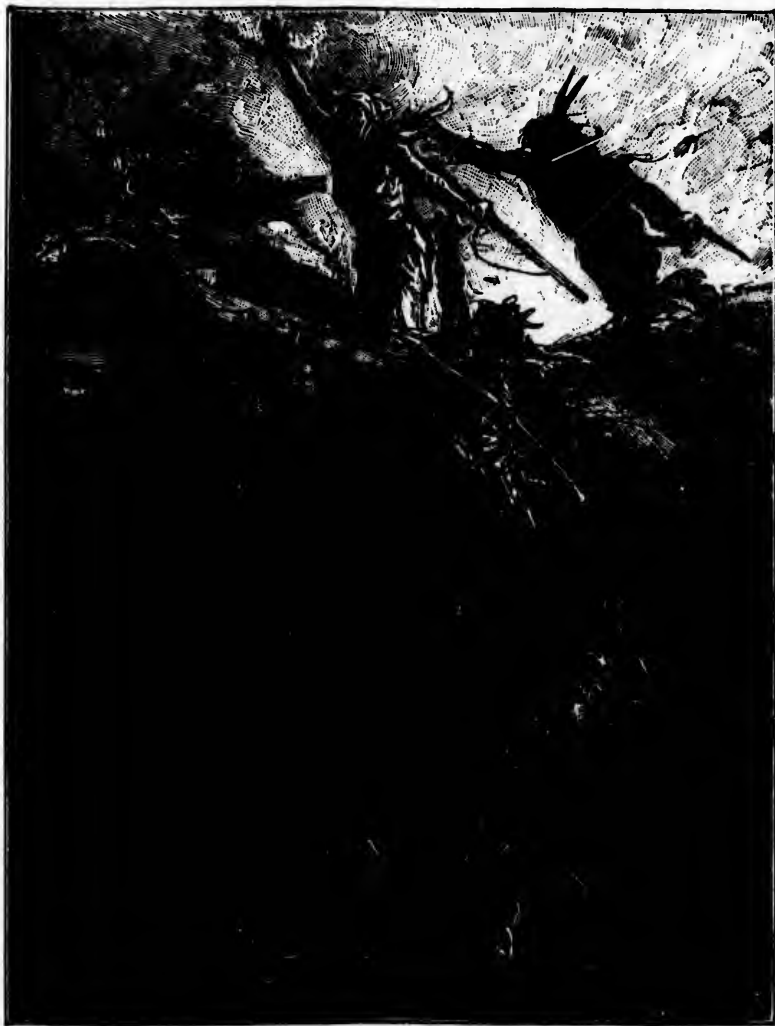
It was expected every minute that a flight of arrows would be aimed at the occupants of the canoes, for they did not for a moment doubt but they would be attacked before they reached the junction of the Willamette River, and their expectations were eventually fully realised.

They paddled for two or three hours along the somewhat shallow and rocky stream, till they came to a tract of rising ground, through which the river had cut a course, deep and narrow; indeed, so much did the stream contract at this point that it was not more than thirty yards wide.

Here, if anywhere, the expected ambuscade would be laid, and the canoes were halted for a debate before attempting to negotiate the half-mile whose end they might never live to see.

The ambush would doubtless be on the left bank, as it

was naturally fitted for a surprise to be delivered from,



THE EXCITED HUNTERS SCRAMBLED DOWN THE ROCKS.

and probably it would take place at the narrowest part of

the river. It was, therefore, deemed advisable for the party to disembark, and, leaving one man in each canoe, to steer her through the rapids, push forward along the left bank with the remaining thirteen, and boldly confront the enemy, if there were any to rout.

Accordingly, every man refreshed, and then went ashore, except the steersman of each canoe.

The shore party proceeded cautiously in Indian file, the Klamaths first, the white men in the centre, and the Clatsops bringing up the rear—"white man sandwich," as Fleming called it. The canoes kept a hundred yards in the rear, so that in case of alarm they would have time to turn before being attacked. Usually the water in this narrow channel ran very swiftly, but as very little rain had fallen for the past fortnight it was somewhat sluggish, a point much in favour of the steersmen, who had but little trouble to steer their craft, which were drifting about two miles per hour.

As expected, the Callapuyas could be seen by the shore party some distance ahead, hiding behind rocks so as to be out of sight of their expected victims in the canoes. They appeared to be so intent on watching the river for the advent of the canoes, which they could not yet see, because of a bend in the river, that they had not seen the party land.

Kamsla taking command, led the van, the rest following silently in his footsteps.

The canoes were silently signalled to stop under an overhanging bank, while Kamsla led his men by a long detour to a considerable wood, which ran to within a hundred yards of the rocks overlooking the river, among which the foe were in hiding.

He now placed Bernard at one end of his forces, and

Rupert at the other. Belton and Fleming he placed at equal distances, and so disposed of the rest of his men that there were three red men between each white man.

There appeared to be about thirty of the enemy, who, screened from the river by the rocks, sat in groups of four



THEY PROCEEDED CAREFULLY IN INDIAN FILE.

or five, gambling with pieces of wood, while four of their number were seen in secure hiding places, watching for the canoes to appear round the bend of the river. For obvious reasons they could not tell at what hour the canoes would arrive, so with Indian patience they watched the coming from their vantage posts, while their comrades

beguiled the time with the well-known Indian gambling game.

The game being played was one much in vogue among most Indian tribes, and a similar game is seen in England under the name of Tippit or Coddam.

Four players take part in the game, each two being partners. The opponents sit on the ground facing each other, two of the players taking possession of a piece of carved wood something like a draughtsman. It is the aim of these two to hide the piece secretly in one of their four hands by manipulating it under their blankets or behind their backs. The piece being hidden in one of their hands, their four arms are extended, and their opponents have to guess in which hand the piece is contained. Not a word is spoken, and the game continues sometimes for hours.

Indians are inveterate gamblers, and will stake all their belongings in their love of games of chance; weapons, horses, dress, and even their wives and children, have at times been the stakes played for.

This was the game in progress while Kamsla was making all his arrangements, and now, stationing himself in the centre of his line of men, he imitated the cry of a blackbird, and immediately a flight of arrows was sent among the gamblers, who sprang to their feet, except two or three who were severely wounded.

As they sprang up the four white men fired, and three more of the enemy fell, whilst the remainder, panic-stricken, hardly knew which way to flee from the deadly "thunder sticks," as they called the white men's guns. They therefore, with Indian instinct, crouched among the rocks, and in turn took the offensive, firing their keen arrows whenever one of Kamsla's men showed himself.

This went on for nearly half-an-hour, without any particular damage being done on either side, as the trees and rocks afforded effective shelter to the combatants, and Kamsla, becoming impatient, coolly walked out with a green branch in his hand as a sign of parley.

The firing at once ceased.

He informed the enemy that it was useless for them to try and hide from the white men's guns, for, unlike arrows, the bullets would find them out behind the rocks, and kill them. He told them in a most lofty manner, as he pointed towards their homes, that they had better retire before the white men fired again, as every bullet meant a Callapuya's life. He finished his harangue by promising them if they returned peaceably homeward he would spare their lives; but they only derided him.

The answer from the treacherous enemy came in the form of a couple of arrows, one of which pierced Kamsla's leather hunting shirt, and the other struck his thigh just about the spot in which he had been wounded a few hours previously. Fortunately, the wound was protected by several wrappings of linen and an outer bandage of soft deerskin, which prevented the arrow from penetrating. The chief shook his fist at the hidden enemy, and, as well as his painful leg would permit him, stalked slowly and heroically back to the cover of the trees, behind one of which he ensconced himself, and drew the encrimsoned arrow from the fleshy part of his left breast. It was but a flesh wound, and he handed the missile to Ra-pa-tal, who was a noted archer, with the remark: "Pay back the arrow, my brother."

Finding the white men did not fire (they were getting short of ammunition, and did not wish to waste a single charge), the enemy grew bolder, and would jump on the

rocks for a moment, and then, drawing the fire from the Clatsop bowmen, disappear before the hastily-aimed arrows could reach them.

Their chief was a fine young man of about five-and-twenty (son of the old villain shot in the scrimmage in the morning), and he also would occasionally leap on a rock and wave his hand in an insulting manner, and jump behind his rocky shield again before an arrow could reach him.

Noting this, Ra-pa-tal fitted the blood-tipped arrow to his strong bow and narrowly watched the movements of the young chief, who presently ventured to mount his rock again to taunt the foe; but Ra-pa-tal, anticipating his leap to the rock, stood with bow ready drawn, and like a flash of light the long light stem of the arrow was seen quivering in the breast of the rash young man, who, with blood gushing from his mouth, fell to rise no more.

With glittering eyes the archer turned to the wounded Kamsla and said, "Ra-pa-tal pay back arrow—good!"

Seeing their young chief fall, the savages ventured out from the rocks to lift him to a place of safety, which gave the Clatsops a favourable opportunity of showing their skill as archers. The enemy were rather nonplussed at seeing the turn events had taken, and Kamsla, noticing this, ordered his men to sling their bows, and, lance in hand, to make a charge among the enemy.

All advanced at a run towards the rocks, the Indians giving their war-whoop, and the white men a loud hurrah! Bang went the muskets, and down fell five of the enemy, one ball having passed clean through a man's chest, bringing down another behind with a dreadful wound in the head.

Guns were quickly clubbed, and, standing with their

backs to the rocks, the white men rolled the enemy over like nine pins, for they were but as big boys to the stalwart Englishmen, and in two minutes the battle was won, and the paltry red thieves in full retreat homeward to their village, which they would find in ashes.

Six of the wretched Callapuyas were dead, and seven so severely wounded that they could not follow their brethren, but they were carefully attended by their white conquerors, and left among the rocks for their comrades to carry away, which they would be sure to do, when the canoes had departed.

Three Clatsops and one Klamath were severely wounded, and Belton had received a very heavy blow on the shoulder from a war-club, which had, without breaking any bones, rendered his arm quite useless.

The canoes were signalled, and the wounded men placed in them, while the rest walked along the bank of the river amid the long prairie grass for a couple of miles, when, being safe from any surprise of the enemy, they drew the canoes ashore in a little bay, where they had a quiet bathe in the limpid water and a good meal. Then, turning everything out of the canoes, they repacked them preparatory to the start homeward.

Quite a large collection of skins had been taken from the Callapuya village, including two bear-skins, several dozen beaver, and ten sea-otter skins: not a bad haul for a small party, and one that more than compensated for the stolen deer-skins.

The homeward journey took much longer than the outward, as they had to *ascend* the Willamette River, consequently the current was against them.

Arriving at the farthest point on the Willamette, it was found impracticable for the whole band to proceed

onward with the canoes, as the skins were quite as much as the party could carry, being now reduced to fourteen able men. It was therefore decided to leave the canoes, skins, and the four wounded men behind, under guard of six others, while the remainder continued the journey homeward. On the arrival of the hunters a party of thirty or forty Indians could be sent to bring home both the men and baggage left behind.

Belton, Bernard, and four Clatsops remained with the wounded.

* * * * *

In three days the others reached the Fort, and sent back a party of thirty-two Clatsops, under Ra-pa-tal, who, a week after, returned to the Fort without further adventure; two of the wounded men having in the meantime nearly recovered.

The arrival of the canoes and wounded was the signal for a great display of feeling on the part of both the Clatsops and the Klamaths, who first mourned their dead with dirges and wailings, and then performed the scalp dance with triumphant yells and the usual savage rites.

Bernard, who was ever eager to acquire knowledge, was shown how to prepare the scalps which had been taken: six by the Clatsops and three by the Klamaths.

The scalps he noticed were about three inches in diameter, and taken from the crown of the head, just where the hair seems to form a centre from which it gyrates, or branches off all round the head; consequently, it is impossible to cut two scalps off one head.

A long willow wand, as thick as one's little finger, and about four feet long, has its top bent into a loop, and, in the circular space thus left, the scalp is fastened all round with thin sinew, so as to make a kind of long-handled fan.

The dance takes place at night, and is continued for from seven to ten nights, darkness being made hideous with the exclamations of the dancers.

The Klamaths and Clatsops performed the dance in each other's camps on alternate nights thus.

Young women, each carrying a scalp, formed a central group, round which the warriors to take part in the dance formed a circle. Each man vaunted forth the most extravagant boasts of his own great prowess, and the whole band commenced to dance and jump round, brandishing their weapons, and yelling and yelping like fiends incarnate. The effect was the more heightened by the performers being lighted by the remainder of the tribe, who carried blazing pine torches.

Catlin, in his great work, says:—

“While the dancers are making their frantic leaps and yelps and thrusts, every man distorts his face to the utmost of his muscles, darting about his glaring eyeballs and snapping his teeth, as if they were in the heat (and actually breathing through their inflated nostrils the very hissing death) of battle!

“No description that can ever be written could ever convey more than a feeble outline of the frightful effects of these scenes, enacted in the dead and darkness of night, under the glaring light of their flambeaux; nor could all the years allotted to mortal man in the least obliterate or deface the vivid impress that one scene of this kind would leave on the memory.”

The Doones witnessed the dance on the first night, but both Mrs. Doone and Ruth were so horrified at the display that they begged Mr. Doone to return with them to the Fort.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Clatsops and Klamaths leave for their Summer Quarters.—Kissing Painted Faces.—Presents.—A Garden made.—Wild Gooseberries and Currants.—Swimming the Pool.—The Candle Fish.—Salmon Season.—Netting.—Spearing and Curing Salmon for Winter.

THE spring had now arrived in all its vernal beauty. The forests were again clothed in emerald; the flooded river had resumed its normal height; flowers peeped forth, and nature seemed to wake again after its long winter sleep. Everyone in the camps and at the Fort were busy.

The Clatsops bade their white friends good-bye, and, packing all their belongings in their canoes, migrated to the coast for the warm season, there to fish, and hunt the sea-otter and seal, and to procure a store of sturgeon and other fish.

The Klamaths also embarked in their great skin *batteaux*, and returned to their distant home on Lake Klamath, beyond the south spur of the Cascade Mountains. They had about 250 miles to travel, but as the greater part would be by water, they did not appear to mind it in the least, and promised to return in the autumn and encamp again near the white men for the ensuing winter. They also promised to hunt and trap during the summer, and to bring back with them the result of their prowess for barter.

It was a busy scene, this embarking of two whole tribes, and one the boys so thoroughly enjoyed that they could never possibly forget.

Every man, woman, and child had to shake hands with the great white chief (Mr. Doone), his wife, sons and daughters, and many of the children, all of whom were freshly painted, insisted on kissing Mrs. Doone and Ruth, much to the amusement of all present, for the paint came off on their faces to such an extent that they looked more like Indians than whites. When a mirror was handed to them they laughed as much as anyone at their blue, red, and yellow mottled faces, and wondered what their friends in Fowey would have thought if they could have beheld them.

Each Indian brought a present, and—*expected one in return!* What innocence! It was their custom, and as such had to be adhered to.

Bead moccasins, bags, weapons, slippers, models, charms, skins, dried fish, wampum, bark cloth, &c., were received, and English commodities given in exchange, and by-and-by the Klamaths, amid the usual yelps and yells, paddled away; and then the white ladies washed their besmirched faces, being fearful of perpetrating a breach of etiquette if they did so before the departure of their savage friends; it would never do to wash away their coloured kisses before their very eyes.

A garden of half-an-acre had been dug on the island, and was now planted with vegetables, hedges having been made round it of gooseberry and currant bushes, which grew wild in some parts of the woods. These Mr. Doone had carefully planted late in the preceding autumn, and hoped, by careful pruning and attention, to obtain a finer

crop of fruit than could be gathered from the bushes in their wild state.

During his frequent wanderings among the mountains, Mr. Doone had found some fine specimens of both gooseberries and currants, growing in their uncultured and wild state, and of these the Indians, under his directions, brought down enough to quite surround his garden with a double hedge.

Of the gooseberries there were three kinds. The purple, on a particularly thorny, stunted bush; a fine flavoured yellow, growing, strangely enough, on a *thornless* bush; and a deep purple, of a grape flavour.

There were also three kinds of currants. One was a yellow-coloured berry, with the flavour of our ordinary *red* currant, this growing from four to five feet high. Another was a well-flavoured purple, growing on a bush which rose eight or nine feet above the earth; the third was a beautiful scarlet, of sweet but delicate flavour, and only reaching a height of about four feet.

Mrs. Doone found plenty to do in making and mending clothes for the family, in cooking, and other domestic duties; but with all this both she and Ruth found leisure during the beautiful long summer days to make excursions far into the forests and up the lower mountain sides. Either Mr. Doone and Belton, or the two boys, accompanied them, with a couple of Indians, and a young squaw to assist in carrying the various articles required; and it was not an infrequent occurrence for them to be away from the Fort for three or four days at a time, as they camped out during the delightful warm nights, and enjoyed the roving life.

Both Ruth and her mother soon became expert marks-



THE TRIO PADDED BY RA-PA-TAL AND BAR-ME-NO.



women, and many a wild turkey and small deer fell to their aim. Besides being very fair shots, they also became capital swimmers—indeed, Ruth frequently swam from the Fort to the abandoned Klamath camp, where Bernard had erected a lodge for her, that she might change her wet dress for a dry one, and then take a long walk before returning in a little birch-bark canoe to the island. Indeed, the ladies became in time perfect Amazons, enjoying the wild life as much as the men.

They were, indeed, happy days for the Doones; no sickness, no lack of anything in the way of food or raiment, no work when they would rather play! Probably, however, the average English boy would consider their play savoured of work, and that, too, of the hardest, if they, as it sometimes happened to Rupert and Bernard, tramped twenty, twenty-five, and even thirty miles during a day when in pursuit of big game—frequently only to witness its escape after all; or, if they had to paddle a canoe up the river for six or seven hours at a stretch, to get a few shots at wild fowl on a small lagoon, which was situated in a very lonely spot near the Cascade Mountains. Their work was a pleasure, and their pleasure was to work. Nothing came amiss to them; they would saw, dig, cut, plant, fish, shoot, or build, as their father desired, and whatever they took in hand was performed promptly, light-heartedly, and with a will.

One evening, when they were sitting at the new landing-place they had built, they caught some curious small fish, which Simola said were rarely seen so far up the river, as it was a sea fish, and although in the winter it swarms into the estuaries and mouths of the rivers, it is seldom seen in summer. It resembles the smelt, and is called

Uthlecan, or the candle fish, and contains so much fat that the natives dry it and use it for giving a light in their wigwams, setting fire to its tail and burning it like a candle.

Early in July they were one morning surprised to see two large canoes coming up the river, and imagined the occupants might be hostile, for in these wild regions no one is a friend till he has shown his true colours. Everything in the Fort was kept ready for an attack, which, among such treacherous barbarians, might occur at any time. Fortunately, on the present occasion there was no need of alarm, for Ra-p^o-tal pronounced them to be a party of Tacons.

They made straight for the Fort, and having landed, Kamsla, who was with them, informed Mr. Doone that he had returned for the salmon fishing. Salmon, he explained, were now at their best, and were running up well, and it had been the Clatsop custom from time immemorial to catch and dry large quantities of this nourishing fish for winter sustenance. If, after they (the Indians) had rested a couple of days, Mr. Doone and his two sons would like to accompany them, they would catch and dry enough fish for the winter's consumption of everyone in the Fort.

Mr. Doone, wishing to see the mode of capture and cure, consented, and the trio, accompanied by Ra-pa-tal and Bar-me-no, went off to the rapids, under Kamsla's leadership.

The rapids were about twenty miles up the river, and in one place formed a fall of about four feet, between a rocky island and the shore. Here the party landed, and for a couple of days the whole of the Tacons, some thirty in number, occupied themselves in felling small trees, and

erecting, curiously, but ingeniously, constructed stages, which overhung the river, to afford them a secure footing from which to fish

The operation of catching was performed in two ways; by netting and spearing.

The first was by means of small, but clumsy, nets, which were kept distended by means of hoops, and mounted on long, tough, wooden handles. With these, the men adroitly scooped up the salmon, which congregated at the foot of the falls, in great numbers, and having them safely in the bag of the net, they tossed them ashore to the squaws.

Others stationed themselves at eligible spots, armed with long spears having barbed heads, and with these terrible looking implements, they impaled the fish, and cast them struggling on shore, where the ready squaws quickly killed them with a blow upon the head, delivered with a club, in a very business-like manner.

When killed, they were split open, beheaded, and gutted, and hung to dry in the sun, on skeleton scaffolding erected for the purpose. When thoroughly dried in the hot sun and wind, they are beaten into shreds between stones, and packed in quaintly shaped baskets. These baskets are cylindrical, about two feet high and one foot in diameter. They are made of a kind of grass-matting, lined with cured salmon skin, and when they are crammed full of pounded salmon, cords are passed through other cords in the edge of the baskets, and drawn tight.

Twelve of these packages are secured together with mats, and the whole strongly corded round; the salmon is then ready for taking to the Indian village; where it is placed in a dry situation, enveloped with more matting, and stored ready for winter consumption.

If well made up in this way, salmon will keep in good condition for several years.

After witnessing the whole process, the Doones once more entered their canoe to return to the Fort, not caring to stay and see the salmon feast, which usually winds up the fishing, as it is nothing but a piggish exhibition of gluttony, and a saturnalia of posturing and yelling such as Indians alone love.

CHAPTER XIX.

A Signal of Distress.—Mrs. Doone in Bed.—Ruth and her Mother as Huntresses.—Indians!—Ruth Fires.—So does Mrs. Doone.—She Conquers but Falls.—Callapuya Threats.

NEARING the Fort, the Doones were surprised to see the red ensign floating upside down, and as they paddled still nearer, they saw that now and again it was dipped, and then hauled back to the masthead.

Evidently something was wrong, and the raising and lowering of the flag was done to attract attention.

On rounding the point, they could not see a soul about the Fort, so examining the priming of their flintlocks, they pressed forward with redoubled speed, fearing something untoward had happened during their five days' absence.

Rupert and Bernard seized the spare paddles and reinforced Bar-me-no and Ra-pa-tal, the four men making the canoe hiss through the whirling current, which was also in their favour.

When close to the landing stage, Ruth came running from the Fort, closely followed by Belton, both with a look of mingled pleasure and alarm on their faces.

"For heaven's sake," cried Mr. Doone, "what has happened. Your mother——?"

"Mother is safe, daddy dear, but we are in great danger

from hostile Indians; come in at once, and we will tell you what has happened."

Linking her arm in her father's, they quickly entered the Fort, and found Mrs. Doone in bed.

"Now boys, and husband," she exclaimed, as they excitedly entered the chamber, "don't be alarmed, for although I am in bed, I am only a little bruised and shaken, and when I tell you all the trouble, you will say it might have been much worse. Sit down, and I will tell you what has happened."

They sat down, very much relieved to find that Mrs. Doone, who had been injured in some mysterious manner, was not very badly hurt, or she would not be able to smile upon them as she did, although now and again, as she turned in bed, she could not hide a twinge of pain, which made her brows contract, and the habitual smiling curl, at the corners of her mouth, take a downward inflection.

"I must own, William, that I have been very imprudent during your absence, having, with Ruth, brought about an adventure which might have had a fatal termination to us both.

"Yesterday, I proposed to Ruth to go across in a canoe to the north shore, and make a little excursion inland, to try our skill, by having a shot at anything we might happen upon during our wanderings.

"After walking two or three miles, we saw half-a-dozen black-tails grazing in a pretty little grassy vale; but as they were near some timber on the far side of the valley, we stalked round, and each singling her quarry, both fired at once. I beat Ruth, for my shot killed a deer on the spot, but Ruth's shot struck her mark high in the shoulder, and the deer, with shambling gait, tried to follow its

comrades towards the forest ; so, naturally, after loading we followed, but soon found the animal, although wounded, could easily out-pace us.

“ Seeing this, we gave up the chase, cut down a sapling, upon which we slung the dead deer, by tying its four hoofs together with wampum, and placing the pole across our shoulders, commenced our triumphant march homeward.

“ We were very excited, and very happy, and were both carolling away at ‘ Old Towler,’ when, just as we had reached the narrow defile, about half-a-mile from the deserted Clatsop camping place, an arrow came whizzing along, and stuck fairly in the ribs of the dead deer we were carrying.

“ Our first thought was to drop the deer, and scream for assistance. A second thought told us screaming would be useless, as no one at the Fort could hear us, and it would only show our assailant or assailants that we were frightened, which would never do.

“ Poor Ruth looked very scared, and unslinging our muskets we faced about, but could see no one.

“ Then we joined hands and ran towards the landing-place of Clatsops, where we had left our canoe.

“ When we had run only about one hundred yards, we heard footsteps behind us, and knew they were Indians by the padlike fall of their moccasins, which made their steps almost noiseless, except for the cracking of twigs and rustle of leaves.

“ We looked round and saw, to our consternation, four half-naked, armed savages, tearing after us, and rapidly overtaking us ; so hurriedly telling Ruth to keep slowly trotting towards the landing, I knelt down and presented my weapon.

"The savages stopped immediately.

"Then I rose, and commenced, as well as the uneven ground would permit me, to walk backwards, but the four painted fiends encroached so much, that I again knelt, and this once more had the effect of checking the foes for the moment.

"It was only for a minute, however, for when I turned and fled, they yelled and run rapidly after me, and when I reached Ruth, who would go no farther without me, I only had breath to say, 'Kneel quickly, Ruth—take steady aim—and shoot the first man.'

"It was a dreadful thing I know for me to say, but it was our only chance.

"As she knelt, a couple of arrows hurtled past, fortunately without hitting us, and as the second two were about to draw upon us, Ruth fired.

"We heard a dull thud and a groan, and the foremost Indian, who was only some fifty yards distant, threw up his arms and fell headlong upon his face.

"Again we turned, but this time we walked instead of running, and while Ruth loaded, I ever and anon turned and pointed my weapon toward's our three pursuers, who kept at about one hundred yards distance, till with trembling limbs we reached the shore.

"Ruth stepped into the canoe, but before I could follow and push off, the three Flatheads, for they were of that tribe, in full view of the Fort, made a rush towards us.

"I was standing in the shallow margin of the river, where the water little more than floated the canoe, but to take steadier aim I knelt in the water, and when the leader was about twenty yards away, I fired straight at his chest, and he fell. Ruth, at the same moment, stepped out of the canoe and fired at the other two men, and

missed them, but to our delight both turned and fled, and on reaching the black rocks, slipped behind them and discharged half-a-dozen arrows at us, but they all fell short.

"I felt so exasperated at the idea of four men trying to kill two women, just for the sake of their long scalp-locks, that I heartily wished I had only enough nerve, and then I would have scalped the Flathead before his comrades' eyes, to show what an Englishwoman can do when she is assaulted."

Mr. Doone and his sons were greatly amused at Mrs. Doone's warlike peroration, and laughed till the tears ran down their cheeks. This exhilaration was doubtless partly due to their pent-up joy at the safety of Mrs. Doone and Ruth.

"But how were you hurt, mother?" both the boys asked at once.

"Tell them, Ruth," cried Mrs. Doone, "for after my triumph and warlike recital I cannot recount my fall!"

"Why," said Ruth, "we pushed off in the canoe, and laying down our guns, paddled as if fiends were after us. Simola, Freeman, and Fleming were putting off to us in the boat, but we signalled to them 'No,' and soon arrived at the landing-place.

"They helped us on to the landing-stage, but as mother was stepping up the six steps to the path, she fainted and fell backward upon the rocks several feet below.

"Her back and right hip are very much bruised, and she received a very severe shaking; but we will soon put her right again, won't we, mother?"

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Doone, cheerfully, "a day or two's rest, and I hope I shall be about again. There is one

thing, it is no use ailing here, for any doctor but a 'medicine man' is unknown.

"Now Rupert call Fleming in, and he will tell you that the band of Callapuya Indians you fought with near the Coast Mountains have been reinforced and have followed your trail, and have come in force to attack the Fort.

"The four who molested us were a kind of advance guard, and were Chinooks or Flatheads, as I could see at a glance by their ugly foreheads."

Fleming, who had seen the main body of the Indians, on being interrogated, said they were undoubtedly mostly men of the Callapuya tribe; he knew them by their totem and their manner of war paint.

Simola said he had taken a canoe that morning, and with Belton had been within one hundred and fifty yards of the shore, close to which the enemy was encamped. There appeared to be eighty or ninety warriors. Simola parleyed with them, and learned that they had come to revenge their fallen chief and comrades, and, in spite of the white men's "thunder sticks," they would come over, burn the Fort, kill the pale faces, and carry their scalps home to decorate their lodges on Lako Pil-gar-na-wish.

Having heard these startling details, Mr. Doone called a council of war, at which all were present, and it was simply resolved to fully prepare and then wait events.

The Flatheads inhabit the land at the mouth of the Columbia River, but the tribe is divided into several branches, one of which is the Callapuya section. They obtain the name of Flatheads from the fact that when they are infants their heads are compressed between boards till the skull is flattened from the brows to the apex of the head, which is thus forced to an inordinate height, giving them a most grotesque and repulsive appearance.

CHAPTER XX.

The Fort in Danger.—Primitive Scaling Ladders.—The First Assault Unsuccessful.—K'nick-K'neck.—The Defenders in Council.—The Mines.—Another Attack.—A Holocaust.—The Wounded cared for.—The Flatheads depart.

As the Fort was always kept in a state of readiness against any sudden attack, but little preparation had to be made to give the foe a warm reception.

The inhabitants of the Fort numbered just a dozen without Mrs. Doone and Ruth, who had recently shown themselves so skilful with the gun that they would prove valuable combatants within walls of the Fort.

The two brass cannon in the bastion were loaded with odd pieces of iron and old bolts, nails, &c., for at close quarters these miscellaneous missiles form a kind of shrapnel, spreading and scattering destruction over a wide area.

A sharp watch was kept both by day and night, and those not on sentry duty slept fully dressed, with their arms at their sides.

For a couple of days the Flatheads could be seen busily engaged making rafts, quite convinced that they could overcome the Fort by sheer numbers, being at least seven to one.

Simola, who well knew the Indian mode of attack, surmised that probably the assault would be delivered in the night, an hour or so before dawn.

The river having run very low, it was improbable that

they would attempt a landing by scaling the rugged sides of the island, but would land on the isthmus and take the strong wooden pallisade by escalade, rearing notched trees with which to climb over. They would then undoubtedly attempt to set fire to the buildings, killing the defenders as they rushed out to prevent being suffocated.

To frustrate this plan three men watched the north, west, and south of the island, while two others were deputed to hide near the pallisade and give the alarm, if the enemy were seen, by firing their muskets, so that all might hear the report and rush to the Fort for shelter.

The pallisades were about ten feet high and sloped outward, so that a man could not climb them; but that the enemy might readily be seen if they attempted to climb this defence, a couple of large fires were lighted and several horn lanterns hung about on poles.

One morning very early the Flatheads were heard approaching; the run of their pontoons and rafts on the gravel of the isthmus could be distinctly heard; and as there was plenty of time, and no need to cause unnecessary alarm, Bar-me-no, who with Ra-pa-tal, was on the watch at the pallisade, ran and awoke those asleep in the Fort, who came quietly out and dropped into holes which had been dug in the ground to form rifle-pits. Of these there were eight, and each was quickly occupied by a man armed with two muskets. Polton and Pendrick mounted guard on the hill behind the buildings to see they were not attacked in the rear, which was not likely, as the cliffs there were quite fifty feet high and most difficult to climb.

Mr. Doone and Belton remained in the bastion to take charge of the ladies and fire the brass guns.

The time of attack was well chosen, as it was for summer time very dark.

All was still within ; but outside the pallisade a stifled, subdued combination of sounds was heard ; but the defenders not being able to see beyond the beams of wood, could not tell what the noises portended.

They had not long to wait for a solution, however, for presently some poles appeared here and there over the pointed pallisade, by which they surmised that the Flat-heads had taken a raft to pieces to form rude scaling-ladders.

Two or three heads now peeped over, but they were immediately fired at by the riflemen, and disappeared. This happened two or three times, and then came a long pause. More grating sounds were heard as the redskins toiled to bring up and erect more poles ; which being done, there was another pause. Suddenly quite a dozen Flat-heads appeared above the pallisade at once, and as quickly eight shots were fired at them ; some of the redskins fell, killed or wounded ; two in their hurry tumbled over the pointed timbers and were hurt, while one or two others retreated, so that but three actually got over unscathed, and of these one leaped into the river, and the other two, making a rush to the rifle-pit occupied by Freeman and Bernard, were quickly slashed down with cutlasses, which, in expert hands, are much more effective weapons than tomahawks.

At this unexpected repulse there was much commotion among the savages, and as the first pale streak of dawn now gave a little light, Mr. Doone could see from the bastion tower that the savages were undecided among themselves what to do next, whether to make another attempt or re-embark.

They chose the latter alternative.

“Run, Belton,” cried Mr. Doone, “and tell those in

the rifle-pits to wait until I fire a pistol as a signal, and then to rush to the loopholes in the pallisades and give the red rascals a good fusilade as they depart."

When, a couple of minutes later, he turned to tell Mrs. Doone and Ruth that their enemy were about to embark, the latter was not in the apartment; but thinking she had gone below, he drew a pistol and gave the signal.

Then to his surprise he saw his daughter make a run between her two brothers to the stockade, and coolly take her stand and fire her musket at the retreating throng of Flatheads, several of whom never left the shores with whole skins.

There was joy in the island that day, and with little ceremony the bodies of six savages, in all the hideousness of war-paint and feathers, were tossed into the brown waters of the Umpqua, to be borne to the mighty Pacific, there to float on its heaving bosom till fish and fowl should consume them.

In the evening a council was assembled, consisting of the whole of the members of the Fort, at which Mr. Doone could not help noticing that they had become so imbued with Indian manners that the pipe of peace was unconsciously smoked, even in their family circle. True, it was not a single pipe, but it was remarked that each man quietly took out his own pipe and filled it with k'nick-k'neck, and commenced puffing, presumably to clear his understanding.

Strangely enough, not one of them smoked real tobacco leaf (which, although a native of America, does not grow in the far West), but a mixture of various herb leaves and a certain bark, to which the aborigines of the States give the generic name of k'nick-k'neck. Their pouches

are formed from the skins of small animals, which are preserved whole, with teeth, claws, and tail complete, but for the Indian dandy beautiful skins are not good enough, so he sets his squaw to work, with porcupine quills and beads, to ornament them, and this they do in a most patient and artistic manner, so that a present of a worked tobacco pouch is no mean gift, even to a white man.

The war council was a lengthy affair, and some capital suggestions were made. Simola, Ra-pa-tal, and Bar-me-no affirmed that, far from being disheartened at their first defeat, the Flatheads would assuredly return to the attack with fresh methods of surmounting the stockade, or otherwise gaining access to the immediate vicinity of the Fort buildings, which they would attempt to destroy by fire.

They implored the white men to use their big "shoots," as they called the cannon, for if the enemy once got inside the stockade they would probably capture the Fort and slaughter every one of its defenders.

Mr. Doone promised that he would carry out a scheme he had concocted which would give the Flatheads such a surprise they would never venture to attack them again.

Parties of three men were told off to guard the island, watch and watch, in three-hour turns, each night, and on the second night Mr. Doone and his two sons contrived so that they were on watch together, for the purpose of preparing a surprise for their enemies when they next attacked them.

On relieving the watch at midnight they proceeded to the stockade, each carrying a spade, a bag, and a lantern of horn. Clambering over the stockade, they, by Mr. Doone's instructions, dug three holes about a foot square and two feet deep, about ten yards apart, each connected by a shallow trench about three inches deep. Then, opening the bags, each took out a small wooden

cask, which was placed upright in the hole dug for its reception. They contained gunpowder, and were then connected by fuses which had been manufactured from cotton rag steeped in a solution of gunpowder.

The barrels were covered with stones and turf, while the shallow trench along which the fuses were laid was covered with twigs and grass, everything being left in as natural a manner as possible. All being finished, the three resumed their watch, were duly relieved, and retired to sleep, with instructions to be called on the slightest cause of alarm.

The night passed without anything being seen of the enemy, the next also, but on the fourth night, at 3 A.M., all in the Fort were suddenly awakened with the news that the enemy were crossing high up the west fork of the river, with the evident intention of attacking on foot from the mainland, beyond the stockade. The night was not very dark, so that the bulky rafts, with their teeming freight, could just be discerned.

In the Fort everything was prepared; the boys slept in the bastion, the cannon were kept loaded, and every gun in the place also—about thirty in number—was loaded and stood ready to hand; pistols and cutlasses were also distributed to each man, so all they could do was to calmly await the coming attack.

An hour—a long, long hour—passed, and then Fleming and Bar-me-no, who were watching at the stockade, reported that the Flatheads were stealthily advancing, each bearing a huge faggot of brushwood on his back, and asking the defenders to take their places in the rifle-pits; but to the surprise of all, Mr. Doone ordered everyone inside the Fort, and enjoined them neither to speak nor show a light of any kind, as he wished it to appear that no watch was being kept.

In a short time a light was observed on the far side of the stockade, which soon leaped into a blaze, throwing the thick piles into strong relief, except where the red glow pierced through the chinks between the posts, which soon began to take fire.

The Flatheads had piled their dry brushwood against the stockade, and were burning it down so as to make a dash for the Fort when the timbers fell.

Everyone looked askance at Mr. Doone, who calmly sat upon a chest in the bastion and smoked his pipe, simply giving answer to all questions by repeating the solitary word, "Wait."

In a short time one or two of the stockade posts were nearly burnt through, and Mr. Doone began to fear the savages might have discovered his mines and removed them, or that something might have gone amiss with them; but on reflection he came to the conclusion that the savages would know nothing of such a use for gunpowder, and would not be likely even to look for what they knew nothing about. He kept his surmises to himself, and smoked on till——

Boom! boom!! came two reports; and then an explosion of flame and incandescent embers, as the centre of the burning stockade flew like gigantic sparks from a blacksmith's anvil in all directions.

The Fort was shaken to its foundation (as with an earthquake shock), and everyone present (except those in the secret) was greatly alarmed.

Yells and groans were heard, and everyone in the Fort looked at those near him, as much as to say, "Whatever has happened?"

Then, with one accord each prepared to dash off to the scene of the catastrophe, and Mr. Doone had great work



to restrain
them, till he
shouted,

“If you
value your
lives, stay
where you
are!”

THE STOCKADE WAS A COMPLETE RUIN.

Almost immediately, another fierce explosion rent the air. The third cask had exploded!

"Now," said Mr. Doone, "you may go; but, mind you, the enemy are still more numerous than we."

All scrambled down the steep stairway and tore off to the stockade, followed by their leader; but on reaching the scene of the explosions, the sight which met their gaze filled them with horror.

The stockade was a complete ruin, and the ground beyond was strewn with dead and dying men, some of them crawling away on broken limbs, and others in such agony that, beyond writhing in paroxysms of pain, they were beyond movement to escape. Some were unscathed or but slightly wounded, and were supporting or carrying away their more unfortunate comrades, and had Mr. Doone been wicked enough to order the pursuit of the beaten foe with cutlasses, scarcely a Flathead would have been left alive to tell the tale in their far-off village. They were allowed, unmolested, to do the humane work of carrying off their friends to the mainland beyond the isthmus.

Then, like good men, the members of the Fort set to work, and gathering together all the Flatheads who showed any signs of life, ministered to their wounds, in which act Mrs. Doone and Ruth took an active part. About a dozen were thus treated, while a score of dead warriors were thrown into the Umpqua, to follow their predeceased comrades to the mighty Pacific.

During the day, Simola and the two Mandans, were sent with a flag of truce—a green branch—to the Flathead camp, to ask the remnant of the warriors to come over and fetch their wounded companions, but such a dread had seized them of approaching the white men that

they declined, although an assurance was given that no them harm should befall them.

On hearing this, Mr. Doone had the wounded men placed in canoes and ferried over to the shore near the Callapuya camp, where they were left.

On the canoes returning to the island, the wounded men were carried by their comrades to the camp, and treated in the usual Indian way of "kill or cure."

After three or four days they gave signs of departing, seeing which, Rupert and Simola crossed to the camp with an oak branch of peace, and the chief came to the shore and spoke with them.

"They were about to depart," he said. "They had mistaken the power of the white men, and were sorry they had been so foolish as to quarrel with them. They had come on the war-path nearly a hundred strong, and now returned to their sorrowing relations with scarcely half that number. Why had they made enemies of the white men? He could not say. Never again would his tribe molest them, but if he might shake the great white chief (Mr. Doone) by the hand he would swear that for ever he would be his friend. Might he cross to the Fort?"

His request was granted; he shook the chief of the white men by the hand, wondering at his great stature, and when Mr. Doone made him a present of a dozen yards of red flannel, a gaudy blanket, and sundry other things, he was perfectly astounded, and at a loss to account for a man, whom he had tried to kill, sending him away laden with presents.

Next day the Flatheads with much shouting and brandishing of weapons departed, and the company of the Fort never saw or heard of them again.

CHAPTER XXI.

Beautiful Scenery of the West.—The Acorn Harvest.—Bread from Acorn Meal.—Bartering.—A Ludicrous Incident nearly turns to a Serious One.—The Furs in Store increase.—Races.—Perfect Basket-weaving.—Nick-nacks of all Kinds.—“Wokas.”—A Temascal.—A Premeditated Pilgrimage.

WITH its beautiful balmy days, spent by the Doones in work and amusement by mountain and river and in the forest, the summer glided rapidly by, bringing the glowing colours of autumn upon tree and shrub only too rapidly.

The winter foliage of the forests of the West would, to the painter, be a vision of arboreal grandeur, of which not even the pen of the poet could give more than a faint idea.

Our English woods have undeniably beautiful colouring, but the largest of them would be but a tiny patch amid the enormous primeval forests of what is now the State of Oregon. To stand on a mountain side and look down upon one of these forests clothed in its glorious autumnal robe, and stretching away beyond the range of human vision, is a sight never to be forgotten. Tint beyond tint, wave beyond wave, the leaves form a perfect sea of living, brilliant colour, which, after running the whole gamut of yellows, greens, and reds, gradually fade away into the purple, dim distance, bounded only by the horizon or interrupted by the sudden outcrop of some mighty, cragged mountain-top.

All the white men admired the magnificence of the scenes around them, which quite perplexed the Indians, who, knowing no other scenery from their birth, wondered what there could be in trees and rocks to strike the pale faces with such admiration.

With the arrival of autumn and its matured beauties, many of the Clatsops returned from the coast; these were principally the old men, squaws, and children, whose duty it was to search for and store the plentiful crop of acorns which annually fall from the patriarchal oaks on the mountain side.

After the Clatsop gatherers had been at work nearly a fortnight harvesting in the forest, the Klamaths also appeared, bent on the same labour, but as each tribe kept to their respective sides of the river, the acorn harvest was a very peaceable affair. Tons and tons of acorns were collected and stored away for bread-making during the five winter months.

Their method of making bread is curious. The acorns being husked, are ground between stones, answering to our own ancient querns, the newly-made meal being placed in rush baskets, through which water is slowly allowed to percolate, which, to a certain degree, removes the peculiar bitter flavour which it is not possible wholly to eliminate from the meal.

The meal being kneaded into dough, is made into little masses like Norfolk dumplings, about the size of a man's fist, and these being rolled in leaves are covered with hot stones and baked. When cooked, the loaves, if kept free from twigs, sand, bark, and other little odds and ends usually found in food cooked by the natives, are quite palatable, and when concomitant to a piece of salmon baked in vine leaves, are even relished by white men.

By the end of October, the remainder of the Clatsops returned from the coast; their long bidarkies laden with six months' spoil in the way of peltries, dried fish, etc.

Then, having rehabilitated their village, trading commenced at the Fort, and for two or three weeks all hands were kept busy bartering for seal and seal-otter skins, also the skins of certain rare aquatic fowl. Gesticulating, yelling, and shouting, fierce looks, supplicating manners, unconcern, eagerness, and a dozen other characteristic traits were shown by the Indians in their dealings, but all disregarded by the traders, who, having fixed a price, adhered to it.

The redskins showed their cunning nature in every way by keeping the best until the last, trying to palm off the inferior skins for the better kind; hiding spear holes or torn places with great ingenuity, and lying in the most barefaced way, frequently without even the slightest need or advantage.

Never more than twenty redskins were allowed upon the island at one time; but as they made as much noise as three times the number of ordinary people, it was sufficiently lively for all concerned.

The Clatsops were accomplished thieves, and a sharp eye had to be kept upon them, but even then they now and again succeeded in filching small articles.

Some of these thefts led to scrimmages between the traders and the Indians; one of these was of such a comical nature that it may be as well to mention it.

Bernard had made a bargain with a big Klamath (who were usually much more honest in their dealings than the Clatsops) to purchase a certain skin for twelve measures of paint, ten of red and two of blue. The colour was a dry powder, and Bernard measured out ten thimblefuls of

red colour into the man's pouch, and stood the tin down on the table while he turned round to reach down the tin of blue.

Probably the sight of the unguarded tin of resplendent red colour was too much for the Indian's integrity; for when Bernard turned round again he saw some colour spilt on the table which he had not noticed before. He accused the Indian of purloining some more paint, but the man denied it, and refused to have the quantity in his bead-worked pouch remeasured; whereupon Bernard attempted to take the pouch away from him by force.

They were both big, strong fellows, but Bernard's wrestling skill gave him the mastery over the red man, and very soon the latter was thrown upon the floor, but even then he clung tenaciously to his treasure, and the two, amid much laughter, rolled over and over, and as they both wallowed into a pool of water, caused by their overturning a washtub, the pouch burst, and the powder escaping, flew over the antagonists; so that in a minute or so it looked as if a combat to the death was being enacted, for the water and the paint mixing caused both men appear to be covered with blood.

Bernard ultimately obtained the pouch, but by this time so little colour remained in it that, for purposes of investigation, there was not sufficient left to prove the Indian's guilt.

Regaining his feet, Bernard held the pouch aloft in a jeering manner, which so greatly exasperated "Big Rock" that he struck the white man in the chest with his clenched fist, and Bernard promptly replied with a fair and square blow between the eyes which sent "Big Rock" off his legs as clean as if he had been kicked by a mule.

The poor fellow was dazed, and with true pluck Bernard

tepped forward and helped the fallen man to his feet, holding out his hand frankly to his late opponent.

"Big Rock," whose hand had sought his knife, drew it, but seeing that the pale face meant him no harm, with a sudden dash cast it at Bernard's feet, and, seizing his hand, grasped it cordially and heartily.

"White Bear" (Bernard's cognomen), said he, "have we not hunted together, and sat in the same canoe? Have we not climbed together, and are we not brothers? Does brother fight against brother? Never! Let us, therefore, be friends and brothers again."

So "Big Rock" and "White Bear" shook hands again and the incident was over.

Ruth, who stood trembling by, happened to have a mirror in her hand, which Mr. Doone held to each of the belligerents, that they might see their countenances, which were daubed and streaked with vermilion in all directions. This produced a roar of laughter, and the squabble ended very quietly, for "Big Rock" not only received ten measures of red and two of blue paint, but Mr. Doone added six more of yellow, which quite healed the wounded feelings of the Klamath.

The Klamaths had a great quantity of deer, muskrat, beaver, fox, land otter, minx, and other skins, which in due course found their way into the stores of the Fort.

By having these two powerful tribes encamped by them, the Doones secured the services of about four hundred persons, with no other outlay than what they chose to give for the peltries purchased. They had now an enormous quantity of furs, but till some means could be discovered of communicating with a civilised place they could not possibly dispose of them.

During the winter the boys spent more of their time

among the Indians than at home, and being ever eager to learn what they could of the manners and customs of their friends, never let an opportunity of gaining knowledge slip idly away.

They tasted everything the Klamaths ate, and some strange things were among the number; among them being snakes, lizards, horse chestnuts, grass seeds, pine seeds, tulé roots, and even grass and clover, which are reckoned quite luxuries and fattening articles of diet.

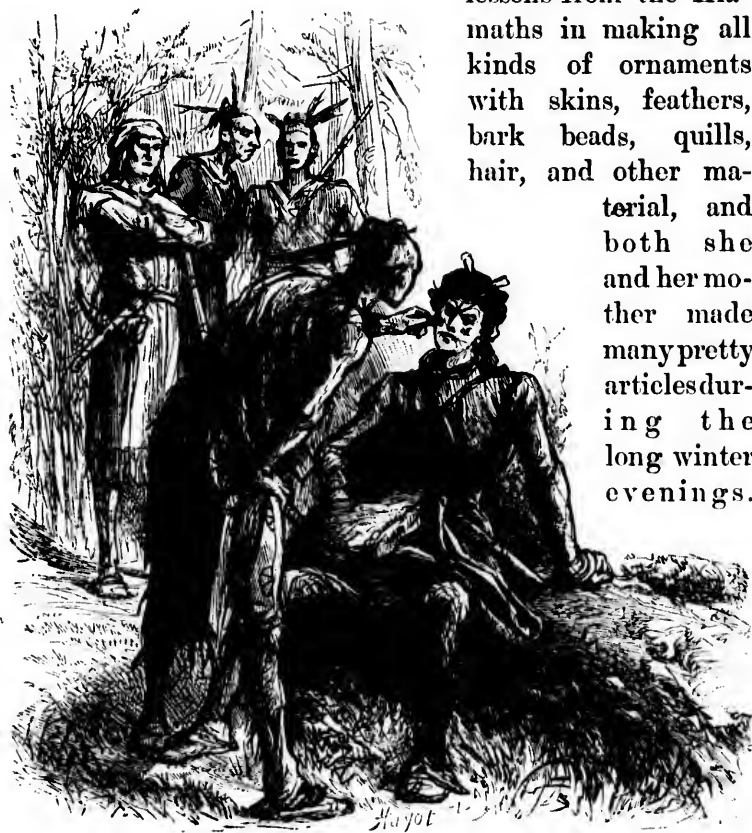
Running races was a favourite amusement among the natives, and such powers of endurance did they possess that the white men were quite outdone by them. Some of their races were to the top of a mountain spur, which was about three miles distant, and upwards of 1,000 feet high. Out and back over rough ground and various impediments, with a stiff rocky climb, was sometimes accomplished by the winner under an hour. So keenly were these races contested for some paltry prize, such as a knife, spoon, or a row of beads, that the winner would sometimes fall at the end of the race and lapse into a state of insensibility for some time, and the exertion on more than one occasion caused bleeding at the nose to the contestants.

The women were very clever at weaving baskets and bowls out of a kind of sedge-grass, and taught Ruth the art as far as they could; but try as she would, with all diligence and patience, she could not make more than one article in half-a-dozen thoroughly water-tight, as her teachers did. They, from long experience, not only made their sedge vessels water-tight, but actually used them for boiling food in.

This process was accomplished by dropping hot stones into the water until it boiled, and Ruth noticed that an Indian squaw could make a basket of water boil *much*

quicker by placing hot stones *in* it, than she herself could by setting a saucepan *over* the hottest fire.

Another thing which pleased pretty Ruth, was to take lessons from the Klamaths in making all kinds of ornaments with skins, feathers, bark beads, quills, hair, and other material, and both she and her mother made many pretty articles during the long winter evenings.



BERNARD TRYING ON INDIAN PAINT.

Slippers, caps, gaiters, belts, pouches, gun and knife cases, and many other things were worked and presented to Mr. Doone and the boys; so that at last they were tricked out in all the bravery of the Indians, except the decoration

of their faces with paint; an ordeal which Bernard once submitted to, but found it far too sticky and uncomfortable to indulge in again.

Like the Indians, they allowed their hair to grow long, and Mr. Doone's beard, never being cut, soon lengthened down to the region of his waist, and in the winter he wore it tucked into his hunting shirt to keep his chest warm.

Among the Indian articles of diet which the boys grew to become fond of, was the *wokas* of the Klamaths. "Wokas" is the seed of the water lily, which the Indians collected in the autumn on the Klamath Lakes.

Men, women, and children construct large rafts and float about among the great lily beds on the shallow part of the lakes gathering the seed vessels. When the rafts are full of the lily capsules, they are taken ashore, and the little bulbs spread out to dry; this being accomplished, a great thrashing takes place, and the seed is stored away in fibre bags for winter use.

When a little was required for consumption it was shelled by parching over some live embers, being first placed in a shallow sedge basket. This was ground into meal and formed into cakes. The Indians declared that a meal of wokas gave them greater staying power than any other food they knew of, and upon trial the boys found that it was a food upon which great faith might be placed where tasks of endurance had to be performed. It was to the Klamaths what porridge is to the Scotsman, or the leaf of the coca plant to the natives of Central and South America.

Among their medical customs are many in which sheer ignorance or credulous superstition play the principal part, and faith has to go farther than physic.

One cure they have, however, which is frequently tried with great success. This is what they call a *tamascal* (sweating house), which is really a primitive kind of Turkish bath. Belton, on one occasion was not at all well, and although Mr. Doone prescribed for him from his simple medical stores, yet he did not appear to regain his normal health, and, obtaining Mr. Doone's consent, ventured to try the *tamascal*.

One was soon constructed thus :

A large deep hole was dug in the ground near the bank of the river, and a dome of bent boughs, grass and earth constructed over it. Only one entrance was left, just large enough for a man to squeeze himself through. Belton and two Indians entered, and the former being placed, naked, on a log of wood, the performance commenced.

Heated stones were handed in through the aperture (which was closed with a deerskin), and placed round the patient, and water poured upon them. This caused clouds of steam to rise, and very soon Belton was in a streaming perspiration.

.Then, having been parboiled, he was pushed through the opening, when he was seized by four Indians, who unceremoniously soused him in a pool of icy-cold water, which took his breath away, and made him feel that one *tamascal* in a lifetime was quite, if not more than sufficient.

This performance was repeated *six* times ! and the *patient*, who by this time had become a *victim* (much to the enjoyment of the white men who stood around, expecting poor Belton to give in and cry a go), was next seized by two more inquisitors, wrapped in blankets, carried to a lodge and put to bed, limp and tired out.

Next morning, after fifteen hours' sou.¹ sleep, he

awoke, nearly dead—with hunger. His wants were supplied, and in an hour he was allowed to rise and dress, feeling as well as he had ever felt in his life! So much for Indian treatment.

It was such a novel idea that all the white men were in turn taken with imaginary illness, and successively tried the *tamasca*, each testifying to its wonderful exhilarating virtues, and even Mrs. Doone and Ruth, in the hands of the squaws, took their turn, and after it was over admired it as much as the men. Here was the primitive idea of the Turkish bath among savages; probably there is nothing new beneath the sun.

Christmas and New Year's Day were kept with great feasting and rejoicing; and although the Indians had never heard of the festivals before the advent of the white men, yet, so fond are they of dress, pageantry, feasting and drinking, that they entered into the carnival with the utmost zest, and under the leadership of Rupert and Bernard, processions were formed, dances organized, and feasts prepared, which lasted from Christmas Day till New Year's Day without intermission!

The Indians all agreed that they had never known such times, and probably spoke the truth.

In January, 1840, a council of white men was held at the Fort, to devise some means of reaching a place of civilisation, where they might find a market for the skins, and procure fresh supplies of barter-goods, clothes, and various necessary stores.

The result of the long and earnest "palaver" was, that early in the spring, the two boys, with Polton and Simola, should proceed with the Klamaths to their home on the Lake of that name, and from thence make the best of their way to the little town of Yerba Buena, and, if possible,

bring back the *William III.* schooner which had been captured by *The Hunter* in the memorable engagement on the outward voyage.

The boys were delighted with the prospect of such an adventurous journey, and longed for the lagging winter, with its cold rains, to glide away, and give them the dry, bright days of spring, that they might commence their contemplated pilgrimage.

CHAPTER XXII.

Programme of a Pilgrimage to Yerba Buena.—The Quartette start.—
Up the Umpqua.—The Camp.—A Simple Mode of Carrying Goods.
—Sport in the Klamath Region.—The Tu'é.—Towards the Sea in
Canoes.—An Earthly Eden.—Farewell to the Klamaths.

TOWARDS the end of March, 1840, the weather set in very fine, with every prospect of a fine spring, which was evinced by the early show of bursting buds and green-tipped grass. These signs soon made themselves apparent by causing uneasiness to the Klamath Indians, who began to talk of departing to their Great Lakes for the summer.

Mr. Doone had arranged with the old chief that Rupert, Bernard, Polton, and Simola, who were to form the little expedition to Yerba Buena, should accompany them as far as the Lakes, whence they could push on alone.

The programme, as laid out by Mr. Doone, was simple enough on paper, but, oh! the difference when trackless wilds have to be passed; where the skill and resourcefulness of the traveller are his only safeguards against wild men, wild beasts, the elements, and death in many forms, including that from hunger.

“Starting early in April,” said Mr. Doone, “you will proceed by bateau to the head waters of the Umpqua, whence, with your Indian escort, you will journey on foot to the Klamath Lakes, by way of a defile or pass in the Cascade Mountains, if the snow will permit you to do so,

as in these high altitudes it frequently lies till quite late in the spring.

“ A week or two will be spent at the Lakes, and then the quartette will re-embark and continue the journey by bateau sixty miles down the Klamath River.

“ Having abandoned the water, the most difficult portion of the journey will commence, as you will find yourselves in the terribly mountainous district of Mount Shasta (14,440 feet high), a region full of dangers, wild, barren, and cold; the home of the mountain lion and grizzly bear.

“ Proceeding due south, you will, in about one hundred and fifty miles after leaving the Klamath Lake, strike the Sacramento River, whose upper waters are not navigable, being rocky and full of rapids. Keep near its banks, and follow its windings until it presents a fair surface, when, by boat, canoe, or raft, you can, with the current, continue south to the mouth of the Sacramento. It falls into a very large bay, some fifty miles long and twenty wide.

“ Having arrived safely at the little village of Martinez, you will procure a boat to convey you across the bay to Yerba Buena, where you will endeavour to secure a vessel large enough to convey us to England. The pirate ship, *William III.*, if she is still unclaimed, would be the very vessel for our purpose.”

This was the main plan of the projected journey, but, as ideas occurred to him, Mr. Doone added scores of little details and pieces of advice for his sons' benefit.

Great preparations were made, in a quiet way, for the long and dangerous journey, which, it was hoped, would be accomplished in less than three months, there being about a thousand miles of trackless, or rather pathless, country between them and their destination.

Early in April, all being ready, the tribe of Klamaths

accompanied by our heroes, set off on their long journey, amid much yelling, gun firing, singing, and other wild tokens of delight common to savages.

Belton tried his utmost to accompany the brothers, but, as Bernard slyly remarked :

“ You will be very worthily employed if you look to the welfare of Ruth during our absence.”

Ruth blushed, and reminded her brother that she was quite capable of taking care of herself, a remark that was possibly meant as much for Belton as Bernard.

The paddle of one hundred miles up the Umpqua was very pleasant to the boys, who, having mastered the Klamath language, joined in the wild paddle chants, which made the rocks and woods ring and echo again, while the birds flew frightened to shelter, as the ten large flat-bottomed canoes or bateaux were propelled against the current by the sinewy arms of the noisy natives.

On the third day the river became very rocky and shallow, so that towards evening they could go no farther, whereupon, disembarking, they hauled the skin canoes upon land and camped for the night.

Oh! what a wild scene it was. It looked a very pandemonium. Rocks and trees were fitfully lighted by the glare of five-and-twenty camp fires, round which men, women, and children were assembled, performing various culinary duties; their half-clothed forms and bronzed limbs made them look more like a horde of demons than human beings.

All this the boys took in and enjoyed immensely, for such scenes fall to the lot of but few to witness, and what would take pages to describe must be left to the vivid imagination of the reader to picture for himself. The materials are ample: bare rocks, various kinds of trees,

gullies, upturned canoes, savage men, women and children, yelping dogs, water, glowing fires, much smoke, more talk and noise, and a great deal of smell. Blend these, reader, to your own taste, and, doubtless, you will form a very fair picture of Indian camp life; one probably far more presentable to civilised eyes and ears than the actual living camp itself, with its noisome smells and sights, which to a novice would at least take away his appetite for the little *delicacies* offered by the Indian cooks!

The long tramp over the Cascade Mountains (a distance, by the tortuous route that had to be threaded with all the baggage, of nearly one hundred and fifty miles) was a very trying one, but, having very little regard for the time spent on the journey, the Klamaths took matters very quietly.

The boats were laid bottom upward in a ravine, so profusely covered with tangled brushwood that none but themselves would be likely to look for such things as skin boats in such a wild place.

The goods and chattels of the party were bound up in packs of various weights and sizes, to suit the varying ages and degrees of strength of the carriers. As usual, the squaws were made the principal beasts of burden, and carried the heaviest loads, while many of the men were loadless, or only deigned to carry a few light articles, and these more for their own use than to be of any service to the tribe or family.

One curious mode of carrying heavy loads the boys quite admired, both for its simplicity and its utility.

A couple of strong, straight saplings, about sixteen feet long, were cut down, and being placed on the ground across each other, in the form of a long letter X, they were strongly bound at the crossing with sinews. The join was made about six feet from the ends of the poles,

the tips of which were about three feet apart, like a pair of shafts. Between these shafts a squaw took her place, with another woman on either hand to help her drag the burden. From the bifurcation to the after end, pieces of light wood were lashed across, and upon these the packs of three or four women were placed, the odd spaces being filled with pots and pans for cooking and usually a child or two. The latter, if young, were fastened between a couple of pieces of birch bark, like a tortoise between its shells, to prevent kicking, and then tied to the wheelless cart.

Such is an Indian lorry; light, simple, useful, and *cheap!*

The journey to the Lakes took nearly a fortnight, and so devoid was the lofty mountain range of sustenance, both in the way of game, shrubs, and roots, that everyone set up a cry of joy when the distant lodges of the Klamath village came in view.

Two of the days occupied in progressing through the pass had been dreadfully wet and bitterly cold; and it was a wonderful sight to the white men to see how well the little ill-clad children stood the inclemency of the weather. Use, or rather the habitual non-use of clothing, seemed to them a second nature.

Several hundred Klamaths came out to meet their returning tribesmen, and appeared awe-stricken to see white men among them, most of them never having seen one before.

Their curiosity was very great, and when Rupert and Bernard, having been led to the Council Lodge of the supreme chief, offered to shake hands with the old sachem, he appeared to look upon the ceremony as a kind of honour much too great for him; but when the young men spoke

to him in his own language he became quite alarmed, and looked upon them as very uncanny beings, with something of a touch of the supernatural in them.

Simola, however, soon put matters right, and during the ten days the little party from Fort Cornwall stayed among the Klamaths they were honoured in every way. Hunting and fishing parties were organized, and such excellent sport enjoyed that it was with great reluctance they tore themselves away from such comfortable quarters and boon companions.

The principal lake was so vast as to look like an inland sea, and in their fishing expeditions upon it they went quite out of sight of land.

One thing that struck the boys was the tremendous size of the bulrushes at the south end of the lake, some they measured being fifteen feet high, and having a head like a policeman's staff. This was used as an esculent by the Klamaths, who called the plant *tulé*, and averred that farther south, in the marsh lands, it was quite common.

Two canoes, each with four paddles, were placed at the disposal of the voyageurs, to take them upon the next section of their journey down the Klamath River towards the sea.

On the 10th of May the white men left Klamath Lake amid a very noisy ovation, and were paddled down the river by a party of their swarthy friends, twelve in number.

The first night's camping-place was at the mouth of a tributary river coming in from the left, and gave the brothers a view of scenery such as surpassed all they had hitherto seen.

Trees of many kinds grew on every side, and spring flowers lined the river banks in wondrous profusion. The tributary river joined the parent stream by leaping over a

foaming cascade, some score feet high, with such impetuosity that the rush of water had fretted the lofty banks on the opposite side of the river into a strange fret-work of caves and pinnacles, which, in the waning light, appeared to be some palace of enchantment, built by fairy hands.

Over the fall great trees grew, and threw both branch and root in gnarled and serpentine forms over the seething current, into whose swelling bosom huge trailing ropes of parasitic plants trailed down their emerald-leaved tendrils, as if sporting with the foam-flecked water beneath.

Birds of many kinds perched in a most unconcerned manner on swaying boughs, as if man was to them a friendly animal, instead of being frequently their most relentless enemy.

Far away (but looking very near), high above even the surrounding mountains, rose the snowy peak of Mount Shasta, now basking in the pink light of the great red sun, slowly sinking in the distant Pacific.

"Is not this a grand scene, Polton?" queried Bernard. "Can you conceive anything more sublime and romantic?"

"Axing your leave, Master Bernard," was the reply; "but I'd sooner have a pipe of 'bacca!"

Truly a case of throwing pearls before—a sailor! On the second evening they camped at the mouth of another stream, which also came in from the south. Up this they turned for half-a-mile and disembarked upon the bank in a most romantic spot, where the foot of a civilised man had probably never trod; neither perhaps that of a red man for a long time, as the curious domed houses of the beaver were seen on all sides, unmolested and unseen.

Next morning the boys were up at daybreak, and stealing from the camp watched the curious little flat-tailed

tree-fellers at work, as they were the first they had seen in a colony, although near Fort Cornwall they had now and again seen one or two.

Four were shot and skinned as trophies, and breakfast having been discussed they embarked and pushed up stream, due south. This stream being navigable, but snaggy and rocky, it took them the whole day to ascend a distance of twenty-five miles, to a point where there was so little water, that they could proceed no farther by canoe.

Here, on a grassy knoll overlooking the stream, the Klamaths made the last camp for their young white friends, who from this point were to journey by themselves.

In the morning presents were given to each of the Indians, who, after breakfast, set out on their return journey, leaving the white men to prosecute their rugged and perilous way alone through the Shasta region.

Without a care or trouble in the world, the little party set off on their journey due south, carolling in the bright morning sunshine as blithely as a posse of boys returning carelessly homeward from a village school.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Mount Shasta District.—Caught in a Strange Valley.—The Cave with a Hole through it.—The Cougar.—Food at Last.—Raw Mutton.—A Bullet Ballot.—Bernard's Adventure.—A Strange Rope.—Out of the Vale of Despair.—Fire, the Friend of Man.

As the little party toiled on, they found that Mr. Doone's *direction*, "go due south," was very different to its *accomplishment*, for, upon the second day, they found themselves being hemmed in on all sides by wild mountains, round whose craggy sides they had to make long detours.

Forests, rocks, dashing streams, dreadful precipices, and dangerous defiles, surrounded and interrupted them whichever way they turned; and by noon of the third day they came to a spot near Mount Shasta (nearly as high as Mont Blanc), which appeared to be their *ultima thule*. It was a rocky valley in which scarcely a blade of grass or anything else grew, and, so far as they could see, it had no outlet to the south, west, or east, but only the one rocky gully down which they had scrambled from the north. It was a dismal place, and nothing but a large straggling pool of water, studded with rocky islets, was to be seen in its whole expanse.

Such a place contained nothing in the way of food, either animal or vegetable, and their stock of eatables was none too large, as a man cannot, besides his accoutrements, carry more food than will last a few days, and the little party, feeling certain of their ability of providing suste-

nance with their guns, had not troubled themselves much for the morrow, leaving it to take care of itself.

While they continued searching round the valley for a means of escape, feeling like four mice in a breadpan, to their chagrin they had neither fire nor food with which to cheer themselves. They had managed badly with their provisions, and now had to suffer for it.

The night was cold, very cold for the time of year; so wrapping themselves up in their blankets, they huddled together for warmth in a little nook among the rocks. During the night it became so cold that they could scarcely sleep, a fact due to their great elevation, for they were upwards of a mile above sea level.

They awoke, tired, stiff, cold, and hungry; and to make matters more miserable for them it was raining; a cold, sleety drizzle which chilled them through and through.

What should they do?

A council was held and the result was, that while Bernard and Rupert scoured the place for something in the way of food, Simola and Polton were to make a survey of the valley towards the south, to find a means of exit, the four agreeing to meet again at their sleeping nook of the previous night when the sun was due south (noon).

Simola and Polton wandered and climbed for two or three hours, slipping, bruising, and hurting themselves on the wet rocks, but outlet they could find none. Faint with their exertions and hunger, they wandered on hopelessly, till suddenly Polton stopped to examine a hole in the wall of the valley, which might lead to the lair of some wild animal. Both men stooped to look into the aperture, when what was their surprise to find that, at a distance of

twenty or thirty feet along the tunnel-shaped opening, they could perceive daylight.

"Hallo!" said Polton, "why that's the very place we want; but how deep is it on the other side? Maybe we should want the length of a ship's cable to get soundings out of yon porthole."

"Crawl in, friend, and peep over," rejoined Simola.

"Arter you, Simmy," replied Polton. "I'm a poor hand at crawling; try your luck, sonny, you're thinner than me."

Down went Simola's gun, and dropping on his hands and knees, in he went; but in another minute he retreated quicker than he entered, for an ominous snarl on the right of the cave showed it to be tenanted by some wild animal.

Both took to their heels and made off a hundred yards or so, when they stopped to reconnoitre. Simola had dropped his cap near the entrance of the cave, and being without his gun also, resolved to venture back for their recapture, under cover of Polton's musket.

They laughed at their own cowardice, and acknowledged that they were no better than a couple of schoolboys; but it was only an instance of sudden panic, such as often occurs. When one runs others follow, without hesitating or waiting to know why; but a little time for reflection brings the bold man to a halt, he faces the danger, others support him, and usually the danger, often imaginary, is overcome.

They had only returned a few paces towards the cave when they again came to a halt, for they saw first a great paw and then a head protrude stealthily from the mouth of the cave. They knew the animal in a moment.

It was a cougar or puma, one of the panther tribe. Both men advanced rapidly towards the animal, Simola especially so, for fear the puma might make a meal of his

beaver-skin cap. Seeing them return, the animal slunk into his den, and try all they could, nothing would induce him to budge from his hiding-place; so at last Simola sent Polton back to the rendezvous, while he kept guard over the puma.

Polton found the boys awaiting him at the pool, having luckily with them a young mountain sheep, which they had shot. Two had been killed, but one fell into a ravine from which it was impossible to recover it.

They now had meat in plenty, but no fire with which to cook it, for not a stick could be found in the whole valley.

One of them shouldered the mutton, and limping, tired and downhearted, they joined the picket at the den, which was at once their salvation and their dread; for doubtless if they killed the puma they could crawl through the cave and emerge on the other side, so as to make good their escape from the terrible desolation of the valley, which they termed the "Vale of Despair."

The sheep was skinned and the hide and offal laid near the entrance to the cave, with the hope of enticing the puma forth, to offer himself as a target for their four guns.

The wily animal declined the offer, and the sun set, leaving the four companions, partially exhausted with hunger, to face another cold night, in which the silent-footed animal might attempt to assuage his hunger by killing one of them.

It was a cold, wet night, and at the first dawn of day the four companions turned out stiff and chilled to the bone.

No puma came forth, although they sat for a weary two hours, silently watching behind the great rocks.

Forty hours' fast is no joke, and Polton at last cried out—"Mates, I'm not going to starve any longer while there is good meat to be had, and if we have no fire I mean to eat my share raw."

While the others looked on with loathing, he cut off some nice pieces, chopped them very fine with his knife, and sprinkling the mess with gunpowder to season it, consumed it with avidity.

The loathing of the others gave place to a desire to try a sample, and soon each had his knife at work, and a good meal was made. Of the poor sheep but some inconsiderable fragments remained, such was the keenness of their appetites.

Trotting about to circulate their blood, Rupert remarked: "Who is game to beard the leopard in his den?"

To which no one replied, till Simola asserted that unless some one did, the puma would starve them out.

After much talk and controversy all four agreed that it was their only chance to escape from the valley, so it was decided to ballot and see who should be either the hero or victim of the day.

Four bullets were accordingly placed in a cap, one of which was marked with a knife.

Amid much excitement Rupert drew first.

No mark was on his bullet.

Joy illumined his face; the dread task was not his.

Simola excitedly thrust in his hand, and drew forth a bullet, with like result. Polton and Bernard had still to draw.

Polton, with glittering eyes and bounding heart, thrust in his great hand and drew forth a bullet, which he held up to the scrutiny of the others.

It was not marked!

The marked bullet was therefore left for poor Bernard.

Without a moment's hesitation, and wishing to get his task over, he quietly hitched up his collar round his throat, took an extra pull at his waist-belt, and marching up to the cave, coolly knelt down, and, to the surprise of the others, fired his piece straight into the opening.

This, he explained, was to give him an opportunity of loading his flintlock more carefully, for fear of a missfire.

All ready; he placed his hunting-knife in his breast, where he could easily grasp it, and, dropping on his knees, thrust his head into the cave.

There was a light at the far end, for through the distant aperture he could see the sky, but no puma was in sight. No doubt, therefore, the animal was in an offshoot of the cave, either on the right or left hand.

Pushing his gun ahead, he crept cautiously along, a few inches at a time.

Forward he went, but although in his progress he could faintly discover clefts and separations in the rocks, he could see nothing of the puma.

His heart beat fast, for the absence of his quarry was now more a source of alarm than its presence would have been.

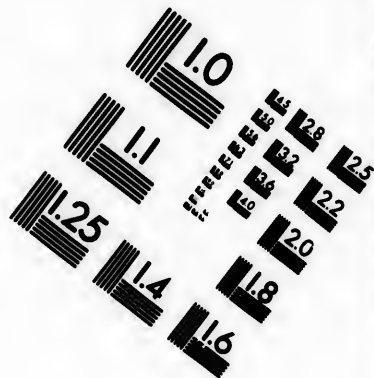
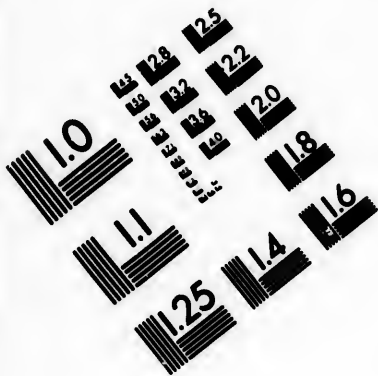
He expected to have seen the creature in its lair, but now he was perplexed, and felt every instant as if he were about to be pounced upon from behind.

Onward he crawled, his nerves braced to their utmost tension.

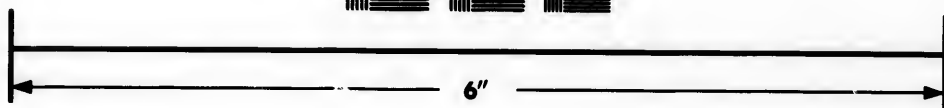
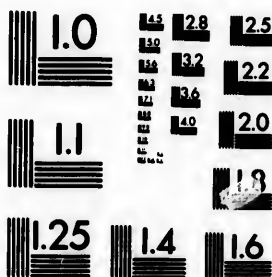
At length he was within ten feet of the further open end of the cave, when there was a snarl and a roar *behind* his very heels!

He gave himself up for lost, as the cave was not wide enough for him to turn his gun in, nor lofty enough for him to kneel upright.





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With all his might he pulled himself forward in a desperate attempt to reach the further exit, but in doing so he somehow touched the trigger, and his gun was discharged, bringing great pieces of the roof down upon him.

The puma, frightened at the report, rushed out at the entrance, and was immediately shot by the three watchers.

Poor Bernard was partly stunned by the falling rock, and nearly choked by the gunpowder, but, to his comrades' inquiries, managed to assure them he was not much hurt.

Rupert quickly entered the tunnel-like cave, and found his brother prostrate on his face, quite unconscious, pressed down by several heavy pieces of rock, which he at once removed and passed to those behind him, who conveyed them out of the cave.

Lying flat upon his brother, he just managed to squeeze past him, and looked out of the further aperture.

The rock dropped sheer down a good thirty feet, and then, in hummocky masses, extended at a steep slope down to a woody valley some two miles away.

Répassing Bernard, he seized him by the feet and dragged him to the exit, where he could obtain fresh air. He felt his limbs, but could discover no injury. He had simply fainted from shock and excitement, and soon came to. He sat up, and having eaten a little lean, raw mutton, quickly revived.

All sat outside the cave for an hour's rest, and then falling upon the puma, they skinned him, and from his hide and that of the sheep they made a rope with which to lower themselves down the cliff.

Fastening it round a rock, they threw the end over, and found it reached within a dozen feet of the ground.

Simola, being lightest, went first, to test the strength of their improvised rope.

He landed safely.

Belts were added to the rope, and the puma, cooking pot, guns, and other articles were lowered to him. Then, successively, the remaining three men descended, and although Rupert's thirteen stone tried the rope exceedingly, yet it held firmly, and in a few minutes they had the pleasure of knowing that "The Valley of Despair" was passed in safety.

Carrying the horrid-looking, skinless carcase of the puma in turns, the party made for the forest in the valley, where, with flint and steel, a fire was lighted, and after a tantalising pause, a hearty, cooked meal was once again enjoyed.

"What a friend man has in fire," sententiously remarked Bernard. "What would flesh be without it?"

"True," quoth Polton, as he lighted his pipe, "what would *tobacco* be without it?"

CHAPTER XXIV.

Fertility and Plenty once more.—A Peep at the History of California.—
Californian Indians.—Their Food.—Burial Customs.—The Sacra-
ment.—The Wish-Ton-Wish.—Spanish Cruelty.

EACH successive day of their journey now become more enjoyable, for the desolate mountains gave place to green valleys and tangled woods, and the cold winds to beautifully warm, and even hot, days, and tolerably cool nights. Game was plentiful, and water to be had everywhere, so that the party wanted for nothing. They thoroughly enjoyed their pleasant outdoor life, and, as usual in wild places, quite disregarded time, pushing on when they had a mind, or stopping to shoot or fish when so disposed.

At length, one morning, as they travelled onward, they espied in the hazy distance a winding river, glistening in the sun, which made it look like quicksilver amid the misty surroundings. As the early sun burst through the haze of the morning, they saw that the river was of fair proportions, and by mid-day they could see Indian lodges and people upon its banks.

The Indians were peaceful but suspicious, not at all liking white men, who had at times treated them harshly. Probably it would be more correct to say that farther south the Indians were treated with great austerity, both by the priesthood and the few white men who found their way to the country from other parts.

Just a little digression to make our story better understood. In 1642 the first attempt at colonisation of this region was made by the Jesuits, who sent many missionaries into the country, and built mission houses and generally governed, or misgoverned, the country with a high and heavy hand, till they were expelled in 1767.

In 1768 Upper California was occupied by an expedition sent from Mexico, and colonised by the establishment of a number of mission stations under the Franciscans, which attained to a fair state of prosperity for all but the poor aborigines, who appear to have been looked upon as cattle or wild animals, and treated as such.

In 1823 the missionaries refused to recognise the authority of the Mexican Government, which at that period endeavoured to turn it into a province or state, and accordingly the Mexicans in 1833 suppressed the mission stations and secularised their property.

Thus at the time of our friends' visit California belonged to the Mexicans, and it was about this time that it began to attract the attention of both Americans and Englishmen, and, as a matter of course, petty revolutions occurred, which greatly loosened the control of the Mexicans over the country, and finally, in 1848, California was ceded to the United States. A few weeks later the gold fever broke out, but with that we have nothing to do, as that happened just eight years *after* the period at which we have arrived in our story, viz., May, 1840.

Our little party, after some show of reluctance, were allowed to enter the Indian village, and after food had been set before them, and a friendly pipe indulged in, a more favourable view of their visitors was taken by the natives, and finally, on receiving a few trinkets as presents, they became quite friendly.

Two days were spent with these people, so as to gain an insight into their mode of life, and to hear what was going on in those regions.

Their houses, or lodges, are built in a peculiar manner. A circular hole being dug in the ground, about four feet deep and ten feet across, a thick, upright post is planted firmly in the centre, rising to a height of eight or nine feet. Poles are then laid from the sides of the hole to this post, and on them matting, twigs, reeds, or even sods and stones, are laid, and the dwelling is complete. The fire burns near the centre, and emits a pungent smoke, which, although it appears to have little effect on the natives, is quite painful and even unendurable to Europeans. A hole in the roof serves for a chimney, and a hole cut in the side for a doorway. Nothing could be simpler, surely. No chimney pots to be blown off, or hinges or locks to break!

The bed is constructed upon a raised platform of poles and reeds, comfortable coverings being made from skins and warm blankets woven from geese feathers. Such is a Californian native's home.

Acorn bread and wild clover, as a kind of salad, were placed as luxuries before our heroes, who, being used to an omnivorous fare, found the food fairly palatable when eaten with juicy antelope steaks. Grasshoppers, eaten *au naturel*, or made into a kind of cake, are used as food by these people, just as Arabs eat the locust, but, fortunately for our friends, these delicacies were not just then in season.

Neither Rupert nor Bernard could for a long while obtain any sleep during their first night in the camp, because of the dreadful howling and moaning of a

number of women in a hut located close to their sleeping place.

Thinking they were prisoners or slaves, they inquired next morning of the chief the meaning of the hideous noise. They were informed that it was their custom to cremate the dead, and for a certain period loud wailings were nightly kept up by the female relatives: hence the doleful noises which disturbed the white men's slumber. The chief sent for two of the mourners, who appeared with the lower part of their faces daubed with some black, sticky pigment, which made them look hideous. This was the mourning they wore for their relative, and indeed was part of the defunct kinsman.

When the cremation has taken place, a certain portion of the embers of the deceased is mixed with pine-resin, which is liberally plastered over the lower portion of the naturally ugly faces of the female relatives as a mark of respect to the dead—a strange custom truly.

The white men found to their joy that the river on whose banks they stood was the Sacramento, and, having bartered certain brass buttons, two knives and a kettle, for a couple of small canoes, they proceeded rejoicing on their way, glad to think their toilsome tramp over rocky mountains and almost impenetrable woods was at an end. For the remainder of the journey the water would take them quietly along without much exertion, which was indeed a blessing, seeing that they were footsore, and their clothes in a very dilapidated condition.

From the point of embarkation to the mouth of the Sacramento was a distance of about two hundred and fifty miles, and this the little party hoped to accomplish in about eight or ten days, having the stream with them; but

as they proceeded the country was so lovely that they could not resist going ashore here and there for a day or so.

Game was plentiful, and the days very warm—at times almost too much so.

Bears, deer, wolves, otters, foxes and wild cats were among the animals which fell victims to their guns on their several expeditions, while the peculiar crested quail supplied them with several dainty meals.

Speaking of deer, Simola did a strange thing one day which deserves mention :

Wanting some fresh meat, Rupert and Simola went ashore to provide some, but met with little success, only bagging a bush turkey.

On arriving at the river bank to join their friends, the canoe was not in sight, and they sat down on a fallen tree to wait. Tiring of inactivity, Rupert returned to the woods to see if he could add to their stock of provisions, and in a few minutes started a noble deer and fired at it, but the bullet found a billet in a tree trunk, and the deer, unhurt, darted off towards the river.

Strangely enough it made for the very spot where Simola silently sat watching the flowing stream.

Rupert shouted, "Look out, deer!" and Simola sprang to his feet; but before he could unsling his gun the deer was upon him. Quick as lightning the half-breed drew his hunting knife and made a mighty stab at the flying animal, and by a lucky chance pierced its heart, the animal falling dead over the bank into the river. It was a wonderful achievement, and no doubt great luck attended the stroke.

One day having wandered some ten or twelve miles eastward from the river bank, they came upon a large tract of rolling prairie land, upon which they observed

hundreds of little mounds, like mole-hills but much larger, near which scampered a number of little animals about the size of a rabbit, but more resembling the marmot in form.

These animals Simola called spermophiles, but our heroes had no difficulty, upon a closer view, in identifying them as the "prairie dog," or, as the Indians call them, wish-ton-wish.

The little fellows when not too closely approached sat by their domed burrows, and gave forth tiny barks, which appeared quite ludicrous when accompanied by an inordinate amount of wagging of their three-inch tails.

English-like they could not see an animal in a wild state without a desire to kill it, and accordingly a dozen were quickly shot and skinned.

Half-way down the Sacramento they came to a valley which was perfectly ablaze with flowers, and the four men were so astonished with the profusion that they rested on their paddles in utter admiration, and suddenly, with one accord, both canoes were turned shoreward that their occupants might revel in such a floral ramble as they had never indulged in before, although they had viewed many beautiful scenes, made still more beautiful by the rich colouring and fragrance of its flowers.

"Surely," said Rupert, "never such a garden as this has ever been seen by mortal since our first parents tenanted Eden!"

Bernard's only reply was a vigorous sniffing, and general look round, while he nodded his head and pressed his lips close together as a sign of his utmost approval.

Roses, however, have thorns, and, as the boys discovered, the floral fields have their drawbacks, one of which is the presence of snakes. Two rattlesnakes which they shot

were both big fellows, one of them, which Simola called a cascaval, measuring nearly nine feet in length.

Of course, as usual with everything they shot, the snakes were skinned, and duly added to their rapidly increasing collection of hunting trophies.

When about fifty miles from the mouth of the river, they one evening came upon a party of Indians, who were paddling up the river in two canoes. Probably there were twelve or fourteen altogether, but upon seeing the white men they stopped paddling, being evidently in fear of them.

This somewhat surprised the white party, who, being numerically so inferior, were not likely to become aggressors, especially against natives who had done them no harm.

Simola knelt up in his canoe and endeavoured to make them understand by signs that they were friends, which they at length seemed to comprehend, and allowed themselves to be approached.

Simola had great difficulty in understanding their spoken language, but by the help of much dumb show and gesticulation, which can be read by all Indians, he was soon able to explain the cause of their alarm.

It appeared that on the previous day, while encamped upon a spit of land jutting out into the river, so that they might be as much away from the tormenting mosquitos as possible, a party of five Spaniards had come suddenly upon them, and, without a friendly word or asking leave, had seized their remnants of food consisting of deer meat and sturgeon.

Such a high-handed proceeding naturally led to an altercation, which resulted in one of their number being shot dead. In retaliation one of the Spaniards was killed with a knife, but, seeing the Spaniards reloading their

pieces, the Indians became alarmed, and turning, fled to their canoes.

They reached them, however, too late to get away before the rascally Spaniards had loaded, and a discharge of their four pieces resulted in the death of two more of their number, and the severe wounding of a couple of others.

These two poor people—one a man the other a woman—were taken ashore and kindly tended by Rupert and Bernard, who washed and bound up their wounds with pieces of birdskin, from which the feathers had been plucked. These coverings were afterwards tied with fine deer sinew, and made excellent surgical dressings. The man was wounded in the neck and the woman in the leg, both clean wounds, breaking no bones.

The ire of the little party was roused at the dastardly conduct of the brutes who called themselves white men, and the two brothers made up their minds, if they came across the gang, to call them to account for their wantonness.

They camped with the Indians, and next morning, bidding them adieu, continued their journey down the now broad and deep river.

CHAPTER XXV.

Down the Sacramento.—A Stranger hails.—Suspicious aroused.—They make Tracks.—Hands Up!—Simola's Flight.—Closely watched.—A Friend in Need.—A Desperate Struggle.—Death of the Pirate Chief.—The Interpreter Hero.—A Laconic Epitaph.—Afloat again.

THE country they were now passing through was beautifully diversified: woods, mountains, valleys, rocky defiles, islands and tributary streams forming an endless, changing panorama as the two canoes glided, with but little propulsion, silently onward towards the sea.

Simola and Polton were steering their respective canoes, and the brothers indulging in *dolce far niente*, when they were suddenly hailed from the shore by a man who, despite his semi-Indian costume, appeared to be a white man.

Glad to have an opportunity of speaking to a white after so many weeks' absence from the Fort, they turned their canoes shoreward, and landed near the stranger.

The man begged for some food, and invited the new comers to his little encampment in a pretty green dell, through which flowed a little murmuring brook, which sparkled and eddied in the sunshine, as with babbling song it flowed buoyantly on to join its great parent, the Sacramento.

In a queer jargon the stranger asked the companions to bring up their belongings to his camp and spend an hour or

two with him. This the boys were pleased to do, as they anticipated obtaining a useful store of information respecting the district and the place of their quest, Yerba Buena.

A hearty meal was enjoyed by all, after which a smoke was indulged in, while the boys obtained from the stranger replies to their questions, which appeared to be given with some amount of hesitation and almost reluctance.

They did not at all like the appearance of the man, but being used to crafty countenances, deceitful eyes, and underhand modes of dealing, they felt quite at their ease, seeing that the odds were four to one in their favour should treachery be abroad.

The man now and then threw uneasy glances to right and left, and could not look them in the face as they spoke to him; but for all that they obtained a great deal of information from him, although, probably, much of it was unreliable.

“About eighty miles would bring them to a sharp bend in the river, which thence tended westward for about forty miles, where it entered a tremendous bay. At several places on the river bank they would pass houses which had but a few years previous been mission-stations, and at them they could gain any information they required. Yerba Buena lay across the bay, some fifty miles from the mouth of the Sacramento, and to reach it they would have to hire a little native vessel, unless they liked to tramp round the coast to it—a distance of quite a hundred miles.” All this and more they obtained from the swarthy individual in whose company they sat.

By-and-by, he in turn wished to know something of them, and when Simola mentioned that his companions

were Englishmen, a look of intense hatred passed over his features, and when he learned that their business was, if possible, to secure a ship, called the *William III.*, his eyes fairly blazed with pent-up passion.

He asked a number of questions of Simola, ending with one in which he requested to be informed if his visitors had ever belonged to a ship called *The Hunter*.

Simola replied that they had, and upon receiving the half-breed's reply, the strange man ground his teeth, but said nothing: he merely rose, and saying he would gather his new friends some currants, which grew wild hard by, he strode off.

"What do you think of him, Simola?" asked Rupert.

"I not like him. He not good man. We must go quickly and leave him. He may have bad friends. See, there are two huts! Why he have two huts? Why he swear when I say you English sailors on *The Hunter* ship? I not like him, and before he can mischief us, we must go."

So spoke Simola, and the rest of the party concurred in his advice, and at once commenced to gather their traps together, preparatory to making for their canoes. All being ready, they walked towards the river in Indian file, Rupert first, and Simola bringing up the rear, somewhat behind the others.

The way was between rocks and much undergrowth, but as there was a well-defined path they could move forward rapidly enough.

Suddenly they were brought to a standstill, by the words, "Halt! Hands up!!"

As each had his musket slung on his back, there was nothing for it but to obey, and they accordingly dropped whatever they were carrying, and elevated their hands

as desired, and seeing the muzzles of three guns pointing at them from among the brushwood, they stood thus, and awaited events.

Three swarthy villains now appeared at the spots where the gun barrels had protruded, and while they still aimed their weapons at the little party, the man who had so kindly gone to gather currents for their eating, quickly came forward and tied the hands of Rupert, Bernard, and Polton behind their backs, but when they looked round for their companion, Simola, he was nowhere to be seen.

This disappearance quite disconcerted the three Englishmen, for they could not tell whether he had merely escaped, or had all through been playing into the hands of their captors. At any rate, they were now in a terrible fix, and would only be too glad to get out of it with their lives, let alone the loss of their weapons, ammunition, canoes, and belongings in general.

They were marched back to the green valley with its sparkling stream and the two odd-looking thatched huts; but under what different circumstances were they now placed to what had been the case half-an-hour before!

With blows they were driven into one of the huts, over which one of the villains mounted guard, while another made preparations as if going on a long journey, and such proved the case, for after a good meal, away he went towards the river.

No food was given to the prisoners during the rest of the day, but one of the three captors, who spoke a little English, informed the three prisoners that their leader was the captain of the ship which had been taken by *The Hunter* nearly two years before, and that on the morrow he was going to have his revenge, by putting them to death in

the presence of some of his companions, who were a few miles down the river at a village horse sale.

Bernard tried to bribe this man, but the cut-throat only scoffed at his offer, averring that he hated the English quite as much as Juan Alflas, for an Englishman had once given him a sound thrashing for stealing a half-dollar, and besides, he was not, upon any consideration, going to be done out of his fun on the morrow.

At dusk, a fire was lighted near the door of the hut, and another man placed on guard to relieve the one who could speak a little English. The latter sarcastically wished them "Good-night! may you dream happy dreams!"

Sleep forsook the eyelids of the three prisoners, who spoke but little, their thoughts being bent upon some means of escape; but, alas, how could they think of escape with a man seated at the door, watching their every movement, while two others slept in the adjoining hut, not twenty yards away?

Might not the wily Simola also be watching that they escaped not? For was he not probably false, or why had he left them so silently and suddenly?

Thus thinking, and occasionally turning their aching limbs, the dreary hours passed slowly away. Their only hope was that their guard might sleep, but, to their chagrin, at about midnight he was changed, and the English-speaking ruffian again appeared. Two more hours passed wearily away, but not a sign of sleep showed itself in the crafty black eyes of their guard, although all three prisoners watched him narrowly but furtively.

When all was as quiet as the grave, a strange thing suddenly happened. A black shadow fell on the watcher; there was a dull thud and a bump, and then, to their surprise, Simola stood before them armed with musket, tomahawk, and knife.

With the latter he cut the bonds of the prisoners, who, trembling with excitement and the cramped position in which they had been lying, were about to follow their deliverer out of the hut, when Juan Alfas and the other Mexican, hearing the noise, suddenly emerged from the other hut, and seeing how matters stood, raised their guns and fired at the escaping prisoners.

Simola uttered a loud groan and fell forward on his face, while Bernard felt a stinging blow in his left upper arm, and knew that he had been shot.

Like lightning, Rupert and Polton closed with their assailants, and although unarmed, commenced a deadly struggle in the ruddy glare of the camp fire, which was kicked about in all directions.

The Mexicans drew their long knives, but the Englishmen being both powerful men, gave them no chance of using them, and thus in deadly grip they wrestled to and fro among the blazing embers, uttering savage cries, and straining and panting for the mastery.

Rupert quickly threw Alfas, whose long hair falling among the hot embers caught fire, but Rupert dare not loose his hold for fear of receiving a fatal stab with the knife his opponent still clutched.

Although Rupert's hands were scorched, he still held his opponent in his iron grip, and thus the two men lay glaring with deadly hate into each other's eyes, each seeking the other's life; not but that the Englishman would gladly have released the pirate if he would have gone away without further molestation, but that was quite out of the question. It was a case of life or death!

Very soon Alfas's clothes caught fire, and he suddenly relinquished the knife that he might be more free to struggle with his powerful foe.

Rupert looked round for something with which to dispatch his man, and then for the first time saw his brother lying face downward, across the body of Simola, at the entrance of the hut. The gun, tomahawk, and knife of the latter, were lying close to the bodies, and fixing his eye upon the tomahawk, he suddenly released his opponent, and at a couple of bounds seized it.

As he stooped to pick it up, Alflas, who had also sprung to his feet, made a lunge at him with his long navaja, which Rupert cleverly avoided by stepping aside. From the impetus of his rush, and meeting with no resistance, Alflas stumbled forward, stretching out his hands to save himself; this brought him within striking distance of Rupert's tomahawk, and with a mighty downward blow he buried it, to the haft, in the back of the pirate's skull.

There was no need of a second blow. Alflas was as dead as Nimrod. He had lived a villain, and had died a villain's death.

Panting from his violent exertions, he looked around for Polton and the other Mexican, but they had disappeared.

He cried out, "Polton! where are you?"

Then came a voice as from the earth itself.

"Here I am, master, but I can't get out!"

Making for the spot indicated by the sound of the voice, he quickly discovered Polton, who had fallen into a deep, straight-sided gully, at the bottom of which was about three feet of water. The sides, although only about ten feet high, were so overhanging, that the poor fellow could not get out, although he had been trying to haul himself up by the ferns and creepers, but they had proved much too frail to support his heavy weight, breaking away in his hands.

It was a pretty little place into which Polton had fallen, a kind of deep rift in the rocky earth, about twenty feet long and six or seven wide; the sides, from bottom to top, being covered with a profusion of pretty ferns and trailing creepers.

"Where is the villain whom you were struggling with?" cried Rupert.

"Oh! here he is; I've settled him right enough," answered Polton, gleefully. "I had to drown him to prevent him drilling a hole through me with this little toasting-fork."

And he held up a bowie knife with a terrible twelve-inch blade.

"As we struggled I saw this here hole, so I took 'im in my arms and jumped over with 'un, and drowned he in this here water."

With the help of a long pine branch Polton was drawn to the bank after much puffing and kicking, and the two immediately and instinctively turned towards the hut to discover what had happened to their friends.

Rupert carefully, but quickly, turned his brother over upon his back, and gazing upon his ashen face uttered a cry of horror, for his brother was, to all appearances, dead.

Tearing open his jacket he placed his hand over his heart, and to his unutterable joy discerned that it was still beating.

After examining him all over he discovered the wound in his arm, and judged rightly that his brother had only fainted from pain and shock. Poor Bernard always appeared to be damaged whenever anything untoward befell the little party.

In the meantime Polton had examined poor Simola, and with tears standing in his eyes, for the two had always

been great friends, dropped the wrist of the half-breed with an emphatic:—

“Dead! and true grit after all!!”

Bernard at length regained consciousness, and, although groaning with pain, allowed his brother to bind up his wounded arm.

The ball had passed quite through the upper arm, and although it had struck the bone and fractured it, it was not broken.

Poor Simola was hastily laid to rest in a little flowery dell, and while Rupert relighted the fire, Polton carved in rude letters upon a piece of pine-wood what he called an epitaph. It consisted of but two words, which read:—

“FAITHFUL SIMOLA.”

Although they had doubted his integrity when he so suddenly disappeared, he had proved himself, as Polton had said, “true grit.”

He had evidently lurked around the camp, watching for an opportunity of succouring his white friends, and, that it might cause no noise, had killed the sentinel with a heavy club.

A noise had, however, been unavoidably made, and the other two villains awakened by it. They had sprung up, and, seizing their pieces, fired point blank at the escaping prisoners, with the dire result of killing one and wounding another.

Alfas's body was placed in a sitting position, with its back to the wall of one of the huts, and in his hand was placed a page from Rupert's pocket-book, bearing these words:—

“Law all the world over—a life for a life.”

This was for the expected band of ruffians to see and read it if they could.

Day was now breaking and the party of half-breed scoundrels would arrive in an hour or two to witness the pirate's revenge upon his captives; it was therefore agreed to partake of a good meal and collect their belongings (all of which they found in the chief's hut), and make a start before the visitors had time to arrive for the expected execution.

Their canoes were quickly found among some brush-wood by the river, and an hour after sunrise they pushed off in the larger and better of the two canoes, feeling anything but secure until they had seen and passed the expected party who would come up the river to witness their execution.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Friendly Reeds.—Loads of Scamps.—Peacefully gliding Southward.—
A Village Physician.—Gold!—Aboard a Native Craft.—Yerba
Buena.—The Pirate Schooner still in Port.—“Harbour Dues.”—
Overhauling the Prize.—Home Again.—Joy and Sorrow.

THEY floated cautiously down the river, keeping a good look out for the unwelcome party they expected soon to see.

Half-a-mile, a mile, they dropped slowly down, and then came a bend in the river, which they approached with great caution, for fear of coming suddenly upon the enemy. Peering round the jutting bank, they saw, to their relief, nothing; that is, nothing of their expected foes, but a quarter of a mile ahead they saw a thick bed of gigantic reeds, among which they might hide till their danger was past.

They made straight for the opportune shelter as hard as they could paddle, and upon reaching it crashed their canoe far into the dense growth, so that it was completely hidden from the view of passers-by, although they themselves could catch a semi-observed view of the river in front of them.

They waited quietly for quite a couple of hours, and then heard faintly in the distance the sound of voices singing and shouting. Poor Bernard lay at full length in the stern, pale as the lily but firm as the oak. The pain gnawed at his arm with sickening monotony, but the brave

fellow uttered not a murmur. His gun rested beside him, and he was ready to use it as best he could with his uninjured arm should occasion require.

In the pirate's hut four guns had been found, and these, with Simola's and their own, made their armoury up to eight pieces, all of which were loaded and placed ready to hand in case of their being needed.

Slowly the voices came nearer and nearer, till at length hazily between the close stems of the tula reed, two canoes could be seen, each containing ten or a dozen men.

These were paddling very unsteadily amid much noise, laughter, and foul language in Spanish, Indian, and to the boys' disgust, English.

Heeding nothing but the fiery pulque, which was being handed round, they quickly passed our heroes, and rounding the bend, were soon out of sight.

With a fervent prayer of thanks for their safe deliverance from the last of the pirate's friends, the canoe of the three voyageurs was again paddled into the middle of the stream, and all day long simply guided down the channel without any exertion of paddling.

They progressed for ten hours at the rate of nearly three miles per hour, and seeing a village on the left bank, landed just as evening was calmly closing in.

The people were very hospitable, and insisted upon carrying Bernard ashore in a hammock stretched upon poles, to the house of a man who had the reputation of being very clever as a doctor and surgeon.

At this village, the future town of Sacramento, our hero stayed ten days, so as to give Bernard's arm an opportunity to recover; and during their rambles round to neighbouring villages, they made the startling discovery that many of the people had nuggets of gold in their

houses, which were stored up as being of some value, but for which they had no market!

Here was an opportunity not to be lost; and finding out who had the best lumps, they bartered six of their guns and all their little nick-nacks and trinkets for gold.

There was such a demand for the muskets that quite a rivalry was set up among the people, and the weapons were disposed of at nearly one hundred times their real value.

Only a few years later the secret of where these nuggets were found was divulged, and thousands of diggers flocked from all parts of the globe to try their luck with Dame Nature. Captains left their ships, soldiers deserted from the army, merchants left their counting-houses, and doctors and lawyers their practices, to rush to the land of gold—California!

Our heroes carried away with them about twenty pounds of virgin gold. It was worth a great deal, but in bulk was very small, in fact one pocket of a hunting-shirt would have held it all comfortably. As twenty pounds weight, however, would be a most uncomfortable freightage for a man's single pocket, the nuggets were divided between the three, and dispersed over their persons in the manner most convenient to each.

Each of the white men bought a gaudy sash which went twice round their waist, and in these each secreted his gold, while his pipe and pistols were also carried there to divert attention.

It was arranged with the inhabitants that they should visit the village again early next spring, bringing with them a great variety of goods for barter.

The distance to Yerba Buena was still nearly two hundred miles, but it so happened that a Spaniard was about to start for that port in a large native trading craft,

propelled by long sweeps and a square-cut sail of grass matting.

A bargain was struck with this man to land them at Yerba Buena, and to provide them with food on the four days' voyage on condition that he received a musket, half-a-pound of powder, and a score bullets in payment.

The voyage down the Sacramento was uneventful, but the trio of Englishmen enjoyed themselves as they quietly sat under an improvised canopy of matting, to keep the glare of the hot July sun from their heads, and admired the grandeur of the scenery on either hand.

Upon reaching the bay they were quite surprised at its extent, as thousands have been since, for it is in reality a land-locked sea.

The village or town of Yerba Buena,* built in the hollow of some hills, was safely reached on the 15th of July, and in due course Rupert and Bernard presented their father's letter to the fat little magistrate and governor, Don Miguel Diaz.

As our heroes surmised, the ship had not yet been disposed of, and Don Miguel declared that if certain—well, what he called *harbour dues*, were paid there was nothing to prevent the *William III.* being taken away by the representatives of Mr. Doone; for, although she had lain by the little quay for nearly two years, nobody had come forward to claim her. It was evident that so long as Don Miguel was made the recipient of "palm-oil," or as he preferred to call it "harbour dues," the ship was still Mr. Doone's, hull, masts, and sails.

This matter of adjusting, or rather broaching, the preliminaries of a pecuniary settlement with the cunning magistrate was a somewhat delicate affair, but it was at

* What would the boys now think of Yerba Buena (San Francisco) with its 250,000 inhabitants!

length arranged that the three Englishmen should be guests of Diaz for a month while the ship was refitting, and that he should be paid two hundred dollars, or its equivalent in gold, *for their accommodation and sustenance!*

The old fellow was not aware that his visitors had quite twenty times this amount with them, or he would not have been content to allow them to recover the ship for so small a sum, but, lacking the knowledge, he and all parties were perfectly satisfied.

A dozen labourers were hired, and under Polton's supervision the vessel was thoroughly overhauled. She was half full of water (but her timbers were sound), and being pumped dry was careened and recaulked. She was thoroughly cleaned from stem to stern, and at the month's end presented quite a smart appearance to what she did when the boys first took possession of her. Nothing more was done to her than to make her seaworthy; painting, new sails, etc., being left for Mr. Doone's consideration when the vessel reached Fort Cornwall.

To help to work the vessel to the Fort, which was a voyage of a little over six hundred miles, six Mexicans were shipped, who, although protesting that they were thorough sailors, knew very little of the management of an English ship when they were once out of sight of land. Still they behaved themselves, and were willing to do all they could, and everything went well.

That there was but little wind was a blessing, for during the two years' detention in harbour, some of the rigging, both standing and running, had become very rotten, and a strong breeze would have played sad havoc with it.

Taking advantage of the tides, which helped them considerably (which the wind being N.W. did not), they reached the dear old "Head of Umpqua," as Bernard would call the giant bluff which guarded the mouth of the

river, on the evening of the fifth day, and two days later, on the morning of the 26th of August, 1840, rounded the bend of the river and came in full sight of their fine old wooden home, Fort Cornwall.

They had no flag, so a red shirt took the place of one. It was seen at once, and immediately answered by the Union Jack being run up at the Fort.

The boys scarcely knew how to contain themselves during the brief time which the vessel took in reaching safe anchorage near the island.

Boats immediately put off to meet them ; and soon Mr. Doone and the rest of the inhabitants of the Fort were aboard the new vessel, which, amid much excitement on the part of the white men and the amazement of the poor Mexicans, who wondered what all the commotion was about, was brought to an anchor.

Mrs. Doone and Ruth both wept over the safe return of the wanderers, and then laughed for happiness, and prayed for thankfulness. They had been away just upon five months, and great alarm had been expressed at the Fort for the safety of the little expedition ; indeed, grave fears began to be expressed that Mrs. Doone would never see her stalwart sons again ; but fortunately all had ended happily, except that the brave Simola had been left behind in the beautiful California valley, and his death was sincerely deplored by everyone at the Fort, especially by the two Indians, Ra-pa-tal and Bar-me-no, who wept for him as they would have done for a brother.

The half-breed's heroic death saddened the hearts of all, especially that of Mrs. Doone, who grieved that she could in no way reward the poor fellow, as he was dead, for saving the lives of her two dear sons, who, but for his faithfulness, would probably have met a cruel death at the hands of the inhuman pirate, Alflas.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Refitting the New Vessel.—Metamorphosis of the *Blue Belle*.—Ready to Sail.—What shall become of Fort Cornwall?—Haste to the Wedding.—Ra-pa-tal disconsolate.—Kamsla satisfied.—The Wedding Feast.—Mexicans disliked.—Don Miguel again.—A Trip for Gold.

It was now too late in the year to think of returning to England; it was therefore decided to winter in their very comfortable quarters, and, when the weather was fitting, to employ their spare time in overhauling the ship, and making her as perfect as possible with their limited means.

Her hull was recaulked in one or two places that showed signs of leakage, while her seams and the bottom in general were served over with tar, which was obtained from the giant fir-trees growing around.

Her cabins were rearranged and added to; berths made, cupboards fixed, and lots of little comforts concocted and provided.

The Klamaths, who once more wintered near the Fort, were diligently employed in making fibre ropes, and such strong, serviceable ones did they make (partly from Mr. Doone's suggestions) that the ship was completely rigged from stem to stern. The chief difficulty was thus surmounted, as the native ropes were very nearly as strong as the ordinary hemp ones, and when they required to be made stronger for standing rigging, such as shrouds

and stays, it was an easy matter to make them thicker, by adding more and thicker strands.

All the sails were unbent and washed, patched, and re-sewn where necessary, and by the end of February everything about the ship looked spick and span, for she was gaily painted a pale blue colour, and, in consequence, re-christened *Blue Belle*.

March was devoted to storing everything aboard, ready for the voyage home, and this occasioned work for both Clatsops and Klamaths; for while the former set about preparing barrels of fish, which were packed in salt especially distilled from sea-water, the latter ranged the country for deer, bear, and bighorn meat, which was also salted and placed in barrels.

The barrels which had contained beef, pork, flour, treacle, and other goods on the outward voyage, were now used for salting all manner of things, including the above meats, sturgeon, salmon, halibut, cod, and turbot.

The huge iron tanks which had been brought from England were utilised for the water supply.

The fine collection of furs were stored in boxes and stowed in dry places for the long voyage, and something like two tons of goods, made by the Indians, were also safely stored aboard. These consisted of all kinds of bead and quill work, pouches, slippers, caps, bags, gun-cases, pipe and knife-cases, etc. Basket work of wonderfully-woven grass was also taken in great quantities. Bows, arrows, clubs, shields, knives, spears, and other weapons were included; also a number of full-sized quaintly-carved canoes from 15 to 40 feet long. With all these articles the ship floated dangerously light, so another fortnight was spent by Indians and white men in cutting down some of the finest timber of the district, and putting it on

board. In this way, about 150 tons of splendid straight oak, chestnut and maple and pine were stowed in the hold, and by April 14th, 1841, everything was ready for commencing the voyage to dear old England.

What was to become of the Fort was the next question. Should they blow it up? or burn it down?

Ra-pa-tal and Bar-me-no, on hearing these suggestions, with great diffidence asked that the Fort might be given to them as a winter residence, and Kamsla added his entreaty to their not inconsiderate request, urging, that as they were going to marry two of his daughters he and they could all live there together, in fact, it would make him a splendid seat of government for his tribe.

On condition that the weddings took place forthwith, Mr. Doone had no objection, especially as the strong, wooden buildings would be of no further service to him. Would the braves consent to a hasty wedding? They could then repent at leisure.

The question was put.

Certainly they would.

Indian marriages are very prosaic affairs, so much so, that in this case, as in many others, the blushing maidens were not consulted, and the whole matter was merely a question of barter between the two young Mandans and the wily chief, Kamsla.

For his bride, Bar-me-no gave a red coat, a pair of old trousers, two knives, a hatchet, and a heap of odds and ends that the Doones had given them, as being of no further use to themselves.

Ra-pa-tal was not so fortunate, for his comrade having made his bargain first, had satisfied the old fellow with odds and ends, and nothing which Ra-pa-tal had to give would now please the dusky chief, so that it looked very

much as if he would have to be content to remain a bachelor.

Here was a dilemma ! The poor Mandan looked blankly round, but all he could see was a circle of laughing faces, whose owners were merry at his expense, but they did not help him at all.

Then Rupert came to the rescue, and, seizing a large fish-basket, walked round and made a collection. Gifts came in from everyone, for the Mandan was a great favourite with all. Kamsla's eyes sparkled when he saw the good things which fell into the basket, and, no doubt, regretted letting Bar-me-no off so cheaply.

The contents of the basket being placed before him, he was so eager to examine the various articles, that on Mr. Doone asking him if he were satisfied, he, without removing his eyes from the presents, simply pushed his daughter towards her intended husband, and calmly sat down upon the ground with the basket between his knees, and examined the goods one by one, just as a child would look over a pile of new toys.

The weddings took place with due formality, and in the evening a great carnival was provided, at which were assembled every man, woman, and child, both of the Klamaths and the Clatsops. Huge fires lighted the laughing groups with their lurid glare, and the hideously painted faces and grotesque dances made the scene a memorable one to the white men, as it was probably the last of such scenes their eyes would ever rest upon. Such shrieks and yells, as only the lungs of savage people can give forth, made the trees and rocks reverberate with sounds like those which emanate from wild beasts. Several scrimmages took place, and many wild scenes occurred which came narrowly near setting the two tribes fighting, but by

diplomatic intervention Mr. Doone succeeded in keeping peace between them, and the saturnalia lasted far into the night.

Such was the wedding of Ra-pa-tal and Bar-me-no, and on the morrow, April 15th, 1841, the good ship *Blue Belle* weighed anchor and stood for the Pacific, surrounded by the canoes of the savages, who yelled themselves hoarse, after their manner, in wishing a farewell to the white men, who were about to return to their distant home in the big flying canoe.

Many of them followed in their canoes quite to the mouth of the Umpqua, and came aboard for a last handshake, and—another little present!

The Mexicans were very glad to see the last of the red men, for, strangely enough, neither Klamaths nor Clatsops had taken to them, and on many occasions it would have gone ill with them but for the interference of the Doones, whose word was instantly obeyed by both tribes of Indians.

The Mexicans were neither white men nor red; they were but half-castes in the eyes of the Indians, and hence the very colour of their yellow visages was against them.

With a fair wind they stood down the coast, joyfully looking forward to their return to distant Fowey, and the following was the muster roll:—(1) Mr. Doone, (2) Mrs. Doone, (3) Ruth, (4) Rupert, (5) Pernard, (6) Belton, (7) Freeman, (8) Fleming, (9) Polton, (10) Pendrick, and (11) Adams.

Belton was made skipper, Freeman first mate, and Polton second mate; Fleming, carpenter; Pendrick, boatswain; and Adams, cook. Such was the ship's company; quite sufficient to make a coasting voyage, but very short-handed for such a voyage as the *Blue Belle* had before her.

Mr. Doone, therefore, resolved to strengthen his crew whenever he had the opportunity of doing so.

On reaching Yerbe Buena the Mexicans left the ship, hard work and a rolling sea not at all agreeing with their constitutions.

Mr. Doone and his sons accepted the hospitality of Don Miguel Diaz, who, besides being the governor and magistrate, was also owner of a fine plantation, and a general merchant to boot.

To have an English family beneath his roof just suited the Don (Mrs. Doone and Ruth being also invited ashore on the second day), for it tickled the vanity of the rotund magistrate, and also gave him an opportunity to display his goods, and thus bring his commercial capabilities into play.

Mr. Doone purchased a number of grass hammocks, also some barrellled pork, and other comestibles for the voyage, and, what was to them a great boon, two rolls of linen, of which they had run short some months previously—in fact, their underwear was more like a network of holes and tatters than anything else.

To the magistrate's great pleasure, Mr. Doone signified his intention of staying a week or two with him, so that his boys might take another trip up the Sacramento, which they wished to visit again for the supposed purpose of gazing once more on the beautiful scenery.

For this purpose Don Miguel allowed the boys to use his pleasure boat. This craft was in form like a very large canoe, rising high at stem and stern. She was fitted with one mast, carrying a single sail, made of fine woven fibre. In the stern was a cabin capable of sleeping three or four persons. The waist of the vessel was open, but the forward part decked, the space between the deck and bottom being for cargo. In the waist were seats for four rowers, so

that when the wind failed manual power could be utilised.

The real purpose of the voyage was to give the brothers an opportunity of taking whatever English goods still remained in Mr. Doone's possession to the village (and vicinity) at which Bernard had been so kindly received the previous autumn, when his arm was fractured. Their instructions were, to barter for nothing but gold, and to be back in fifteen or sixteen days at latest.

For fear of arousing the jealousy of Don Miguel, the goods, guns, ammunition, &c., were transferred from the *Blue Belle* to the *Quaxati* during the night, and in the morning, Bernard and Rupert, attended by Adams, as cook (for fear of an *accident* by poison), sailed away in company with four half-breeds, who were to act as crew for the price of a blanket apiece and their food.

* * * * *

On the 6th of May, after an absence of fourteen days, they returned with the news that, although they had disposed of their cargo, they had made but a poor bargain in comparison with that of the previous autumn.

They were hospitably received by the natives, who were glad to see them again, but during the months which had intervened since their visit, a party of Yankees had been among them, and bartered with them for their nuggets and gold dust.

This took place in October, and the Americans had stayed six months in the district, doubtless both to pass the winter and to endeavour to learn from whence the inhabitants procured their gold. With them were two Scotchmen, who were still in the locality, and, being found, were very pleased to obtain a passage back to

England as sailors before the mast ; they therefore returned with the boys.

For the goods they had bartered Mr. Doone calculated that the boys received about eighteen pounds (*avoirdupois*) of dust, shingle and nugget gold. This was a tremendous increase upon the real value of the goods, which cost some £40, and Mr. Doone was delighted at what his boys called a bad bargain.

Besides the two Scotchmen, Mr. Doone shipped four Portuguese sailors, promising to land them at Lisbon, of which city they were natives. This brought the ship's company up to twelve, with which the voyage could be comfortably undertaken.

On May 10th the good ship *Blue Belle* turned her bowsprit due south, and, after her passengers had bidden a hearty farewell to the little Don, bowled gallantly away for distant Cape Horn.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Homeward Bound.—A Gale.—Juan Fernandez.—They land on the Real Crusoe's Island.—A Tramp over Historic Ground.—Wild Fruits.—Crayfish.—Manner of Capture.—Mount Yunque.—Sleep Ashore.—Farewell.—Magellan Straits threaded.—Monte Video.

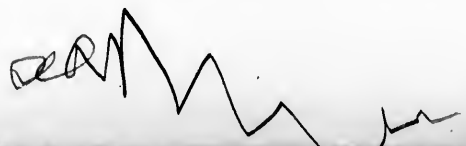
THE voyage south to the Horn was for several weeks of an uneventful nature, and only once did they meet with bad weather, and that was of only two days' duration, when a north-easterly gale blew with great force, and drove them with much speed before it. It also took them far from land—in fact, they simply set their storm-sails and ran before the blast, knowing that in from twenty to fifty hours such gales usually blew themselves out, when they could again resume their proper course.

The morning of July 1st, the day after the gale, was one of those beautifully brilliant, lazy times, which are only experienced in the tropics. The ship just quietly drew through the water, rising gracefully to the heave of the rounded swell of the ocean, while the sun, pouring down on her decks, appeared to make her as idle as her crew, who were sitting and lying about at their ease, having nothing whatever to do. The sails, only partially filled with the warm air, wafted the vessel quietly onward at perhaps two knots per hour, when at noon Captain Belton "shot the sun."

"What do you make it, Belton?" asked Mr. Doone from his hammock.

"Longitude $76^{\circ} 39'$ west, latitude $33^{\circ} 2'$ south, sir."

"And what distance are we from land?"



"Well, from the mainland we are about three hundred and forty miles, but I shall edge in nearer as we run south."

"But why do you say *mainland*, Belton; surely we are not near any islands, are we?"

"Oh, yes, you know Juan Fernandez lies in $34^{\circ} 28'$ south latitude, and longitude $79^{\circ} 5'$ west, so we are within eighty miles of Crusoe's famous island."

Out leaped Mr. Doone from his hammock, and ran to the cabin, where the family were busy patching up the remains of their clothing.

"I say," he cried, as he burst in upon them, "Belton says we are within eighty miles of Juan Fernandez, Crusoe's Island! What do you say, boys; shall we visit it?"

Down dropped their needles; for the boys were quite expert with these wonderfully useful adjuncts to civilised life, and, throwing their garments on the table, they rushed on deck and quite dazed Belton with their queries.

It was quickly decided to visit the celebrated island and anchor there for one night.

The breeze continued so light that it was past noon of the next day when they actually arrived off the island, although it had been in sight since daybreak. It had been a morning of anticipatory excitement, and now that they lay near the shore, they almost felt as if they could swim to the beach, so long did the boat appear to be before it was lowered into the water.

The sea is so deep on the eastern side of the island that at one hundred yards' distance from the shore they moored the ship in seventy-five fathoms!

The island is much larger than is generally supposed, Mr. Doone estimating its length at twenty miles, and its breadth about an average of six miles, or, roughly speak-

ing; about two-thirds as large as the Isle of Wight; so Crusoe had ample space for pedestrian exercise.

The boys, and in fact, all who landed, were in a high state of excitement; for were they not on a spot which, with but very little claim to any veracious history, was known wherever in the world the English tongue was spoken? The romantic fiction of Defoe's pen has given it a greater celebrity than if it had been a spot where some great historical event had occurred.

The boys were a little disappointed to find the island inhabited by about a dozen Chilians, to whose country it belonged, but such picturesque barbarians did the said population appear, that they gave quite a character to the island, and although no verbal conversation could be held with them, yet by signs they made the Englishmen welcome. To Mrs. Doone and Ruth they were particularly gracious, and learning by signs that the party would stay at least thirty-six hours, they invited them to a dinner, which consisted of fish of several kinds, goat's flesh, vegetables, and fruits. Food on the island is exceedingly plentiful and varied.

A party was formed for exploring as much of the island as practicable in the short time at their disposal.

Near the landing-place were three huge caves, which had many years before been used as prisons for about five hundred convicts, but it was found impracticable to keep them within bounds, and they frequently escaped to the more inaccessible parts of the island, where they lived a life of ease, fettered with no restraint whatever. The penal settlement was therefore removed once more to the mainland.

The vegetation of the island is profuse, and its edibles so abundant that a large number of persons could find sustenance without any extraneous aid whatever.

During their wanderings our party saw, among other trees and plants growing wild, the cherry, peach, apple, fig, strawberry, balm, radish, mint, and others; so salubrious is the climate that every fruit grown in the British Isles would grow in Juan Fernandez in wild luxuriance.

They passed through several considerable woods, and crossed a number of rocky rivers which flowed down from the great mountain in the interior, and on their way to the sea, amid beautiful surroundings, broke in sparkling waterfalls and foaming cataracts.

Some of the valleys were filled with a kind of wild rye or oat-grass, which was a couple of feet over the heads of even the big Doones, which caused pretty Ruth to exclaim:

“What a paradise for a donkey! how I would like to pension old ‘Sir Bray’ (her donkey) here, if the poor old fellow is still alive!”

“Never mind the donkey,” quoth Belton, with a roguish look. “If I only had a suitable companion, I could very well live here without a pension.”

The rugged rocks jutted out in serrated points into the deep blue sea, and in the clear pools immense crayfish could be seen, of which Mr. Doone was very fond. This becoming known to their guides, they halted and commenced to catch them.

Thin fibre cords, baited in a peculiar manner, were used, and in a couple of hours an immense number of the toothsome, sprawling crustaceans were secured.

The mode of catching them was very simple. Upon the end of a long fibre line a loose bundle of refuse fibre was looped and bunched, so as to form a mass nearly as large as a man’s head, and this mass was baited by tying pieces of goat’s flesh and fish among the tangled strands of the fibre.

This being done, the fisherman scrambled out on the rocks, where, on the lea side, he could see down several fathoms into the clear water. Having marked the crayfish he wished to secure in the depths below, the baited bundle was lowered quietly down, and allowed to rest near the fish. Very soon it was seized, and gradually the claws and bony parts of the fish became entangled with the fibre, which was then deftly hauled to the surface and the victim secured.

The Chilians did not miss above one crayfish in four after they had once commenced to devour the bait, but the Englishmen were lucky if they landed one in four. The mode of capture appeared ridiculously simple, but they soon found that it required much skill and knack to accomplish successfully.

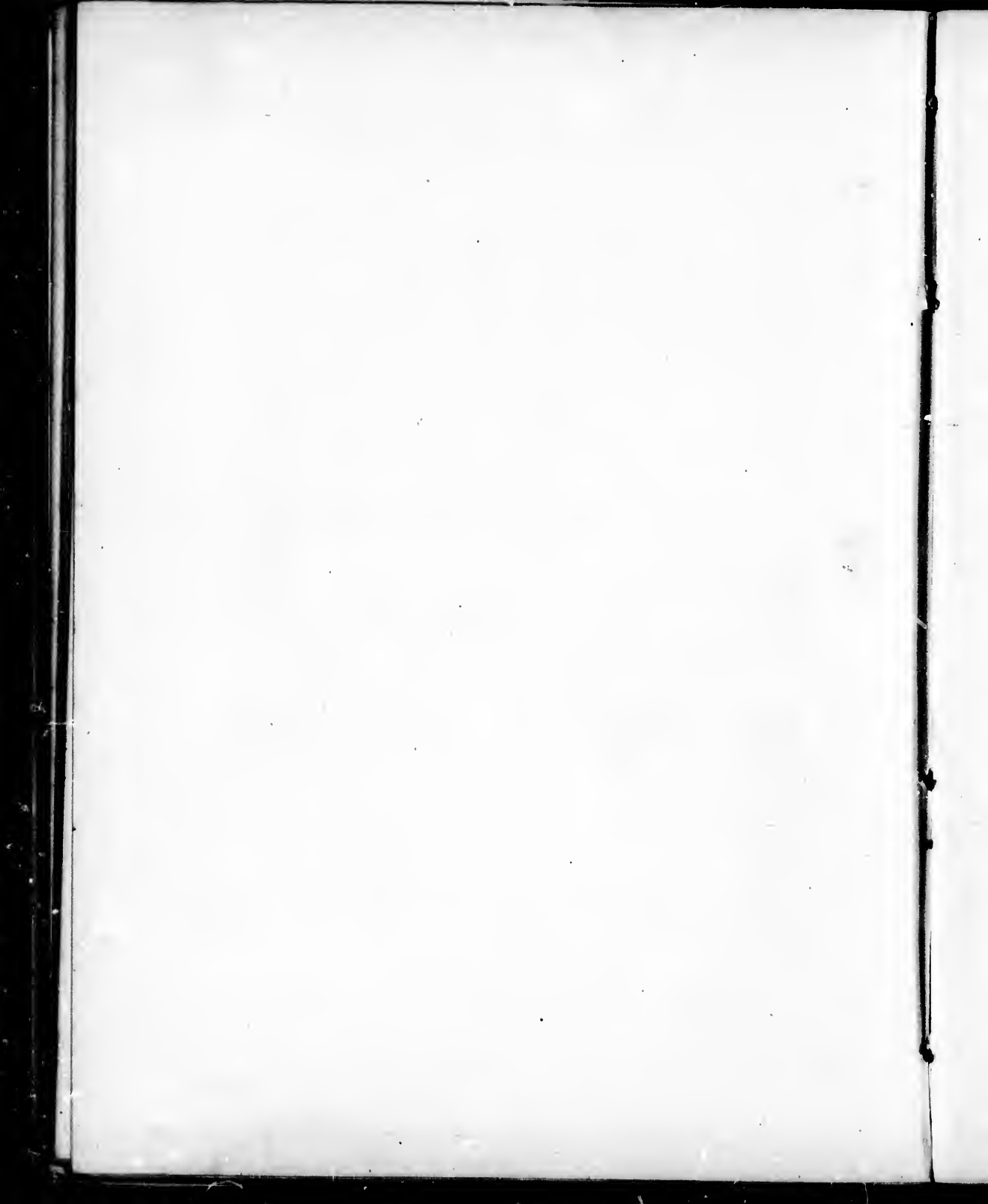
The mountain, called Yunkque, which is about 3,500 ft. high, they did not ascend, but as the whole island is mountainous, they ascended one about four miles from the harbour, and although it was only 1,500 feet above the ocean, it gave them a view nearly over the entire island.

During the long tramp, Mr. Doone confessed to a feeling that possessed him and which prompted him, in a ludicrous manner, to endeavour to discover Crusoe's footprint, as that worthy did Friday's about one hundred and forty years previously.

That night, tired out with their fatiguing travels of the day, the entire party, except the ladies, slept ashore in grass hammocks slung between the trees. Most of them were so tired that it did not need the sighing of the cool sea air through the palm leaves, nor the sound of the waves as they broke upon the shore, to lull them to sleep, for ten minutes after entering the hammocks the sound



JUAN FERNANDEZ: A NIGHT ASHORE.



of heavy breathing and incipient snores told that Morpheus held sway.

Next morning an iron tank was brought ashore, into which a couple of hundred large crayfish were placed; the receptacle, being afterwards three parts filled with salt water, to keep them alive till required for table, and again taken aboard.

Vegetables and fruits having been bartered for in large quantities, for sundry articles that the simple inhabitants took a fancy to, the water casks were next filled at a cascade which fell upon the beach from a considerable elevation, and caused its showers of liquid diamonds to scintillate most brilliantly in the rays of the cloudless sun.

All this and more being accomplished, the *Blue Belle*, to the regret of all on board, once more bore away south towards Cape Horn. The lofty peaks of Juan Fernandez, the erstwhile home of Alexander Selkirk, the prototype of Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe," remained in sight till the sun went down, and the evening haze shut the island from the gaze of the English lads who were exceedingly loath to leave it.

Cooler and cooler became the breezes as the good ship neared The Horn, but as the wind was favourable it was decided to run through the Straits of Magellan. This rocky, barren, inhospitable coast, the home of storms and icy winds, is in winter a terror to the mariners, but in the summer the passage, as on the present occasion, is frequently pleasant, and saves a long trip round Terra del Fuego.

Here was the *Blue Belle* with Patagonia on one side, and Terra del Fuego on the other; places which the boys had read of and now longed to visit, but Mr. Doone would not hear of the ship being stopped even for an hour, although they sadly wanted to pay a visit to a Patagonian

camp, and see with their own eyes whether or no the natives are of such gigantic stature as travellers allege.

By July 22nd Cape Virgin was on their port beam, and as they turned the ship's head to the north-east, they thanked God that the worst half of their voyage had been safely and pleasantly accomplished, and the rocky Straits of Magellan threaded.

Before the month was out they had a couple of days of bad weather, which split one or two of their old sails, and started some of their water barrels, giving them what Pendrick called "a high old shake up."

It was, therefore, with joy that they ran into Monte Video harbour on August 7th, where they anchored for three days, while new sails were being made, and sundry needful ship's stores taken on board.

This gave Bernard and Rupert time to look about what was in those days a small city.

Built upon a peninsula on the eastern side of the harbour, Monte Video has a very fine appearance from the sea, and the great mountain to the west, from which it takes its name, further helps to give a picturesque and grand appearance to the surrounding country.

The brothers took Ruth ashore, and showed her the great Plaza and the very fine cathedral, but being windy, the dust from the unpaved streets flew in such clouds, that to their unaccustomed eyes it was almost unbearable, this circumstance to a great extent spoiling their pleasure. In the winter, they were told, the great drawback was mud, and of the two evils Ruth declared that after all she preferred the dust, which nuisance might be mitigated by wearing a veil.

Under weigh again, on August 11th, they proceeded northward along the coast, from which they were seldom more than one hundred miles distant, although they never saw it.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Pernambuco again.—Christening the Goats.—Cupid Abroad.—Captain Bedford and Annetta.—Verde Island Oranges.—The Portuguese Sailors landed.—Nearing Home.—The Lizard sighted.—Fowey reached.—The Return brings both Joy and Sorrow.

ON leaving Monte Video, Mr. Doone signified his intention of calling at Pernambuco, which news at once put poor Bernard quite in a fever, for the lovely Annetta, daughter of Captain Bedford, Mr. Doone's old friend, immediately loomed before him. Hopes and fears as to whether his first love were still alive and well, and if she ever thought of him, quite upset the poor boy, and as they neared the port he became quite useless as a companion to his brother and sister, and was constantly lost in thought when they addressed him. They of course teased him greatly, and when Ruth in fun proposed to christen one of the goats they had brought from Juan Fernandez "Annetta," he caused her to blush, falter, and finally give up teasing him, by suggesting that the other goat should be christened "Jack Belton!" Bernard certainly scored by this smart repartee, for Ruth teased him no more.

Poor Ruth, who had hitherto been fond of Captain Belton's company, and treated him in the same familiar manner as she did her brothers, was set seriously thinking over this gibe of Bernard's.

She secretly asked herself the pertinent question: "Do I love Belton?"

"No, surely not," she answered herself. "I admire him for his manly bearing, his great courage, his talents, and his straightforwardness, but that is certainly all. What nonsense to take notice of my brother's joke!"

Alas, the modest maiden deceived herself, and although she fancied herself quite secure from any power of Cupid's art, she was already in the toils without knowing it, although her partiality to Belton had not escaped the vigilant eyes of her mother.

Belton could scarcely contain himself when they came in sight of Pernambuco, and every half hour he bothered Belton with the questions, "How far are we off? What time shall we take to do the distance? Shall we be sure to get in to-night?" etc., till at last the skipper told him to go and have a sleep, and he would wake him when they arrived in port.

This did not at all suit Bernard, whose eyes were as bright as the sun over his head, so he sighed and resigned himself to circumstances.

At 7 P.M., on the 10th September, the *Blue Belle* dropped anchor in Pernambuco harbour, but no one was allowed to land till the morning, so that Bernard had to endure a sleepless night, tossing about in his berth with the vision of Anneta constantly before him.

Next day Mr. Doone and his family paid a visit to Captain Bedford, whom they found alive and well; his daughter Anneta was also at home, much to the delight of the younger Doone.

Captain Bedford had retired from his appointment some three months previously on a very fair pension, and shortly intended to return to England with Anneta, who had evinced a great desire to reside there. His affairs, he said, would take a month to settle, which was much more

than Mr. Doone could think of waiting for his old friend, but he informed him that if he cared to leave such of his affairs as could not be immediately settled, and sail with him in the *Blue Belle*, he would undertake to wait one week for him.

After due deliberation, Captain Bedford decided to accept his friend's offer of a free passage for himself and daughter, and accordingly, to Bernard's intense delight, Anneta and her father appeared on the deck of the *Blue Belle* on September 18th as passengers for dear old England.

Everything favoured the voyage, and they had a splendid run across the Atlantic to the Cape de Verde Islands, at one of which, San Antonio, they stayed just long enough to procure fresh water, vegetables, and fruit, as Mr. Doone had a wholesome dread of scurvy breaking out on board, and he knew that the finest antidote was vegetables and fruit, and as it only meant the loss of a few hours, it was very prudent to take such pleasant means of keeping all aboard in good health and spirits.

The orange crop was just ripening, and having procured a supply from a large grove, they found the beautiful fruit a great luxury. Bernard found oranges just the very thing by which he could show his attention to Anneta, and it would have delighted him to have peeled her a score, but like everything else, one can have too much of them, and when they cloy they are apt to produce revulsion; but to do Anneta justice, she kept Bernard very well employed, for she gave freely to those around, so that Bernard had no cause to grumble.

Strangely enough, Captain Belton also found oranges a fine medium between himself and Ruth, and so, probably, have thousands of other lovers since the days when Adam

and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, which Eastern legend affirms to have been the orange.

So fond did—well, *certain persons*, appear of the golden fruit, that when, a week after, lofty Teneriffe reared his pointed head above the ocean, there was a great outcry for more, and Mr. Doone, ever anxious to oblige, and to see all he could in voyaging, put in at Funchal, and made another purchase of various fruits, conspicuous among which were the much-desired oranges.

The next persons to become excited were the Portuguese sailors, who had been promised that they should be landed at Lisbon, and as Funchal is only about one thousand miles from that city, they daily grew more and more happy and wishful to once more see their beloved Tagus, and the earthquake-shaken city on its banks.

As the wind was fair, and the captain therefore wished to cross the Bay of Biscay as quickly as possible, the *Blue Belle* was not taken up the broad estuary of the Tagus, but was hove-to off the little town of Belem, five or six miles west of Lisbon, where the Portuguese, with loud thanks for their kind treatment, and many farewells to their messmates, jumped into the boats and were quickly pulled ashore by Pendrick and Polton.

Being now short-handed, and the time mid-October, when gales are of frequent occurrence, all sail was crowded upon the vessel to get clear of the rock-bound Portuguese and Spanish coasts; and with a run of a thousand miles end their tremendous voyage of 18,000 miles by a smart spin across the dreaded Bay of Biscay, and, finding the Lizard, make a safe entry into the harbour of their beloved Fowey.

With a W.S.W. wind, they bowled merrily along, each day reducing the run by from 100 to 150 miles, and as

each day dawned so did the anxiety and excitement increase to catch sight of dear old England.

They left Lisbon on October 17th, and on the 20th, early in the morning, passed Cape Finisterre, the nose of Spain, and were fairly in the Bay of Biscay, which they quickly knew, for it was very rough, and their progress much slower; however, on the 21st they sighted Ushant Island, and gave it a wide berth, for having once passed the island, where many a stout vessel has left its ribs, they were fairly into the English Channel.

Hurrah! only one hundred and fifty miles remained, of which they accomplished ninety-five on the 22nd, and for fear of running in too close to the land, sail was shortened for the night.

At daybreak everyone was astir, and just before peep of day the Lizard Lighthouse was sighted about ten miles due north. Three cheers went up for the first glimpse of old England, and as they had nearly fifty miles to run, the whole theme of conversation centred on, "What time do you think we shall be in?" On this all-absorbing question the Captain was consulted, and he put it thus:

"Wind S.W.; time now 6 A.M.; distance to run, say forty-seven miles; average speed, if the wind holds, and it probably will, six knots an hour. There you are, Miss Ruth, now you can sum it up for yourself!"

Ruth did so, and gave the answer with her face aglow in the sharp morning air, "We shall arrive then, Mr. Captain, at ten minutes to two precisely, and mind you do not waste any time in getting past the Heads."

The *Blue Belle* was scarcely so punctual as her Captain had predicted, but at 2 P.M. she was within a couple of miles of the entrance to Fowey Haven, and her two brass guns having been loaded, were now fired, and her flags at foremast and mizen raised but half-mast high.

The flag on the headland was dipped in response, and when a little later the ship's head was turned due northward into the mouth of the harbour, quite a crowd had collected to witness the entrance of the weather-worn little vessel.

The one word, "Doone," had been signalled to the man at the look-out, and immediately there was a stampede towards the quay, and for the boats.

We need not dwell long on the reception given to the Doones, as it was a repetition of that given to poor Captain Rose four years before. Nothing could exceed the heartiness of the welcome of the people of Fowey, and Mr. Doone and his sons were quite mobbed by the kindly endeavours of the villagers to all shake hands and ask questions at the same time.

But, alas! among the happy throng were others whose hearts were nigh on breaking, when they heard the news of the death of Captain Rose and several hands—four of whom belonged to Fowey.

Like a few drops of poison in a winecup, the sorrow brought to the relatives of the four dead men caused the ebullition of joy to simmer and cool down, until a chill seized upon the minds of the people as they gazed at the fluttering flags hanging in their lowly positions.

Then honest John Trereen, Mr. Doone's steward, came hurrying down, and was received on board by the master. John's cheery voice and hearty manners appeared to put good spirits into everyone again, and the first shock of the sad news being over, the people rejoiced once more at the return of the Doones and the remnant of the crew.

As old Pendennis, the blacksmith, said: "It's better for the sojer to come home with a wooden leg than not return at all."

CHAPTER XXX.

A Bazaar opened.—The Last Council of War.—Mr. Doone speaks.—
His Liberality.—A Present for Each.—Belton's Live Present.—
Wedding Bells.—The End of the Yarn.

THE homecoming of the Doones was a remarkable event in the history of Fowey, and for a long time was the talk for miles round, people coming from long distances to see both the adventurers and their ship, while many of them wished to see the strange things brought from across the seas.

On the quay was a long black store belonging to Mr. Doone, and in this the quaint cargo of the *Blue Belle* was placed, forming quite a museum, or as we in later days should call it a "Bazaar," and as everything displayed was for sale, quite a large business in curiosities was carried on for several weeks. All this was left in the hands of Rupert and Belton, while Mr. Doone went off to London to dispose of his rich collection of furs and the gold.

With him he took four large waggons and eight men as drivers and escorts, for fear something serious might happen to them as it did when last he went to the great metropolis.

What with advertising the goods, waiting for the sales, and collecting the purchase-money, seeking for and buying furniture, and other goods, delays from snow in returning, etc., it was over six weeks before they again arrived at Fowey, and several weeks more before they could become accustomed to their old ways and settle down again to civilised life.

When the spring came, Mr. Doone called what he termed a "grand palaver," to which the late crew of the *Blue Belle* were invited, and without exception all accepted the invitation.

A good meal was spread upon the board with true Cornish hospitality to which all, with the appetite of those accustomed to toil in the open air, did ample justice, and if afterwards a little *eau de vie*, which had escaped custom's duty, was served out to each man, it did them no harm, being taken in strict moderation, but caused their good humour to bubble over and their pent-up hilarity to burst forth in song and laughter.

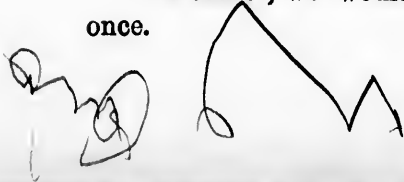
After they had enjoyed themselves for some time, Mr. Doone rose and signified his intention of making a little speech, and, clearing his throat, he began thus :

"My men, I have asked you to come and take a meal with me, that I might have the opportunity of thanking you for your services, during some ticklish times, in the past three years. We have gone through some strange adventures together in a far-off land, and I have come to look upon you rather as friends than as employees ; I am therefore loath to part with you, for on all occasions you have not only done your duty, but, as I have reason to know, have always studied my interests and had an eye to my welfare."

Here the great fellows looked very red, not having expected such an eulogy upon their conduct, and broke in with little exclamations of, "It's only our duty, sir!" "You've always been kind to us," etc.

"Now, my men," Mr. Doone proceeded, "I have a proposal to make to you. Would you like to remain in my service?"

"Of course, we would!" came from all the men at once.



"Very well, then; I am going to embark in the coasting trade again, and if you like to keep your names on the ship's books you shall remain *Blue Belles* as long as you do your duty and behave yourselves to my satisfaction.

"Captain Belton, I appoint you skipper, if you will accept the berth, and I will at the same time make you part owner. What do you say?"

"Say, Mr. Doone," said the young fellow effusively, "why, say yes with all my heart, and I trust that for many years good fortune may smile upon my endeavours, and give me prosperous voyages for our mutual benefit. I could not desire a better crew, for I know that, come fair, come foul, they are men to be relied on. I will say no more, for my heart is more full of thanks than I can find words to express."

Belton sat down amid the applause of all present, fairly glowing with pride and joy at his good fortune and advancement.

"Now, my men," said Mr. Doone, "I am not going to send you away to-night empty-handed, for I have a present for each of you. I have a big parcel and a small parcel for each; the large parcel contains some cloth and sundry little articles I purchased in London for you, and the small one contains a few sugar-plums. Bring in the big ones first, boys."

At this Rupert and Bernard brought in some large parcels, each inscribed with the recipient's name, and, as each received his present, pretty, buxom Ruth added a little packet which, with much laughter, each man squeezed and shook to ascertain its contents, but without any correct diagnosis, as a doctor would call it; whereupon Mr. Doone, who sat next to Freeman, said:

"Open it, Freeman, and see your luck."

He did so, and found it contained ten sovereigns, done up in cotton wool, to keep them, as Ruth said, from *consumption*! Each man found, on opening his packet, that he had been similarly treated.

It was noticed that Belton had not been among the recipients of a dole, either of material or money, but, addressing him, Mr. Doone commenced:

"John Belton, I have now to speak to you upon a more serious matter." (John turned red and white by turns, and looked very uncomfortable.) "Last week you asked me to give you a certain present, which I said I would take time to think about. Mrs. Doone and I have consulted together, and have decided to give you an answer to your request to-night."

Here Ruth sidled round to her mother, and, throwing her arm around her waist, nestled up close to her parent like a timid child, keeping her eyes steadfastly bent upon the floor.

"You have asked me for a very simple thing, yet it is one of the greatest gifts a man on this earth can receive; it is the hand of a true woman. To most parents the thought of an only daughter leaving their roof would have a touch of sadness in it" (now Ruth moved her arm from her mother's waist, and, throwing it round her neck, hid her flushed face on her breast), "but I have watched you closely, John, for the past three years, and admire your character and manly bearing. Give me your hand, lad."

Belton complied mechanically, scarcely knowing what he was about; then, turning to his daughter, Mr. Doone resumed:

"Ruth, my lass, can I do aught else to add to your happiness than say 'yes' to John's request? Have you fully made up your mind to wed a sea-rover? Speak up, my child."

"Quite, father," said Ruth, with a beaming, ruddy countenance, "and, since my home will be on your estate, there will be no grief at having to leave you and mother." As she spoke and turned to look at her mother the tears came to her eyes, as if to belie her words, but they were tears of joy, and as her father took her hand and placed it in the sailor's broad palm, her measure of joy was complete, for tears of happiness so filled her eyes that she could scarcely see her beloved John.

Her hearing also seemed at fault, she could but indistinctly hear her father say something about "blessing and good fortune," when everyone present sent forth such rousing cheers that they made the old rafters ring again.

Rupert and Bernard seized their sister and congratulated her, while Belton, who would not relinquish the hand he had secured, gave her a hearty salute before the whole company as if to bind the troth, and then gallantly led the blushing maid back to her mother.

It was late that night when the merry party broke up, but when it did happiness was in every heart.

* * * * *

When May came round there was again joy in Fowey—double joy indeed, for on May-day the bells rang out their merriest peals, as on that day Ruth Doone become Mrs. Belton, and Annetta Bedford, Mrs. Doone—a Doone lost and a Doone gained.

The whole town was *en fête*, and every vessel and boat in the harbour put forth its best display of bunting in honour of the occasion, while all who chose to come were invited to a field near Mr. Doone's house, where tables were spread, bonfires lighted, and dancing kept up to a late hour.

Trereen was for his services placed in a small farm, and Bernard promoted to be Mr. Doone's factotum, a house

being built close to his father's, in which Anneta ruled as Mrs. Doone the second.

* * * * *

Mr. Doone made a large profit of his collection of furs, indeed they realised nearly £4,000, while the gold was sold to the Master of the Mint for £2,000. Thus, with what he obtained in addition for the timber and Indian goods, he was enabled to settle down and live very comfortably.

Rupert,* as his share of the profits, received £1,000, and, not having had enough of adventures, became the partner of a young sailor, named Horace Jackson (a schoolfellow), who, having had some experience in the West African trade, was desirous of trying a trip on his own account.

* * * * *

Now, having spun my yarn, I must ask my young readers one favour, and that is, to take an atlas and prosecute an imaginary voyage of their own, by following and noting every place at which *The Hunter* called on her outward journey, the wanderings of the Doones in Oregon and California, and the return voyage in the *Blue Belle*.

Having done this they will have taken a step to advance their knowledge; for, if what I have written in this book should not add greatly to their store of incidents worthy of remembrance, still they will have received one lasting benefit—a capital lesson in honesty of purpose, self-reliance, and geography.

* Possibly at some future time I may see my way to write more of this young rover, for many startling adventures fell to his lot on the African coast between 1842 and 1850.

THE END.

