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**NARRATIVE OF THE
VOYAGES AND
SERVICES OF THE
NEMESIS FROM
1840 TO 1843**

William Hall
William Bernard
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and Services of the
Nemesis from 1840 to 1843

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*Narrative of the Voyages and Services of the Nemesis from 1840 to 1843 /
And of the Combined Naval and Military Operations in China: Comprising
a Complete Account of the Colony of Hong-Kong and Remarks on the
Character & Habits of the Chinese. Second Edition:*

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**William Hutcheon Hall,
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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The design originally proposed when the following work

was undertaken, has been somewhat departed from during its progress towards completion. Not only did the interest awakened by the various subjects treated of greatly increase, as the Author proceeded in his attempt to describe the scenes in which the Nemesis bore so distinguished a part, but the introduction of much collateral matter seemed to be called for, in order to enable him fully to illustrate the current of passing events. Hence the narrative of the adventures of the Nemesis gradually expanded itself into a complete history of the origin, progress, and termination of all the recent interesting occurrences in China, including a full and accurate account of all the operations of the war, and of the complicated difficulties from which it originated, as well as of the peculiar features that marked its progress.

In addition, therefore, to her own interesting tale, the Nemesis supplied a valuable foundation upon which to build up a more enlarged history. The Author had long taken a deep interest in all that concerned our relations with China; and with a view to study personally the character of the people, and to obtain accurate information by observation on the spot, he paid a lengthened visit to that country in 1842. He there had the good fortune to fall in with the Nemesis, and through the kindness of Captain Hall, he subsequently proceeded in her to Calcutta in the beginning of 1843. He has thus been enabled to add to the history of the operations copious notices of the various places visited by the expedition; and has given a full description of the New

Colony of Hong-Kong, with remarks upon its vast importance as a possession of the British empire upon the threshold of China.

Incidental observations have been introduced upon the character of the Chinese people, and the new prospects which have been opened to us, through the extraordinary changes which have taken place in our intercourse with them, in a social, moral, mercantile, and religious point of view. These will be met with according as they were suggested by particular occurrences, or prompted by localities described in the work. The Maps and Illustrations will also contribute to give interest to the Narrative.

The Author owes some apology to naval and military readers for the apparent presumption with which he has ventured to handle so many details of a professional character; nor indeed would he have undertaken the task without the able advice and correction of officers who were themselves actors in the scenes described. The valuable assistance and co-operation of Captain Hall, who was actively employed in China during the whole period of the war, and whose services in command of the *Nemesis* need no extraneous encomium, were indispensable to the completion of the work. The Author also gladly avails himself of this opportunity of acknowledging the kindness of Capt. Sir Thomas Herbert, R.N., K.C.B., who obligingly permitted him to have access to his plans and documents; and to numerous other naval and military officers the best thanks of Captain Hall and himself are due.

Those readers who are alive to the important progress of

steam navigation cannot fail to take a deep interest in the history of the first iron steamer that ever doubled the Cape of Good Hope. In the narrative of her curious and protracted voyage will be found many notices of the places she visited, and in particular of some of the Portuguese slave settlements on the east coast of Africa, at Delagoa Bay at Mozambique, &c. The description given of the Comoro Islands will probably be quite new to most readers.

At the end of the work will be found an account of a visit to some of the harbours of the important island of Hainan, which must acquire greater importance through the progressive increase of our commercial intercourse with China; and in the Appendix have been added the new regulations concerning trade in China, and an abstract of the supplementary treaty recently concluded.

With much diffidence, but entertaining a hope that the numerous subjects touched upon in these volumes have not been hastily or crudely handled, the Author commits his Narrative to the kind indulgence of his readers.

W. D. B.

Oxford and Cambridge Club,

March, 1844.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The rapid sale of the first edition, and the unexpected favour which the work has met with, have induced the Author to put forth a second edition, in a somewhat condensed and cheaper form. While no passages have been omitted which appeared essential to the completeness of the narrative, and none curtailed which seemed calculated to keep alive the general interest in the current of events, it is hoped, that the condensation of the whole into one volume, will be considered advantageous to a numerous class of readers.

The woodcuts have been all retained, and an additional map of the east coast of China, comprising all the recent improvements, has been added. A few corrections in the detail of facts have been made, at the suggestion of officers engaged, and it is hoped that this edition will be found to possess some advantages over the first. The Author gladly takes this opportunity of thanking the naval and military officers concerned, for their indulgence, and also a considerate public for the friendly reception which has been accorded to the work.

The Author is willing to believe that he owes more to the interest of the subject itself, when simply handled, than to his own individual efforts, however conscientiously directed.

London, – 1844.

CHAPTER I

The year 1839 will long be remembered by all those who have taken any interest in Eastern affairs. The harsh and unwarrantable measures of Commissioner Lin, the imprisonment of Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary and all other English subjects, and the wild but brief career of uncontrolled violence which marked his reign, called imperatively on our part for stronger measures than had yet been resorted to; and such measures were at once adopted by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, as well as by the government of the country, their direct object being to ensure the speedy departure of an adequate force for the protection of British subjects and British trade in China, and to demand proper reparation for the violence and insult offered to Her Majesty's representative.

It was scarcely to be expected that, under these circumstances, hostilities could be altogether avoided; and, as the principal scene of them, if they occurred, would be in rivers and along the coasts, attention was directed to the fitting out of armed vessels, which should be peculiarly adapted for that particular service. Iron, as a material for ship-building, had been already tried, and found to answer; and this was considered an extremely favourable opportunity for testing the advantages or otherwise of iron steam-vessels; and the numerous rivers along the coast of China, hitherto very imperfectly known, and almost totally

unsurveyed, presented an admirable field for these experiments. If successful there, it might be readily inferred that their utility in the fine rivers and along the shores of Hindostan, and other portions of the Company's territories, would be demonstrated, and by degrees a very powerful steam fleet would become an invaluable addition to the already vast resources of the Indian government.

Orders were therefore given for the immediate building of several stout iron steamers, to be constructed with peculiar reference to their employment in river navigation. They were all to be adequately armed and manned, and no reasonable expense was to be spared in fitting them out in a manner best adapted to the particular object sought to be attained by them. No iron steamer had ever yet doubled the Cape of Good Hope; their qualities, therefore, remained yet to be tested in the stormy seas about Southern Africa; and various questions respecting the errors of the compasses, the effects of lightning, &c., upon vessels of this description, remained still imperfectly solved, particularly in reference to those tropical regions, where the great phenomena of nature are exhibited in a more intense and dangerous degree. In fact, no experience had yet been gained of their capabilities for the performance of long and perilous voyages; and it was a bold conception which suggested that they should be sent round the Cape, to the eastward, in the very worst season of the year, when even the stoutest and largest *wooden ships* trust themselves as little as possible in that stormy region.

The equipment and destination of the *Nemesis*, however, was kept a profound secret, except to those who were personally concerned in it, and even they (with the exception of the authorities) had little notion of the precise service upon which she was to be employed.

The *Nemesis* was at length finished, and sent to sea as a private armed steamer. She was never commissioned under the articles of war, although commanded principally by officers belonging to the Royal Navy; neither was she classed among the ships of the regular navy of the East India Company. In short, the *Nemesis* was equipped under very peculiar circumstances, which, together with the novelty of her construction, caused her to become an object of very general interest. The "*wooden walls*" of England had, in fact, been so long identified with her proudest recollections, and had constituted for so many centuries her national "boast," that it seemed an almost *unnational* innovation to attempt to build them of iron. Indeed, it was rather looked upon as one of the dangerous experiments of modern days. Moreover, as the *floating* property of wood, without reference to its shape or fashion, rendered it the most natural material for the construction of ships, so did the *sinking* property of iron make it appear, at first sight, very ill adapted for a similar purpose. It was sometimes forgotten that even wooden ships are composed of wood, iron, and copper together, and that the bulkiness of these necessary materials greatly diminishes the buoyancy of the wood.

A minute and scientific description of the structure of the

Nemesis will be found in the United Service Journal for May, 1840, and it will therefore be sufficient, in this place, merely to notice one or two peculiarities, in which it differs from that of wooden ships in general. With the exception of the great paddle-beams, across the ship, and the *planks* of the deck and the cabin-fittings, together with one or two other parts, the names of which would be only intelligible to the scientific reader, the whole vessel was built of iron.

Credit is due to Mr. Laird, of the Birkenhead Iron Works, Liverpool, for the admirable manner in which she was constructed, and for the elegance of her form and model, which fully answered every purpose required of her.

Her burden was about 680 tons, and her engines of 120-horse power, constructed by Messrs. Forrester and Co., also of Liverpool; and with twelve days' supply of coals, together with water and provisions for four months, and stores of all sorts for two years, with duplicate machinery, &c., and all her armament complete, her mean load draught of water was only *six feet*. But commonly, in actual service, she drew little more than five feet. Her length over all was 184 feet, her breadth 29 feet, and her depth 11 feet. Her keel-plate was laid, and the vessel built and launched, in the short space of three months.

Strictly speaking, the Nemesis has no fixed keel, but the lower plate of iron, which connects the two sides of the ship together along its middle, is called the keel-plate. She is, therefore, almost perfectly flat-bottomed; and, in order to obviate, as

much as possible, the disadvantages attendant upon this peculiar construction, there are two sliding or moveable keels, capable of being raised or lowered to the depth of five feet below the bottom of the vessel. Each of these keels is about seven feet in length, one being placed before and the other abaft the engine-room. They are each enclosed in a narrow case or tank, one foot wide, running from the bottom of the vessel up to the deck, and which, of course being open below, allows the water to rise in it, to the level of the sea on the outside of the vessel. In this, the keel, which is of wood, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, works up and down by means of a small winch, and a strong chain which is attached to it. Thus it is evident, that either the foremost or the aftermost keel can be raised or lowered, independently of the other, if circumstances require it.

As it would, however, be impossible to steer with accuracy, a vessel of this construction, with a rudder merely of the ordinary description, and which, from its shallowness, would, in a heavy sea, be in a great measure out of water, there is a contrivance by which a moveable or false rudder is attached to the lower part of the true or fixed rudder, and which descends to the same depth as the two false keels, and, like them, can be raised or lowered at pleasure.

The main or true rudder was composed of wood, but the lower or false rudder was made of iron, and was so constructed as to grasp the lower part of the upper or fixed one, firmly on either side, but was bolted through in such a way as to be moveable, as

if it were fastened by a hinge, so that, by means of a chain run up to the taffrail from its outer edge, it could be hauled up to any height required.

The next striking peculiarity in the construction of the *Nemesis* was, that the entire vessel was divided into seven water-tight compartments, by means of iron bulkheads; so that, in fact, it somewhat resembled a number of iron tanks, cased over, so as to assume the external form of one connected vessel. By this means, the occurrence of any accident, such as striking on a rock, or shot-holes, &c., which might occasion a dangerous leak in one compartment, would have no effect upon any other part of the vessel.

The advantages of this arrangement were often tested, during her three years' hard service; and, indeed, within a few days after her first departure from Liverpool, as will be presently related, this contrivance sufficed to save her from the almost certain destruction which would otherwise have awaited her.

The last peculiarity which it seems necessary here to mention, was the provision of some kind of instrument for counteracting the effect of the local attraction of so large a mass of iron upon the compasses, and for correcting the errors occasioned thereby. This difficulty had been seriously felt by Colonel Chesney, on board the small iron steamers which he had under his orders, during his expedition to the Euphrates; although he was of opinion, that the placing of the compasses at a certain height *above* the vessel, so as to be further removed from the sphere

of the local attraction of the iron, was sufficient to reduce their errors materially.

Without entering into the merits of Barlow's counteracting plates, or Professor Airy's interesting discoveries, it will be sufficient here to mention, that the Nemesis was fitted with correctors, very much according to the system of Professor Airy, but not under his own superintendence; that the experiments were conducted at Liverpool under every disadvantage, and that the result was never perfectly satisfactory. Indeed, the accident which shortly befel her, has been attributed, upon strong grounds, principally to the imperfection of her compasses. It is right, however, to mention, that other vessels, such as the Phlegethon and Pluto, which have been fitted with Airy's correctors, tested according to the most approved principles, and after experiments conducted with great attention, have been totally relieved from this source of danger and anxiety, and have been navigated with perfect accuracy and confidence.

We may now come to the interesting moment of the departure of the Nemesis from Liverpool, where she was built. Everything seemed at first to prosper; the weather was favourable, and the machinery perfect in all its parts. She had cleared the narrowest part of the Irish Channel, had passed the coast of Wales, and crossed the entrance to the Bristol Channel; and the course she had been steering would have taken her well clear of the Land's End.

It was now the second day since her departure. About two

o'clock in the morning, the weather being still hazy and the night dark, she struck heavily on a rock.

Of course the engines were instantly stopped, but the *way* she already had on her appeared sufficient to carry her over the reef; and, indeed, the actual rocks themselves could be seen outside of her, so that she had evidently passed between them and the land, and had merely struck the edge of the reef.

Finding that the vessel did not *hang* upon the reef, and was therefore still afloat, her head was turned to seaward, and the engines kept working slowly, while the dawn was anxiously expected. It was now discovered, that the rocks upon which she had struck were aptly enough called "The Stones," lying at the entrance to the bay of St. Ives, in Cornwall, and not very far distant from the Land's End. It was soon evident, also, that the accident had occasioned a very serious leak, in one of the foremost compartments of the vessel. It was with difficulty that the water could be kept lower in it than the level of the sea outside, with the hand-pump; and, in fact, if the vessel had not been divided into these water-tight compartments, it is difficult to imagine that the accident would not have been fatal to her.

However, she was carried, without much difficulty, round the Land's End, into Mount's Bay, where she anchored about three miles from Penzance, off St. Michael's Mount. The object here was to procure an additional pump, in the hope of being able, by that means, to empty the tank or compartment, so as to be able to stop the leak from the inside. Fortunately, one perfectly

adapted for the purpose was obtained from a small coasting-vessel which was at anchor in the bay. It was an iron one, and has been preserved on board ever since, and, on many occasions, has been found of the greatest utility. Indeed, every vessel of this description should be provided with an extra pump of this kind, to be worked by hand, and at all times ready to be placed into any compartment, as an additional means of pumping it out, and also as a security against fire, for the purpose of pumping water into the vessel in case of necessity.

With the assistance of this additional pump, the water in the compartment was completely emptied, and, then it was discovered that a hole had been cut completely through her bottom by the rock, but could now be easily stopped from the inside.

This being speedily effected, the vessel pursued her voyage without the least difficulty, and came to anchor on the following evening in Yarmouth Roads, inside the Isle of Wight.

It should here be mentioned, that every compartment of the vessel was provided with a small pipe and cock, by means of which, the water could be let out of one compartment into another, and so passed on, from one to the other, into the engine-room, where it could be pumped out by the machinery. But, as this appeared a rather clumsy mode of doing it, namely, by floating nearly half the ship unnecessarily, it was not resorted to. But, in vessels more recently constructed, a great improvement has been introduced in this respect. From each of

the compartments, a pipe leads directly into the engine-room itself, without communicating with any other part; so that, by means of a cock, the water can at once be pumped out by the engine, or else can be confined to the compartment itself, and pumped out by hand, when it is not desirable to let it flow into the engine-room.

As little time as possible was lost in completing the necessary repairs, and in rendering her in all respects fit to undertake the long and unknown voyage she was about to perform. At length she was cleared out for the Russian port of Odessa, much to the astonishment of every one; but those who gave themselves time to reflect hardly believed it possible that such could be her real destination.

She was armed with two 32-pounder guns, mounted on pivot, or traversing carriages, for the purpose of throwing either shot or shell, one being placed forward and the other aft, as in all armed steamers.¹

On leaving England she had on board about sixty men and officers; but, during the operations in China, she usually had about ninety men and officers.² Her daily consumption of fuel

¹ She subsequently, also, carried five long brass 6-pounders, two on each side, and one upon the bridge; and had also ten small iron swivels along the top of her bulwarks, besides boat guns and small arms.

² Nominal list of Officers who served on board the *Nemesis* during the period referred to in this work: —William H. Hall, R.N., Commander – Promoted to Commander, 10th June, 1843; Lieutenant William Pedder, R.N., First Officer – Made Harbour Master and Marine-magistrate at Hong-Kong, July, 1841; Mr. Ed. L.

was about eleven tons.

She had no *paddle-boats*; but in other respects, she was well found in boats, while in China. She had two cutters, pinnace, gig, jolly-boat, dingy, and always a large Chinese boat. A large platform was also built between the paddle-boxes, instead of the small bridge which is usually constructed there. This platform covered the whole space between the paddle-boxes, and was found particularly convenient, when troops were on board, as it was always occupied by the officers, while the decks were crowded with the soldiers. There was also a 6-pounder brass pivot gun, mounted upon the bridge, which was very useful for

Strangways, Mate, R.N., Second Officer – Left sick, 29th March, 1841; Lieutenant, 23rd Dec. 1842; Mr. John Laird Galbraith, Third Officer – Made Second Officer, 29th March, 1841; and First Officer, 1st July, 1842; and paid off at Calcutta, March, 1843; Mr. F. W. Whitehurst, Fourth Officer – Made Third Officer, 29th March, 1841; and Second Officer, 1st July, 1842; and paid off at Calcutta, March, 1843; Mr. Peter Young, M.R.C.S., Surgeon – Left the vessel, 15th January, 1841, at Macao; Mr. John Gaunt, Purser – Served during the whole period. N.B. – The above joined the *Nemesis* in England. The following officers joined the *Nemesis* at different periods in China: — Mr. John Turner, Surgeon – Joined 15th Jan. 1841, at Macao; made Assistant-Surgeon, Bombay Establishment, Oct. 1843; Mr. A. T. Freese, Mate, R.N., First Officer – Joined 1st August, 1841, at Hong-Kong; left the vessel 30th June, 1842; Lieutenant, 23rd Dec. 1842; Mr. Alfred Fryer, Fourth Officer – Joined 1st February, 1842, at Chusan; paid off and rejoined at Calcutta, 1843; Mr. B. G. Dryden, Second Officer – Joined 1st July, 1842, at Woosung; ditto Mr. Arthur Baker, Volunteer – Joined 24th August, 1842; Yangtze river; ditto Engineers – Mr. Colin M'Lougal (killed), Mr. John Kinross, Mr. Henry L. Harley, Mr. William Lang, Mr. David Wilson, Robert Kelly. N.B. – Mr. Crouch, Mate, R.N., served on board as gunnery-mate, from the *Wellesley*, by permission of Commodore Sir Gordon Bremer, at Chuenpee, at First Bar Action, and Inner Passage, &c. Promoted Lieutenant, 8th June, 1841; Commander, 25th October, 1843. Wounded at Chin-keang-foo.

trying the range. A rocket tube and a supply of rockets were always kept in readiness upon this platform, besides ammunition for the brass gun, &c. In hot weather an awning was spread over it, and it was always a most convenient place for watching and directing the operations of the steamer.

Besides the guns above-mentioned, the *Nemesis* carried four brass 6-pounders and one small howitzer.

Unusual interest was excited by the expected departure of this strange vessel, upon a voyage of which both the purpose and the destination were alike unknown. Even the Admiral himself was ignorant of the service which she was called upon to perform.

At length, on the 28th of March, 1840, she really had sailed. The Needle Rocks, the high cliffs at the back of the Isle of Wight, the shores of England herself, had gradually sunk below the horizon, and the excitement attending departure had at length settled down into the cold reality of a first night at sea.

On the third day, the 30th of March, at daylight, the last glimpse was taken of the land of our birth. The Lizard disappeared, and nothing was around but the wide expanse of the blue ocean. On the gallant vessel went gaily through the Bay of Biscay, at an average rate of seven to eight knots under steam, moving gracefully to the heavy swell which at all times prevails there.

On the 2nd of April, she was well in sight of Cape Finisterre, the dread of seamen, on the rock-bound coast of Portugal, and encountered a moderate gale of wind, but made head against it

without difficulty.

On the 6th of April, the lovely island of Madeira came full in sight, the ninth day since she had left Portsmouth, and only the seventh from the Land's End.

At daylight, the little island of Porto Santo having been passed, the full prospect of the larger island of Madeira lay exposed.

Though sailors are seldom poets, there is something in the aspect of this lovely island which speaks poetry to the least poetical; and where nature looks so eloquent, and the fresh green of the loaded vineyard contrasts so beautifully with the wilder rocks above it, while the sun of its scarce-failing summer sheds its glow upon the varied woods around, even the iron Nemesis and her iron-hearted crew were cheered and gladdened, as she glided close along the shore.

The Nemesis was not long in coming to anchor within the bay, not very far from the town, and between it and the remarkable rock called the Loo Rock.

Time was precious, and the great object of her visit was to be accomplished as soon as possible – namely, in the stoker's language, "coaling" – an operation anything but pleasant. But they who would enjoy the steamer's "stately march upon the waters" must be content to purchase it at the price of this necessary evil.

CHAPTER II

On the evening of the 8th April, the steamer was again standing out of the Bay of Funchal, after being detained there only three days. It has been already stated that the vessel was not under the articles of war; this was well known to all the crew, although the majority of her officers belonged to Her Majesty's navy. Even in this early part of her career the difficulty had been seriously felt; and none but those who have been placed in similar circumstances, as commanding officers, can form any notion of the great forbearance, tact, and judgment which are daily required on their part, in the management of their men.

On the 11th, she passed quietly through the Canary Islands, between Palma and Teneriffe, the high peak of the latter, however, not being visible, owing to the hazy weather. The *Nemesis* was now entirely under canvass, and the steam was not got up for twelve or thirteen days after her departure from Madeira. The north-east trade-wind soon carried her smoothly along, as she passed about midway between the Cape de Verd Islands and the coast of Africa, and it was only in a calm, not far from Sierra Leone, that she had occasion to use her engines. She was found to sail remarkably well without steam, although so flat-bottomed.

Thus she proceeded quietly along the coast, until she reached the neighbourhood of Cape Formoso, towards which she was

set by strong and unusual southerly winds and a lee-current. She was, however, not long in reaching Princes' Island, situated near the coast of Africa. This is a settlement belonging to the Portuguese, and the principal place of resort for our cruisers in that quarter, not very far from Fernando Po. She cast anchor in West Bay, Princes' Island, on the evening of the 14th May, forty-four days from England, principally under sail. Here she remained, undergoing a necessary refit, cutting wood for fuel, and preparing for sea, until the evening of the 23rd.

It is the practice here for every English man-of-war, of those stationed on the coast, which resort to the island, to leave a Krooman³ in her pay, for the purpose of cutting wood for the ship, in readiness for her return. As there are generally several vessels on the coast, so are there also several Kroomen belonging to them, who join together, and go out to cut wood, lending each other mutual assistance. The wood is then brought down to the coast, and stacked in piles, one for each ship, the name of the particular ship being written on it.

As the *Nemesis* was furnished with a letter from the Admiralty, requiring all Her Majesty's ships to give her every assistance in their power, she was not long in taking on board the whole stock of wood already laid up for the little squadron. Captain Tucker, then commanding the *Wolverine*, was most active in lending his aid, and even gave up the supply of wood he already had on board. In this way about seventy tons of good

³ A native African from the so-called Kroo country.

hard wood were at last taken on board the *Nemesis*, and, as plenty of coal still remained, there could be little doubt that, with this reinforcement, she would be able to reach the Cape of Good Hope without difficulty. Water is easily procured in the immediate neighbourhood of the landing-place, of excellent quality; and thus two very important items for the recruiting of a ship are to be found in abundance in Princes' Island. Pigs, poultry, and goats are to be had in any quantity, as well as yams, Indian corn, coffee, bananas, pineapples, and limes. Above all, the anchorage at Princes' Island is good in all seasons, and of easy access, either by day or night. It is consequently a very valuable place of call for vessels going by the eastern passage to the Cape, which in some seasons is to be preferred to the western route, particularly for steamers.

On the side of the island opposite to West Bay, or the north-east, is the town and harbour of Port St. Antonio, where the governor of the island resides. It is tolerably secure, but confined, and by no means equal to West Bay for shipping. There is a respectable Portuguese merchant there, who is in the habit of supplying the ships at West Bay with various stores that they may require; and, with the view of furnishing all the information which could be procured, in case any other steamer should touch there, application was made to Mr. Carnaero, the reply to which was, that he would supply any quantity, at the rate of one Spanish dollar for every hundred logs;⁴ but if they were required to be cut

⁴ About one thousand logs make up twenty-two tons and a half of fire-wood.

into smaller pieces it would cost more, as negroes would have to be hired for the purpose, at the rate of one dollar a day for every three men. Further, as regarded the time necessary, he thought it would require from thirty to forty days to provide five thousand logs. Coals were to be had at West Bay, of course imported from England, but only at the enormous rate of about £6 sterling per ton.

Princes' Island is being greatly benefited already by the demand for its wood. Land is, in consequence, being cleared and planted, and the coffee grown there is of good quality, and cheap. In fact, from its position and capabilities, it is likely to become a place of great resort, as steam communication, viâ the Cape of Good Hope, gradually becomes more extended.

It must be mentioned here, that ships sailing much along the coast are pretty sure to get their bottoms covered with large barnacles; and the *Nemesis*, so far from being exempt from this annoyance, being entirely of iron, was, perhaps, more troubled with them than a coppered ship would have been. The quantity, in fact, was enormous, and they adhered so firmly, that it was with some difficulty they were taken off, commonly bringing away the paint with them. Kroomen belonging to the men-of-war were employed to dive under the ship's bottom for the purpose, and a very curious and amusing scene it was. It is quite astonishing how long these men can remain at work under water, and no light work either. Great, muscular, black, curly-headed fellows, bobbing down under water, some with brooms, some

with scrapers, and others with bits of iron bar; anything, in short, with which they could attack the tenacious visitors which clung so lovingly to the iron Nemesis. The Kroomen are an active, laborious, and faithful race, as all will testify who have occasion to employ them on the coast. They are received as seamen in our men-of-war upon the station; and, on her return to Calcutta, after long and arduous service, the Nemesis had still two of them remaining on board, out of three who accompanied her from the coast, the other having died in the service.

At length, on the 22nd of May, the steam was once more got up, boats hoisted in, anchor weighed, and the word "full speed" being passed below, away went the still mysterious Nemesis, as the sun had just dipped below the horizon. Her course would necessarily lead her towards the island of St Thomas's, another Portuguese settlement, lying as nearly as possible under the Line, and, therefore, scarcely a day's voyage from Princes' Island. She accordingly approached it on the following afternoon, and did not lose the opportunity of entering the Bay of Chaves, where lies the principal town, called St. Anne de Chaves.

Some parts of this small island are very pretty and picturesque, others are wild and thickly wooded. It produces large quantities of fruit and vegetables, but is principally valuable on account of the excellence of its coffee, which, however, is not cultivated in very large quantity. St Anne, the principal town, lies at the bottom of a lovely bay. The greater part of the inhabitants of St. Anne are negro slaves and Kroomen. The latter come

over from the coast to the northward of the Line, and are tall, athletic men, very industrious, (in this respect different from most other Africans,) intelligent, and, when well treated, faithful and honest. All the Kroomen are strongly attached to the English, and willingly serve on board our ships. They have great faith in an Englishman's word, and, to whatever part of the world they may be carried, they always feel confident of being sent back to their own country free of expense, whenever their services are no longer required. They are an independent people, and have never been connected with slave-dealers, whom, indeed, they seem to hold in great contempt. Nevertheless, they have the woolly hair and thick lips and nose of the true negro. Of all the Africans whom I have seen, they appear most to resemble the Abyssinians in their character and habits, though improved by more frequent contact with our countrymen.

The governor's house is the best in the place, and is distinguished from the more humble ones around it by the luxury of a green verandah. Across the entrance to the principal apartment, a large curtain or screen of drapery was hung, richly emblazoned with the arms of Portugal, and almost the only real token of her power.

It was naturally a matter of curiosity to visit his Excellency in state, and, accordingly, Captain Hall and his officers were ushered into the *presence* by a grand Master of the Ceremonies, who was also commandant of the island. This person was a huge black negro, "richly caparisoned" for the occasion, and,

as he spoke a little English, he proceeded, immediately after the presentation, to expound to his Excellency the object of the visit. That object was, first, of course, to pay respect to so distinguished an officer, and next, to ascertain whether, in case a steamer should happen to touch there at any other time, a depôt for coal could be formed on the island, and whether wood could be procured for fuel, and a proper place provided for storing it until required. His Excellency condescended to be extremely polite, saying that both these matters could be accomplished, and that he should be happy to lend his assistance in any manner he could. He added that he perfectly well remembered that the *Enterprise*, a wooden steamer, had touched there on her way to India many years before, but that he had never till now heard of an *iron* one.

The interview was soon ended, and was so far perfectly satisfactory. But, as the party were on the way down to the ship again, the black master of the ceremonies, aide-de-camp, commandant, &c., made a particular request that no salute should be fired, for that they happened to be "very badly off for powder" themselves, and should find it inconvenient to be obliged to return it; probably a gentle hint that a little powder would be acceptable.

Little time could be devoted to the further examination of the island, which would seem to be of very small value to its masters. There is reason, however, to believe, that to a certain degree, although unacknowledged and in secret, it is made use of as a

sort of intermediate trading-place for slaves.

It was on this island that the distinguished Major Sabine conducted his scientific and interesting observations upon the swinging of the pendulum in 1822, as it lies as nearly as possible under the Line.

On the following morning, the 25th, the *Nemesis* crossed the Line, with the thermometer at 96° , which had been the average temperature for several days. Strong adverse winds prevailed, with a heavy swell for many days afterwards, against which she went ahead very steadily, at the rate of five to five and a half knots an hour; but, as it was desirable to save fuel as much as possible, it was at length determined to make a hitherto untried experiment – viz., to work the lee paddle-wheel only, while under sail, (the other wheel being disconnected, and allowed to revolve by the motion of the vessel,) and also to use only one boiler. She was steered about five and a half points from the wind, and in this position, with a rolling sea and steady breeze, she continued to make head at the rate of six and a half to seven knots an hour, the active or lee paddle-wheel making twelve to fifteen revolutions per minute. Thus the success of the trial was complete, particularly as it appeared to counteract the *lee-way* of the vessel. The helm did not seem to be materially affected by the unequal force applied to the two sides of the vessel.

Some pains have been taken to ascertain whether *both* engines could be worked to any good purpose with one boiler. In reply to this question, it appears that, except in the river Mersey,

at Liverpool, with all circumstances particularly favourable, the Nemesis was never able to work both engines with one boiler with more than very inconsiderable effect. But it must be very evident that any vessel, having power enough to do so in case of emergency, must possess a great advantage; and there is little doubt that, with twenty or thirty horse power more, she would have been able to accomplish it in smooth water, particularly with sails set. It is therefore to be regretted that her power (only one hundred and twenty horse) was scarcely sufficient for her size and weight.

On the 2nd of June, the ship all at once seemed to be lost to the control of the helmsman, and, no other very good reason suggesting itself, the rudder was naturally examined with care. It was at once discovered that the drop or false rudder had been carried away, but by what means did not sufficiently appear, except that, on examination, there was reason to think it must have been fairly worn through at the point of junction with the lower edge of the upper or true rudder – for at this part nearly the whole strain of its action operated.

No time was to be lost in attempting to repair this injury, as the vessel became almost unmanageable, the true rudder, at times, being nearly above water, in the heavy pitching of the ship. With the utmost exertion on the part of the officers and the intelligent carpenter of the ship, a temporary false rudder was constructed, and securely fixed before nightfall. It was, moreover, found to act even better than the original one, having more hold in the water,

as well as a larger surface of attachment to the upper rudder. Subjoined is a plan of this contrivance, which will almost suffice to explain its ingenuity. It was made of planks of wood, instead of solid iron, and was secured by chains, in such a manner as to grasp the upper or true rudder firmly, while it could also be raised or lowered at pleasure.

The whole apparatus was found to answer remarkably well, and, during the remainder of the voyage to the Cape, (and that a trying one,) it never got out of order, or required additional support. Indeed, it was remarked by every one, that the vessel was more easily steered than it had been before.

But the difficulties which the *Nemesis* had to encounter were not yet ended. Strong breezes from the southward still prevailed, without any prospect of a speedy change; her progress was slow, and there only remained on board thirty-two tons of coal, with a little wood; nor was there any place at hand to which she could run for fuel. It was therefore resolved to stand out to sea, trusting to her canvas only. Thus her remaining fuel would be reserved for any emergency, and would suffice to ensure her being able to get into port when within a reasonable distance. A reference to the map will shew her position at this time.

As much sail was set as she could carry, and her course was altered according to the wind. Away stood the fearless *Nemesis*, disdainful of the land, and boldly venturing out to dare the stormy seas of those regions in the depth of winter. The heavy winds from the southward, which had so long prevailed, had baffled all

the usual calculations.

On the first day of their standing away, it became more than ever apparent that, being very light, and in fact scarcely drawing five feet and a half of water, as she was really flat-bottomed, the vessel fell so much to leeward, that she made very little progress on a wind and in a heavy sea; and, in short, that her deep moveable keels were far from sufficient to counteract this tendency. It therefore became of the utmost importance to endeavour to invent some additional means of remedying this inconvenience.

Calling to mind his former experience on the coast of Holland, and remembering the great advantage which the flat-bottomed Dutch vessels derive from the use of their lee-boards, when sailing in light winds or close hauled, with a head sea, it occurred to the commander that something of a similar kind might be adopted on the present occasion. The officers concurred in this suggestion; and when all are animated with the same cordial and enterprising spirit, few things are found to be so difficult as they at first appear. It is the mutual reliance upon each other, in the moment of difficulty, which enables British seamen boldly and successfully to brave many perils which a moment's doubt or hesitation might render insurmountable.

The above diagram will sufficiently explain the nature of the contrivance adopted on this occasion, without the assistance of minute and tedious description. It is only necessary to remark, that in addition to the four chains which are seen in the plan, a

fifth was found necessary, to keep the lee-board close to the side of the vessel. It was secured to the lower end of the lee-board at its centre, and, having then been carried across the vessel's bottom, was fastened to the opposite side by a rope and tackle.

Thus equipped, the Nemesis proceeded on her voyage, and was found to derive great assistance from this new contrivance. It was found that her lee-way was reduced *fully one-half*, as ascertained by careful observation.⁵

Gradually the breeze freshened on the subsequent days, until, at last, about the 18th, it amounted to a moderate gale, with that high and heavy sea which all who have visited the Cape will long remember, threatening, every now and then, to break on board or poop the ship; but the steady little vessel rose to it like a swan, and never shipped one heavy or dangerous sea.

Confidence in all her qualities daily increased, and, with a strong breeze on the quarter, she was now sailing, under canvas only, at the rate of eight to nine and a half knots an hour. The

⁵ Another remark, perhaps worthy of being attended to, suggested itself on this occasion, and it has been frequently confirmed since – namely, that no steamer constructed according to the model of the Nemesis should be sent to sea upon a long and uncertain voyage, without having a *fixed keel* running the whole way fore and aft, and bolted strongly through her bottom. This would be found of the greatest possible utility at sea, and it could easily be taken off, and the moveable keels put on, whenever the vessel were employed on a coast, or in river navigation. It may further be questionable, in the event of a smaller steamer being intended to be sent out, whether it would not be both safer and less expensive to send it *in pieces*, and have it put together, by the mechanics and engineers belonging to it, at the place where it might be destined for use, than to send it ready equipped, to make its own way to its destination by steam and canvas, with all the necessary risk.

lee-board was found at all times useful in making the ship stanch under sail, but as it was constructed in haste, and only with such materials as were at hand, it required to be repaired and strengthened several times.

At length, on the 29th, being still two hundred and thirty miles from the Cape, but well down to the southward, and it appearing that there was sufficient fuel left to carry her into port, the steam was for the last time got up. On the morning of the 1st July, the remarkable land of the Table Mountain, and the conical peak to the southward of it, were well in sight. The Nemesis had made a long and tiresome voyage in the most unfavourable season of the year, and the anxiety which had been shared by all on board may well be conceived. The dangers of the Cape, at that time of year, have not been exaggerated. On the 1st July, much to the astonishment of every one at Cape Town, she was descried, late in the evening, quietly steaming into Table Bay.

CHAPTER III

During the winter season, few vessels, and those only of light burden, venture into Table Bay, exposed as it is to the full fury of the north-west gales. But the *Nemesis* had little cause for fear; her light draught of water enabling her to anchor in a well-sheltered cove, near the stone jetty which has recently been constructed.

On the second day after her arrival, the governor of the colony paid a visit on board, and, as he appeared to take the greatest interest in all that related to her construction and equipment, the steam was got up, and the whole party were carried round the bay, apparently much to their satisfaction and enjoyment. The foremost gun was fired in every position, and with different charges of powder, to shew its power and range; and the interest awakened as to the future destination of the vessel was much increased by what they then witnessed.

Everything contributed to make the day remembered; and as the *Nemesis*, returning from her trip, approached the landing-place, thousands came to greet her. To the astonishment of all, she ran in close to the side of the *old* jetty, where no vessel had ever been seen before. Nothing could exceed the wonder of the people at seeing so long and large a vessel floating alongside their old wooden pier, usually frequented only by boats. It created quite an excitement in quiet Cape Town, and the steady, sober-thinking Dutchmen could hardly bring themselves to believe

that iron would float at all, and still less with such astonishing buoyancy.

Scarcely had the governor and his suite landed, when hundreds, one might almost say thousands, of curious people crowded on board. The report that an iron steamer was lying close to the town had spread so fast, and had excited so much curiosity, that even the sick made it an excuse for an airing; and such a motley crowd of people of every caste and colour as gathered round the vessel is rarely to be met with elsewhere. The negro, the Hottentot, the Caffir, and the Malay, with all the intermediate shades of colour, hastened down with idle curiosity; while the respectable Europeans and colonists, young and old, were admitted on board, and seemed delighted to gaze on something new.

As it was desirable that as much coal as possible should be taken on board before the vessel was compelled to haul off, owing to the falling of the tide, no time was lost in commencing the troublesome process. Even this did not at all deter the visitors, who continued to succeed each other in crowds, in spite of the inconvenience they suffered.

Several repairs were now to be made with all expedition. The drop, or false rudder, was first to be restored, and required to be much strengthened. This was a very essential matter; and a suggestion now occurred worth noticing, namely, that in the event of other vessels of the same description being sent to sea, they should be provided with some means of being able completely

to choke the rudder temporarily, or prevent its action altogether, while at sea, in case of its being found requisite to repair the drop-rudder. The want of some means of keeping the rudder stationary while repairing it at sea was frequently felt, and something might easily be provided to effect this object. The whole delay at the Cape amounted to nine clear days.

On the 11th of July, all being completed, she once more stood out of Table Bay, with the cheers and hearty good wishes of all for her success, although they wondered what her mysterious destination could be.

It is evident that a steamer bound to Singapore, or to any place still further eastward, would have a choice of three routes; either she might make her passage from the Cape towards the Straits of Sunda, between the islands of Java and Sumatra, trusting principally to her sails, the winds being generally strong in those latitudes, and thereby saving her fuel; or she might run from the Cape up to the Mauritius, to take in coal, which has been done by many steamers, and thence proceed by the Straits of Malacca; or, lastly, she might run through the Mozambique Channel, between the continent of Africa and the island of Madagascar, and, touching at Ceylon for coals, proceed likewise down the Straits of Malacca to her destination.

On the present occasion, the *Nemesis* had distinct orders to choose the latter route, the season of the year being considered the most favourable for it, and it being thought desirable that a visit should be paid to the island of Johanna, the most frequented

of the group called the Comoro Islands, situated at the northern end of the Mozambique Channel. This island will be more particularly alluded to in its proper place. Thence she was to proceed direct to Ceylon for coals. But even this was only known to her commander; and all that either officers or men could learn about her destination, when they left the Cape, was, that they were at once to proceed through the Mozambique Channel, but with what object they knew not.

The *Nemesis* now approaches to one of the most eventful periods of her history. Six days had scarcely passed since her departure from the Cape, when a new and quite unforeseen danger awaited her, and threatened the most appalling consequences, without any port being at hand for refuge. It has very rarely happened that a ship has been so near destruction, and yet escaped at last. The first few days of her passage alternated between gales and calms, and the high sea which she encountered only gave her a further opportunity of proving the good qualities which she possessed as a sea-boat. Cape Francis, on the southern side of the coast of Africa, within the colony, near Algoa Bay, was in sight from the mast-head on the 14th. The barometer began to fall on the 15th, and at length, on the following day, had almost sunk to twenty-eight inches. Vivid flashes of lightning now ran along the sky to the westward; the wind, which had been strong and steady from the N.N.W., freshened to a heavy gale; every appearance threatened an increase rather than a diminution of the storm; and the sea became so high and heavy, that it

threatened every moment to overwhelm the *long, low* Nemesis, for the sail that could be put upon her scarcely sufficed to keep her before the sea.

The float-boards had been taken off the wheels before the gale commenced, and she had continued under canvas ever since. Algoa Bay had been passed long before the weather had become so threatening; to return to it was now impossible; the gale went on increasing, the sea rose fearfully, and the ship's course was slightly altered, so as to carry her further away from the land. Her danger even at this time was great, as she lay so low upon the sea, which heaved its convulsive waves high above her.

In the night, or rather about three o'clock in the morning of the 17th, a tremendous sea at length struck her upon the larboard quarter. Her whole frame quivered with the blow; and so violent was the shock, that the first impression of all on board was, that the ship had been actually riven asunder. The violence of the blow made her broach to the sea and wind; but, happily, she was got before it again as speedily as possible.

As daylight dawned, the injuries which the vessel had received were soon discovered. The starboard paddle-wheel had been seriously damaged; in fact, a considerable portion of it had been nearly carried away, and only hung by a very small attachment, by which it was then dragging through the water.

Scarcely had the necessary means been adopted to save this portion of the wheel, when another and more serious injury was found to have happened to the body of the ship itself.

An immense perpendicular crack was discovered, on both sides of the vessel, just before the after paddle or sponson beam, extending almost entirely through the second iron plate from the top, and also through a small portion of the upper one. These had been broken asunder with such violence, that, at the worst point of the injury, the plate had bulged outwards in such a manner, that one portion of the broken surface projected to the extent of about two inches, leaving a most formidable opening in the ship's side. In reality, the vessel had begun to separate amidships, from one side to the other. There was every probability, too, that the crack, which at this time was nearly two feet and a half in length, would rapidly extend itself by the working of the ship, unless the weather moderated very speedily. There was every cause for alarm, and little prospect of being able, even temporarily, to repair so serious an injury in the then state of the weather.

It was evident that the broken paddle-wheel could not long hold together, and scarcely any one thought it possible to save the broken portion of it from being lost. But a little ingenuity, stimulated by the necessity of the moment, often suggests the most effectual contrivances, which are, after all, the most simple. The great object was to secure it temporarily in some way or other; so that, as soon as the rim became completely broken through, the mass might hang suspended by some other means from the ship's side. The vessel was rolling heavily, so that there was little chance of being able to pass a rope round it; but the ingenious thought quickly suggested itself, that one of

the large boat-anchors would make a capital fish-hook for the purpose. With this, one of the arms was at last caught hold of, and supported, until the rim was completely torn through; and then, by means of a tackle, the large broken portion of the wheel was, with some difficulty, hauled on board.

So far there had been good fortune in the midst of trouble, for, had this portion of the wheel been entirely lost, there is good reason to fear, as will presently be seen, that with only one wheel, which might also have easily become injured, the unfortunate *Nemesis* would very probably have been unable to outlive the still worse weather which she afterwards encountered, and would have scarcely reached a port, even in a sinking state.

And here we may make two observations. First, that the practice of taking off the float-boards under sail, which, in some steamers, is made a regular exercise for the men, at all times materially weakens the paddle-wheel, particularly in a heavy sea, and may endanger it altogether. Secondly, that an additional paddle-ring, running round the centre of the paddle-arms, and tying them together, contributes very much to the strength of the wheel; and further, that the paddle-centre should never be made of cast iron. It is the most important part of the whole wheel, and should have the utmost strength, which wrought iron alone can give it. It should here be mentioned, that even on this occasion eight only, out of the sixteen float-boards, had been removed, otherwise very probably still more serious damage would have happened. In order to provide against the recurrence of any

similar accident, orders were subsequently given, to prepare several small bars of iron, which were to be screwed on in the place of every *second* float-board removed; so that, if eight float-boards were taken off, four small bars of iron would be put on in their places. Thus the wheel would not lose its proper support and connexion. But, from the experience which had now been gained, it was rarely afterwards thought expedient to take the float-boards off at all, and certainly only in smooth water, and with every appearance of settled weather. The portion of the paddle-wheel which had been torn away on this occasion comprised no less than two-fifths of the entire circumference of the wheel. This large mass of iron could not have weighed less than fifteen to sixteen cwt.

On the following day, the 18th, the weather moderated considerably, and the vessel proceeded, with the help of one wheel only, at the rate of about four knots an hour. In the meantime, every possible effort was used to get the broken wheel repaired; and, in the short space of three days after the accident, the broken portion was got over the vessel's side with extraordinary labour, and was ultimately secured by bolts in its original place.

On the 20th, she passed within forty miles of Port Natal, (become so famous as the place the eminent Dutch farmers, from the Cape Colony, have attempted to make independent.) But there was little chance of being able to make the necessary repairs in such a place.

The dangerous condition of the vessel, after the iron plates on both sides had begun to open, could be concealed from none on board; but, as long as the weather was moderate, there appeared little doubt of her being able to reach Delagoa Bay without very great risk of foundering. On the following day, however, the 21st, the wind again began to freshen from the north-east, an unusual quarter at that time of the year. Again the mighty sea arose, and damped the reviving hopes of all, and the heavy cross swell could be looked on only with deep alarm.

Gradually, the opening in the ship's sides, which hitherto had been sufficiently limited to cause her to take in but little water, began to extend itself in an alarming manner. Indeed, it was impossible to guess where it would stop, or how any efficient means could be adopted to check it. Both sides were so bad that it was difficult to say which was worst. The vessel was evidently *working* amidships, as it is called; or, in other words, it had not only opened up and down, but was moving in and out from side to side. Moreover, the weather threatened to become rather worse than better; and, to add to the difficulty, the furnace of the larboard boiler was now found to be likewise injured, and, in fact, could scarcely be used at all. Thus it became more and more uncertain whether the engines could be kept working, so as to pump the water out of the hold; to say nothing of urging the vessel along.

Temporary expedients were at once to be resorted to; repairs were wanted at various parts at the same time, and every hand on

board was now to be occupied day and night in contriving means to keep the vessel afloat. The heavy sea which, since the change of wind, had met the full current, and rolled heavily behind the vessel, threatened to break over her every instant. To provide as well as possible against this danger, four breadths of stout plank were secured, as strongly as possible, over the stern and along the quarters, in order to keep the sea out, or at all events to break its force. So heavy was the sea, that at this time the main rudder was sometimes completely out of water, and at the same moment the jib-boom was *under* it.

In the midst of this, with the hope of relieving the strain, by diminishing the top weight at the extremities, the aftermost or large stern gun was with great labour dismounted from its pivot-carriage, and safely deposited in one of the after coal-bunkers; and the bower anchors, which had already been brought inboard, were now dragged further amidships. This eased the ship a little. But gradually as the day advanced, the wind increased, and hourly the sea became more dangerous.

An attempt was, however, made on the 22nd to effect a temporary repair to the ship's sides, which were straining very much. For this purpose, two or three rivets were cut out on each side of the crack in the plates, and a portion of a new iron plate was with difficulty fixed on the outside, upon the worst part, and bolted through into a piece of stout oak plank, placed across it on the inside. The openings had by this time extended downwards *more than three feet and a half* on both sides of the vessel.

They were, at this time, at no great distance from Cape Vidal; but a tremendous current was setting to the south-west, at the rate of more than fifty miles a day, and helped to throw up a very heavy, dangerous sea. At length the morning dawned once more, and, as the day advanced, the north-east gale had moderated; and gradually it declined, until, in the afternoon, the wind changed round towards the south-east. The repairs to the damaged wheel were by this time completed, and although the injury to the ship's sides was hourly increasing, the hopes of all on board redoubled as they saw the double power of both wheels once more at work. But Delagoa Bay, for which they struggled still so hard, was not less than two hundred miles distant. As night closed in again, the angry wind began to howl, and burst upon the fated bark in heavy gusts and squalls. And all around was dark and solemn, as the fate which seemed again to threaten misery and destruction.

The only sail she now carried was torn away in shreds, and the steam itself had little power to stand the fury of the winds and waves. At length it lulled: again she moved, and yet again the mighty storm increased, and with alternate hopes and fears the morning's dawn was looked for. She heaved and strained most fearfully, the leaks increased, the *openings spread*, and yet she floated. 'Twas hoped that, as the day advanced, the storm would yield; but hour after hour, as it passed, had brought no sign of change or promise of amendment. Their danger was at this time imminent; but it became so evident to all that the only chance of safety lay in using unremitting exertions, and

labouring day and night with hearty good-will, that their very efforts produced confidence, which, in its turn, redoubled all their strength. Nevertheless, it seemed as if new dangers were constantly in store.

The leaks continued to increase, her sides strained and opened fearfully, and the apertures had by this time extended upwards completely to the deck, and downwards far below the water-line. As the vessel heaved and rolled from side to side, the broken edges of the iron plates sometimes opened to the extent of an inch, while their lateral motion, as the vessel worked, in the part that had bulged, was frequently not less than *five inches*. As the storm increased, it was found that in the short space of two and a half hours, and in spite of every exertion to strengthen the part, the openings on both sides had further increased in length no less than eighteen inches.

The motion of the vessel, in such a pitching cross sea, was very quick; and every time the sides opened, the rush of wind and water through them was terrific. Luckily, the engines were still able to work, and continued to pump the water out very fast, although the openings were actually close to the engine-room itself. But the dangerous state of the vessel was appalling, not only from the fear of her separating amidships, but from the chance of the bilge-pumps becoming choked, or the fires being put out by the rush of water.

The struggle was evidently to be one for life or death. She groaned and worked tremendously, and reports were brought in

quick succession from different parts of the vessel, that she was fast breaking up in pieces.

In this dilemma, it was still necessary to inspire the drooping spirits of the men with some new exertion. The captain tried to smile, and, by a cool, collected manner, sought to awaken hope which in secret he himself could scarcely feel. "You may smile, sir," said one of the sturdiest of the men, a hardy boiler-maker by trade, "but you don't know the nature of iron; how should you!" (as if in pity of his ignorance,) and then added, as if for comfort, "Ah, sir, when once it works and cracks, as our sides are doing now, it's sure to go on; nothing can stop it."

However, it was evident that talking about it would not mend the matter, and all that could be said was, "The greater our danger, the more must our exertions be increased to counteract it." And increased they were. Every officer and man set-to again in earnest, to try to keep the ship together. One party was employed to nail down thick planks and spars upon the deck, fore and aft, over the broken part of the ship; others were busy bolting the ends of them into the sponson-beams, between the paddle-boxes; while another party, engineers and firemen, were busy strengthening the ship's sides below.

To understand this latter part of the condition of affairs, it must be explained that, what in a wooden ship would be called the ribs, are, in an iron one, called the "angle-irons." They are, in fact, strong angular bars, extending up and down the ship's sides like ribs, having a flat surface, to which the plates of iron are

bolted. These angle-irons, or ribs, are seventeen inches distant from each other, and at about the centre, between two of them, the crack had taken place in the plates of iron. The accident had occurred precisely in the weakest part of the vessel, amidships; and it would seem probable that, as there was a heavy cross sea in the Mozambique Channel when the misfortune happened, the head of the vessel was held firm in the hollow of one sea at the moment the top of another sea struck her heavily on the quarter. It made her frame quiver; and her length and shallowness rendered her the more liable to suffer injury from a similar blow.⁶

As regards the temporary repairs, it was evident that two contrivances were necessary for holding the broken plate together in its proper position. In the first place, small blocks of wood were fixed across between the angle-irons from one to the other, in such a manner that they crossed each other like the letter X, and gave support against the working of the ship, and the tendency of the plates to overlap each other. Next, strong bolts or bars of iron were passed *through* the angle-irons from one to the other, and tightened by means of a nut and screw at their extremities. By these means, the angle-irons, being now strongly connected together, were made to hold the edges of the broken plates in contact between them, which, as long as the bolts held good, would be quite sufficient as a temporary repair. But

⁶ The mode in which the permanent repairs were afterwards effected will be explained in the fifth chapter, together with the method by which the recurrence of a similar accident has been provided against in vessels more recently constructed.

all these contrivances were adopted with extreme difficulty, and during a gale of wind, when all attempts of the kind appeared desperate. Fortunately, towards morning of the next day, the 26th, the gale slightly moderated; and these repairs being now completed as well as circumstances would permit, rendered her in all respects stronger, so that she strained much less than before.

By this time the land was not far distant, and the hopes of those who had most despaired revived again. By degrees the haze began to clear; and now what new sensations crowded in the anxious mind! what thrills of joyous gratitude, as the straining eye first caught the doubtful land! The heavy sea had gradually diminished as the Nemesis approached the coast, and she at length ran into smooth water, near a bold cape. Never was the sound of the running out of a cable after an almost hopeless voyage heard with greater joy than on this occasion. She was now safe at last, and rescued from an almost desperate fate. Congratulations were mutual; and it may well be said that those who toil and share their fears and hopes together become more firmly bound in sympathy and friendship.

CHAPTER IV

The anchorage which the *Nemesis* had now so providentially reached was situated close to Cape Inyache, at the entrance of Delagoa Bay. This settlement, which still belongs to the Portuguese, was once famous in the annals of slavery, as one of the principal marts in which that revolting traffic was carried on. It is still far from being undeserving of the stigma which attaches to its name, although it has greatly fallen from its once thriving condition. It is situated on the eastern coast of Africa, (see map,) and at daylight, on the morning of the 27th July, 1840, the *Nemesis* steamed into the river which runs into the bay, and is known by the name of English River.

The Portuguese have a small fort near its entrance, from which the approach of the steamer was no sooner discovered than a mighty stir was made. Steamers had scarcely even been heard of, much less seen. The object of her visit none could guess; but all were conscious of partaking more or less in both the sins and the profits of the slave-trade; and, therefore, all regarded the approaching vessel as no friendly visiter. Guns were made to bear, ammunition was got into readiness, and everything would have looked very formidable had it not been fully known that a single shot from the stern gun of the *Nemesis* would have made the walls tremble, and the defenders hide themselves.

The *Nemesis* being uncertain whether her reception would

be friendly or otherwise, slowly passed up beyond the fort, to explore the river, and great was the surprise of all the lookers-on, to see her move so easily through water so shallow, that they thought it could scarcely float one of their smallest slavers. They had little dreamed that so large a vessel could, if necessary, pursue even the boats of the slavers into their most secret haunts.

As she again descended and approached the fort, there was evidently some excitement, as if they doubted what would happen next.

An aide-de-camp soon came on board from the governor of the fort, to inquire whence the vessel came, and what her object might be in visiting such an unfrequented place; but neither he nor any one on board could make each other understood.

On the same day, the captain and some of the officers of the *Nemesis* went on shore, to pay their respects to his Excellency, who affected to be exceedingly glad to see them, and shewed them all possible civility and attention. This was, no doubt, politic on his part, for he had every reason to believe that the *Nemesis* was a man-of-war, and he also well knew, that had she been so, it would have been a difficult matter for him to exculpate himself from the charge of openly aiding and abetting the slave-trade, which was at that very moment being carried on under his own eyes, and within reach of his own guns. It was, moreover, sanctioned by the very flag flying at the peak of the slavers. Yet the same flag was hoisted on the fort itself, under the stipulations of a treaty, by which its exertions were to be used to prevent the

continuance of the horrid traffic in the river. A slaver was, in fact, lying in the river, not far from the fort, and, as the steamer was passing up, it was easily observed that the crew were deserting her, and trying to make good their escape, leaving their craft at the mercy of a single boat's crew. But the *Nemesis* was not a man-of-war, and had no right to capture her; and it was therefore more politic not to seem to notice, in the first instance, what was very apparent to all.

For some time, there was a difficulty in communicating with the governor at all, no one knowing the language; but, at length, a Parsee merchant was sent for, who could speak Hindostanee as well as Portuguese, and as there was also a man on board who could speak Hindostanee, a regular cross-fire conversation was thus maintained, in a roundabout manner. One would hardly have expected to find a Parsee merchant settled in such a remote and unhealthy spot as Delagoa Bay, under the Portuguese government. But where will not the "auri sacra fames" tempt mankind to court the smile of Fortune, even with the grin of Pestilence and Death before them?

As a settlement, Delagoa Bay is of very little use to the Portuguese, of whom very few reside there; and without the stain of slavery, it could scarcely linger on. There is, however, a limited trade in ivory and gold-dust, and the coast is frequented by whalers, particularly Americans, who come into the settlement for supplies. The narrative of Captain Owen's survey on the coast gives a melancholy picture of the deadly nature of the climate,

which very few, either of his officers or his men, were fortunate enough to survive.

The fact of a slaver lying under the guns of the fort, and other little evidences that the governor was very backward in carrying out the instructions he had received respecting the slave-trade, went hard with him afterwards. This case was mentioned to the governor of Mozambique, under whose jurisdiction Delagoa Bay is placed, and by whom the deputy-governor is appointed. It will hereafter be seen, that *he* was, at all events, sincere and energetic in his efforts to stop the trade. He became excessively angry when the circumstances were stated to him, and declared that it was in violation of his most strict and positive orders, and instantly directed that the deputy-governor should be removed from his post.

The slaver, which was a fine Portuguese brig, was subsequently visited by some of the officers of the *Nemesis*, and found to be regularly fitted out for the trade, the planks for the slave-deck being all ready, with boilers for their food, and shackles, &c. Her masts and spars were large, and of excellent stuff, and advantage was soon taken of this circumstance, to procure some necessary materials for the repairs.

It appeared that there were some excellent timbers lying on the beach, which had probably belonged to some large ship wrecked in the neighbourhood. They were precisely such as would best suit the wants of our vessel; and, as it was stated that they belonged to a Portuguese merchant in the town, inquiry

was at once made about the purchase of them. Various excuses, however, were made, and unnecessary difficulty suggested. It was evident that there was a "screw loose" somewhere or other, or else that they wished to impose an exorbitant price for them. A message was therefore immediately sent, declaring that if the timbers were not given up at a fair valuation, *within twenty minutes*, the captain of the *Nemesis* "would go on board the slaver with his men, and take the masts and spars out of *her*, and as they appeared to be exceedingly good ones, they would answer her purpose rather better."

No talisman could have acted more instantaneously than this well-timed threat, which, moreover, would certainly have been put in execution. The whole community, from the governor downwards, were more or less interested in the affair; the report rapidly reached the master of the slaver; his alarm was natural enough, and his reasons for urging the immediate surrender of the timbers sufficiently evident. "Pray give them anything in the world they want," said he; "let me rather pay for it a dozen times over, than keep that strange-looking ship here. She will ruin us altogether; we must get rid of her in any way we can; give her, by all means, everything she wants, and let her be off, for mercy's sake."

Long before the twenty minutes had expired, the timbers were given up. The governor himself, on the following day, the 29th of July, sent a present of some vegetables and ivory on board, and afterwards came in person to look at the ship, and was, to

all appearance, so pleased with his reception, and doubtless, so well impressed with the appearance of the vessel, that he stayed to dinner, and did his best to shew himself a good fellow.

It may here be observed, that the so-called "English River," which empties itself into the sea at Delagoa Bay, is, in reality, the estuary of three rivers, called the Temby, the Dundas, and the Mattoll. But they are none of them of much importance, considered separately, having their sources at scarcely more than a good day's journey from the entrance, and forming rather the drains of a rich, alluvial country, than the outlets of the superabundant waters of distant tiers of mountains. They run into the English River at the distance of little more than five miles above the fort. Their shores are generally bordered by an extensive muddy flat, gradually rising towards higher land, covered with large bushes, but which can hardly be said to be crowned with luxuriant woods. Nothing can be imagined more calculated, under a tropical sun, to produce the most deadly pestilence. No wonder that those who have endeavoured to trace up these rivers, for even a short distance, have so commonly fallen victims to their enthusiasm.

The entrance to English River, from its breadth and general appearance, leads you to imagine it of greater importance than it really is. Yet it is not without something of a picturesque character; the sand hills covered with calabash trees, and the aspect of the village and Portuguese Fort, tottering though it be, all present a refreshing picture, when first viewed, after a long

and dangerous voyage.

The neighbouring country is divided among different tribes, who are frequently at war with each other, and over whom the Portuguese have very little control. Their own factory, or fort, is situated on the north side of the river, in the country of Mafoomo. But the most warlike and troublesome of all the tribes are the so-called Hollontontes, living some distance to the southward, and resembling, or indeed probably a branch of, the Zooloo Caffirs, of whom we have lately heard so much in connexion with the unfortunate Dutch emigrant-farmers at Port Natal. These Hollontontes (probably a corruption from Hottentots) have, on more than one occasion, made themselves formidable, even to the Portuguese themselves.

On the 31st, the *Nemesis* was hauled on shore on the fine sandy beach near the fort, and, in fact, within range of its guns.

It was on this day that a remarkable phenomenon occurred, which is here worth mentioning; the more particularly as it was followed at night and during the subsequent day by a very heavy gale of wind, whose approach it might, in a manner, be said to have indicated. This was, in fact, the seventh⁷ great plague of Egypt, the plague of locusts, which filled the atmosphere in myriads, as far as the eye could reach on every side; and indeed much further, for, during the time it lasted, the very sky was

⁷ It will be remembered that the plagues were frogs; dust turned to lice; swarms of flies; the murrain of beasts; the plague of boils and blanes; the plague of hail, of locusts, and of darkness.

darkened, and the whole air was filled with a sound as of "a mighty rushing wind," by the flapping of their wings. You could scarcely open either your eyes or your mouth, without fear of being blinded or choked by them.

Fortunately, the visitation did not last long enough to commit extensive destruction, but it was nevertheless a source of great alarm and inconvenience. In some parts of China, also, the swarms of locusts occasionally produce a great deal of mischief, and are very naturally dreaded, both by the people and the government. But those visitations are not so severe as this was, during the short time it lasted.⁸

Large quantities of locusts were collected by the natives for food; and it was a very curious sight, for two or three days afterwards, to watch the different groups of black men, as nearly naked as possible, crowding round their fires, with all the eagerness of hunger, and all the longing of an epicure, to enjoy a feast of locusts. They stripped off the wings and legs, and having

⁸ In the account given of the Egyptian plague, it is stated "that the locusts were brought by an east wind," and were carried away "by a mighty strong west wind." I was curious to ascertain whether there was anything worth noting in relation to the state of the wind at Delagoa Bay when the locusts appeared, and when they were carried away again. On referring to the ship's log, I find that the day preceding the appearance of the locusts was one of perfect calm; but the morning of the day on which they came was ushered in by a north-east wind, which lasted until the evening, when it changed round to precisely the opposite quarter – namely, to the south-west, and increased on the following day to a strong gale from the same quarter, which carried away all the locusts. Subsequently, it again veered round to the north-east, and continued so for several days, but brought no more locusts.

slightly roasted or grilled them, appeared to find them a capital luxury, even not unworthy of the dance and song with which they accompanied their repast.

CHAPTER V

No time was now lost in commencing the repairs of which the steamer stood so much in need. It will be remembered, that the structure of the ship's side has been elsewhere described, and that the angle-irons are, in fact, the ship's ribs. The split amidships had taken place in the middle of the iron plate, between the two angle-irons immediately before the after sponson-beam. It extended downwards full seven feet from the deck on either side the vessel; and, as the distance from the deck to the water-line, with a moderate draught of water, is only from three feet four inches to three feet six inches, it must have extended under water for about the same distance as it did above. But the whole *semi*-circumference of the vessel's hull is only about twenty-three feet and a half. Therefore, as the crack was full seven feet in length on each side of the ship, there only remained sixteen feet on each side of the ship's hull, or about two-thirds in all, not separated in two.

In other iron vessels more recently constructed by the same builder, Mr. Laird, of Birkenhead, it is satisfactory to know that full provision has been made against the recurrence of any similar accidents. The Phlegethon, which was afterwards built upon the same model, has been constructed in such a manner, by the addition of bulkheads, &c., that not only could there be no apprehension of the accident, but an almost impossibility

of its recurrence. The accompanying woodcut will explain the improvement.

The first thing now to be done was evidently to remove the broken iron plates, and to rivet in new ones in their place. In order to provide for additional strengthening of the vessel inside, the large timbers which had been purchased were made use of, as being exactly adapted for the purpose. Three of these were placed across the angle-irons against the side of the vessel, the longest and stoutest, which was twenty-three feet in length, one foot broad, and six inches thick, being placed highest up, about two to three feet below the deck. This was secured in its place by bolts, each a foot long, which were run through the ship's side, one at the centre of the space between each of the angle-irons. As there would, however, be a space left between the face of the beam and the side of the vessel, except at those points where it rested upon the angle-irons, this interval was filled up with well-seasoned red pine, which added very much to the solidity of the contrivance. To "make assurance doubly sure," two other beams, of the same depth and thickness, but not of the same length, and secured in a similar manner, were also employed. By this means, it is very evident that the ship was made a vast deal stronger than she ever was before, though not stronger than was proper for her size and shape. The whole length of the new plates put in the ship's sides was eight feet two inches; and so effectually was the work done that the whole of it remained perfect, stringers and all, at the end of two years and a half of severe and uninterrupted

service.

These contrivances added very little to the weight of the vessel, and gave it very great support in the weakest part, and just where it was most required, to enable her to carry coals on deck, &c.

During her detention of twelve days, the *Nemesis* had been an object of great curiosity to the native Africans, as well as to the Portuguese settlers. The chiefs of some of the tribes were occasionally allowed to look at the vessel, and expressed the greatest possible astonishment at what they saw. It happened to be just the time of year when the king of one of the tribes most friendly to the Portuguese (probably, as it appeared, because they have large dealings together in slaves) usually came down from his own country, about thirty miles distant, to pay his annual visit to the Portuguese governor. On these occasions, there is a vast attempt on both sides to appear very friendly to each other, with precisely that degree of sincerity which, as a *minimum*, is indispensable to the advantageous barter of slaves and ivory for iron and spirits, or occasionally gold-dust for various trifling articles, which in the eyes of a savage possess inestimable value.

There appears, in general, to be very little good feeling existing between the native tribes and the Portuguese. The former look upon the latter with some degree of dread, arising from the injuries which they have at various times received at their hands; and the latter regard the former merely as degraded savages, fit for little else than the speculations of the slave trade.

On both sides there is a degree of mistrust, arising from the debasing tendency which such a traffic necessarily exercises upon all concerned in it. In Captain Owens narrative, an instance is related of the most savage cruelty, exercised by Portuguese Christians upon a few unarmed and oppressed natives who fell into their hands, which it is impossible to read without shuddering.

On the present occasion, the native chief who came to do honour to the governor was a decrepit old man, nearly seventy years of age, attended by about seven hundred or eight hundred of his most doughty warriors, partially clothed in skins, and ornamented with ostrich-feathers stuck in their heads. He himself, as being a very great man, was clothed in a loose sort of dressing-gown, with a red nightcap on his head, a present from the governor himself. Every man had three spears of different sizes, probably to be thrown at different distances, together with a stout club and shield; and in the use of these weapons they exhibited great dexterity.

The governor had invited Captain Hall and his officers to witness the performance of their war-dance, which was, in reality, as savage an exhibition as it was possible to conceive.

As evening advanced, the attendants of the old chief were called upon to drink the governor's health, out of a large *tub-full* of rum; and, in order to ensure fair play, a corporal stood by with a stout cane in his hand, with which he most courageously belaboured all those who shewed an uncivilized disposition for

helping themselves to more than their share. But the passions of the savage are not so easily to be subdued; and, if the mere sight and smell of the liquor had warmed them up into something like a quarrelsome mood, what was to be expected from the actual taste and fire of it? Words ran high, and all the threatening gestures of the excited savage promised even bloodshed; until, at length, the corporal's stick being insufficient to allay the disturbance, he very quietly upset the whole remaining contents of the tub, and soon dispersed the mighty men-of-war, in apparent reconciliation.

The negro tribes of these parts adopt the practice of tattooing their faces, but not in that peculiarly neat and regular manner for which the New Zealanders are distinguished. It is here more like a rude system of notching the skin, as if done rather to shew how manfully they can endure pain, than as a mere ornamental art.

A more sensible practice among some of the tribes about Delagoa Bay, is that of shaving a large portion of the thick wool off their heads, tending greatly to cleanliness in a tropical country. Occasionally it is trimmed into some fanciful shape, like the old yew-trees in some of our English villages, which stand forth as curious specimens of nature improved; while, again, the natives on some parts of the Madagascar coast, generally stout, athletic men, divide their hair into little tufts all over the head, each of which is frequently tied round the roots, and thus made to stand out on all sides in little knobs, giving a very singular appearance to the head, more particularly when they are seen

working side by side, as I have often witnessed at the Mauritius, with close-shaved Indian or Chinese labourers.

As the king above-mentioned and his followers had come from a considerable distance, and were reported to possess great influence among their neighbours, it was thought a good opportunity both to impress them with a knowledge of our power, and to conciliate them by a show of our good-nature. There was the more reason for this, in consequence of pretty certain evidence having been obtained that the crew of an American trading-vessel, which had been wrecked on the coast not long before, had been most barbarously treated by the tribe into whose hands they fell. As such a misfortune might again happen, it was thought a good opportunity to make an impression upon the native tribes, which was sure to be communicated from one to the other, by means of the old king and his adherents. Accordingly, the old man (who was called Appelli by the Portuguese) was one day invited to go on board the Nemesis, with one or two of his attendants. The vessel had by this time been got nearly ready for sea, and on this occasion, in order to produce greater effect upon all the lookers-on, was dressed out with her flags, and, being newly-painted, presented a very gay appearance. A Portuguese merchant accompanied the veteran chief to the ship as interpreter, and, rather unexpectedly, several women also came off with him, dressed in showy colours, and impelled, perhaps, as much by the flattering thought that they would quite astonish the white man, as by the mere feeling of

curiosity.

The moment the king put his foot upon the deck, the single fife and drum which was on board set up "God save the king!" and the old man appeared well pleased both with the tune and the attention. After this, a particularly ugly, repulsive-looking fellow, who turned out to be the king's fool, though as old as the king himself, set up a most discordant note of admiration upon three reeds which he held in his hand, something after the manner of pan-pipes. At intervals he treated you to a sort of explanatory text of his own, in the shape of a few uncouth words, yelled out in a manner particularly edifying to all *except* those in whose honour it is supposed they were especially poured forth. His appearance was rendered more uncouth by a large bag tied under his chin, for what purpose was not very evident, but probably to contain either his charms or his tobacco.

The queen herself had also accompanied her lord upon this occasion, and exhibited no fear, and certainly no beauty. Picture to yourself a young sable queen, a capital caricature of one of the Egyptian statues in black marble, plump and shiny as her prototype, only less expressive. Then invest her in your imagination with sundry huge scars about her cheek and nose; not those delicate lines and graceful curves which decorate the upper lip of royalty among New Zealand tribes, but regular lumps, squeezed up and dried, as it were into large warts, particularly about the nose, as if a race of gigantic mosquitoes had held a feast there!

However, to do justice to the lady's rank, if not to her looks, Captain Hall thought proper to shew her due attention, and, accordingly, a glass of wine was offered to her, as well as to her lord. The old man, though at first suspicious, like all half-savages, very gladly swallowed it, as soon as one of the officers had tasted it first. But for the queen wine was not good enough; rum was the nectar for her —*that* was the soul-stirring influence which could bend her pride, and warm her heart to gentleness.

Having by these means warmed the royal pair to good humour, the next thing was to bewilder them with astonishment. This was not difficult. They were requested to examine the ship's side, and to assure themselves that she was made entirely of iron. A loud Heugh! was their exclamation. To them it seemed a boundless mine of wealth, that mass of precious stuff, to purchase which was all their ambition. They were calculating in their own minds how many thousands and tens of thousands of slaves they would have to procure, before they could be able to obtain so much of the valued metal. But, when the engine was shewn to them, with all its polished bars, and massive parts, and its uses partly explained through the interpreter, their astonishment knew no bounds.

Before the chief's departure, great care was taken to explain to him the barbarous cruelties which had been committed upon the shipwrecked seamen by some of the tribes on the coast. He declared that he had never heard of the occurrence, and affected to be very much horrified at it. He was made to understand

that he was to communicate to all the people of his tribe, as well as to all others whom he might fall in with, that, if ever any injury were done to any white men when driven upon any part of the coast, an iron vessel, even more terrible than the one he was then in, would be sent to punish the people. On the contrary, if he conducted himself peaceably, and treated white men well on all occasions, he would be considered the friend of the English, and of all other white men. He was also to make it publicly known wherever he went, that white men were always to be treated kindly when in distress. This he promised to do, with every appearance of sincerity, and upon the whole shewed more intelligence than might have been expected.

In consideration of the king's promises, and in order the more fully to gain his influence, a present was made to him, the most valuable he could have received – namely, a musket and bayonet, with its accoutrements. His surprise and delight were beyond all bounds; he almost seemed to get young again with pleasure as he grasped the precious weapon in his hands. On leaving the vessel, he insisted on shaking hands with almost every one on board.

On the following day, he returned again to the ship in high glee, bringing with him his own spear and shield, with other implements of war and of the chase, which he laid at the captain's feet, as the most valuable presents he could offer to a "faithful ally."

CHAPTER VI

The circumstances relating to the distressed seamen on the coast, alluded to in the foregoing chapter, were first stated by one of the unfortunate sufferers himself, who accosted, in very good English, some of the officers of the *Nemesis*, as they were returning to their ship, and soon proved himself to have belonged to an American vessel, but stated that he was a native of Hanover. His name was Samuel Reid, or something very much like it. His right eye and lower jaw appeared to have been dreadfully wounded, and gave a practical introduction to the following tale, every part of which there is too much reason to believe is strictly true.

It appears that an American schooner, called the *Colonel Crockett*, of one hundred and forty tons, belonging to Newburgh, U. S., sailed from New York in the summer of 1839, bound on a voyage to the West Coast of Africa, to procure bullocks for salting, principally for the St. Helena market. She subsequently, also, proceeded to Madagascar, and touched at Delagoa Bay, on her way to Inhampura River, high up on the east coast, to trade for ivory. There she remained three weeks, without being able to accomplish her object. In working out of it again, in May, 1840, she missed stays, and went on shore on the sand at the river's mouth. They tried in vain to get the vessel off on the following day, there not being enough men fit for work, as all, except three

out of eleven, were sick with fever. There she lay, nearly high and dry. It seems they had only one boat remaining, which was too small to contain all the people, and, therefore, it was agreed that the captain and second mate, (Samuel Reid,) with two men, should start off in her, and try to reach Delagoa Bay, which was only about seventy miles distant, where they were to procure a larger boat and other assistance, and then return to bring away the remainder of the crew, and whatever could be saved from the wreck.

Unfortunately, they found the surf beating over the bar at the mouth of the Inhampura so heavily, that they could not succeed in getting the boat out. In this predicament, the captain and second mate volunteered to set out together, to try to reach Delagoa Bay by land – a most hazardous experiment under any circumstances, with the dangers of the fatal fevers, and the treachery of the savage native tribes, staring them in the face. The attempt was, in fact, almost hopeless. Nevertheless, on the morning of the 9th of May, 1840, they landed from the vessel, totally unarmed, thinking, probably, that it would be both useless and laborious for two men to carry arms which they could scarcely use for more than one or two discharges, owing to the difficulty of carrying ammunition.

They proceeded for about twenty to twenty-five miles on that day, without molestation, but were at length joined by three natives, one of whom left them, under the pretence of going to procure water, while the other two lighted a fire, and began

to roast some corn, of which they all partook equally. In the meantime, the native who had been absent returned, bringing with him seven others.

The captain, being anxious to make the most of his time, determined to proceed, although the day was fast declining. But, in order to relieve themselves from the weight of their bags of clothes which they had each brought with them, they entrusted them to the care of the natives who followed. On arriving at the bottom of a steep hill, where there was a picturesque valley, they all halted for the night, and soon made a capital fire. As might have been expected, the curiosity of the natives, to say nothing of their treacherous disposition, could not withstand the temptation of looking into the bags they had carried, to examine their contents. This was resisted by the captain, who was rather a hasty man; a scuffle ensued, and thus the opportunity the natives sought for was at once afforded them.

Their intentions might have been foreseen the moment the man left the party, ostensibly to look for water, but in reality to look for assistance. And although a natural dread of the white man had hitherto prevented them from openly commencing their attack – waiting, probably, for a more favourable opportunity at nightfall – a quarrel having once arisen, however trifling, their savage blood was roused, and all their bad feelings awakened. They immediately rose in a body, and made a general discharge of their spears at the two unhappy white men. The captain faced them boldly, and soon received several severe wounds in front,

and at last tried to save himself by flight. But, wounded as he was, they soon overtook him, and struck him down, it is to be hoped, quite dead, although even that does not appear certain.

The mate, on the other hand, who stood sideways to receive the discharge of spears, presenting a narrower surface than in front, was wounded with two spears in the right arm, and one in the neighbourhood of the right eye, and, having picked up one of them, made a furious charge at those who were nearest to him, and killed two of the savages on the spot. Numbers, however, necessarily prevailed over the most desperate courage, and he was at last struck down by a heavy blow of a club over the head, and, being senseless, was considered dead. They now dragged him towards the fire, as he afterwards found, and must have struck him several heavy blows upon different parts of the body. On coming to himself again, he found that he was stripped of all his clothes, lying naked upon the sand, and so exhausted that he could neither speak nor move. Gradually, however, becoming sensible of his helpless situation, he looked around him, from time to time, unobserved; and, at length, to his great horror, discovered the body of his unfortunate captain lying by the side of the fire, and several natives standing around it, some of whom were busy cutting off slices from the fleshy parts of the body, while others roasted them in the fire, with all the appearance of anxious longing for the feast!

Can any situation be conceived more horrible at this moment than that of the unfortunate wounded man? If he betrayed

symptoms of life, he was sure to be beaten with heavy clubs to death; if he lay quiet, to all appearance lifeless, it was far from improbable that, when they should have become satiated with the flesh of his companion, they might be ready to commence their butchery upon himself. Who can picture to himself without horror the dreadful moments which lingered as they passed, and seemed endless in the anxiety of suspense! There the poor fellow lay, in speechless agony, the fated witness of barbarity the most revolting.

At length, having gorged themselves with that horrible repast in the peculiar manner which those who have ever seen the hungry savage at his meal can never forget, they fell asleep round the fire, under the full oppression of repletion. The poor mate, perceiving this, made a desperate effort to rouse himself from his death-like dreaminess, and try to fly from his impending fate, he knew not how or whither. He could not stand, he could not walk, and almost fainted with the effort; yet he crawled on hands and knees towards the neighbouring bush or thicket, and there contrived to hide himself.

He lay concealed, in helplessness, until the following day, when he was discovered by the restless eye of the suspicious savage. He asked, by signs, for water; but not only was that refused to him, but he was given to understand, without difficulty, that they looked forward to the pleasure of eating him for their evening meal with particular satisfaction; and a sort of rude table was pointed out to him, upon which they intended

to cut him up for their repast, according to their most approved fashion. After this, they left him alone in his misery. It should be mentioned, that when they refused him drink, they *did* give him a little food, which they *forced* him to eat, and – horrible to think of! – it was not improbably a part of his murdered companion, upon which they had regaled themselves the evening before.

As night approached, the man, finding himself somewhat recovered from the shock of his wounds, made another desperate effort to escape. He could now walk; and slowly and cautiously he pursued his way, tracing back his course with the almost unerring instinct which the resolution of despair awakens. The darkness of the night favoured him; and, by sometimes diving into the wood for concealment, sometimes resting in the darkest part of the thicket to collect his failing strength, and then again boldly urging on his course along the more open beach by the sea-side, he at length eluded all his pursuers. They had followed him, for some distance, in vain; and he safely reached, on the following day, the schooner he had left, completely exhausted and helpless.

Here he found that, even during his short absence, death had done its work among his messmates on board. Finding that there was no hope of procuring relief on shore, another attempt was made to get the boat over the bar – and with success. In this the chief mate, with two other men, embarked, in the hope of being able to make their passage along the coast of Delagoa Bay. The attempt fortunately succeeded; and, at the end of five days, a large boat was descried approaching the wreck, which

had been hired by their comrades from the Portuguese authorities for two hundred dollars, for the purpose of bringing them off. But their troubles were not yet destined to end. A heavy sea still continued to beat upon the bar, creating such a surf that they were compelled to wait at least fourteen days more before they could leave the schooner. Happily, they were at length able to embark; and, carrying with them the most portable articles of value they could stow away, they ultimately succeeded in reaching Delagoa Bay.

It has more than once been suspected that some of the tribes on the eastern coast of Africa were cannibals, under certain circumstances: but others again, and Captain Owen among the number, have declared that, "on inquiry, even their greatest enemies acquitted them of the suspicion." There does not, however, appear to be any well-grounded reason for calling in question the truth of the statement made by this unfortunate man, Reid. His tale was told to Captain Hall with every appearance of truth; and, although it might be suggested that the man was not unlikely to have been in a state of dreamy delirium, after the wounds and blows he had received upon the head, and might have been led by fear to imagine what he pictured to himself to be true, still this is a very unsatisfactory answer to a simple tale of facts, artlessly told, and without any object to be gained by inventing a case of horror. Besides which, he could hardly have found his way back to the schooner without assistance, had he not perfectly recovered his senses before he started.

Two of the unfortunate men entered as able seamen on board the *Nemesis*, with liberty to be discharged when they pleased, and continued on board until she arrived at Singapore; but the second mate preferred waiting for any American vessel that might touch at the settlement.

It may seem that I have dwelt long upon the subjects of interest connected with the stay of the *Nemesis* at Delagoa Bay; but, in reality, it is a part of the coast of Africa little known to the general reader, and as the vessel was detained there for a considerable time, many objects of interest were noticed and remembered. I have before mentioned that the Portuguese have been very far from advancing the civilization of the natives. There is certainly no love for each other between them; and the debasing influences of the slave-trade seem universally to poison the heart, and destroy all the sympathies of our nature.

One poor native woman was discovered who spoke English tolerably well, and was found to have been extremely useful as interpreter to all the English and American vessels, whalers, and others, which touched there for supplies. For what particular reason does not appear, but this woman had been strictly forbidden by the governor to go on board the *Nemesis*, under pain of the severest punishment; indeed, she had been kept in close confinement nearly ever since the arrival of the vessel. But, at length, when an American whaler came into the bay, she was allowed to visit *that ship* as usual. There was something peculiarly artless and good-natured about the poor woman's manner, and

she expressed a particular wish to be allowed to see some person from the English ship. Word was accordingly brought from the American captain to that effect.

Her tale was a remarkable one, and told with considerable intelligence. She expressed her attachment to the English in strong terms, enumerated the various kindnesses she had received from them, inquired after particular ships and individuals, and seemed to remember almost every trifling incident that had occurred. She was greatly afraid of being punished by the governor for having dared to talk to the English, but could assign no particular grounds for the harsh treatment she received. It was, however, shrewdly suspected that it arose from fear that she might furnish information about the slave-trade, and that, in fact, her remarks might already have been very useful to the English cruisers, and, consequently, injurious to the Portuguese dealers. It has been before stated that the governor himself was not free from the suspicion of countenancing the traffic; and, taking all the circumstances together, it became pretty evident that this poor woman's treatment was only one of the links in the chain of turpitude forged out of the iron rod of slavery.

For the first time since the arrival of the Nemesis, some of her officers were now able to leave the ship for a day, and make an interesting excursion up the river. They started early in the morning, accompanied by a Portuguese merchant and his servant. It being now the least unhealthy season of the year,

there was little or no danger to be apprehended from sickness, particularly as it was not their intention to remain out at night.

It has already been noticed that the English River, is, in fact, formed by the united waters of three rivers, at the distance of only five or six miles from the fort, the largest being the Temby, to the southward, and the smallest the Dundas, to the westward, while the Mattoll runs up towards the northward. The Dundas was the one chosen on the present excursion, as there was good expectation of finding large herds of hippopotami upon its banks, and perhaps other wild animals, which would furnish a capital day's sport. The banks of the river were low, and the stream sluggish, and on all sides abundance of mangrove shrubs and bushes, sufficient of themselves to indicate that the country must frequently be flooded. Birds of various kinds, particularly such as feed upon small fish and worms, were seen in great numbers, curlews and crows, and occasionally a pelican, with wild geese and pigeons, and now and then birds of more beautiful plumage.

As the boat ascended, four wild buffaloes were seen at a distance, and a beautiful zebra was descried, galloping away from the river-side. But the most striking objects were the numerous hippopotami, in the midst of whose favourite haunts they now found themselves. A more curious or exciting scene can scarcely be imagined; and when it was resolved to continue the ascent, in the hope of having some fine sport, the Portuguese merchant was so alarmed, that he very humbly requested that he might

be left behind. The strange animals opened their huge mouths, and bellowed forth a sound something like the roar of an ox in concert with the grunt of a wild boar, with a little accompaniment of the braying of an ass. They did not at first seem frightened, but shewed their formidable-looking teeth, as if they had some right to frighten others. Hundreds of them started up at different times, some rising from the shallow mud in which they had been lying, and hastening off with a quick, heavy tread; others, again, just raising their heads up from the deeper parts of the river, and diving again like porpoises. Several of them were fired at and wounded, upon which they dived instantly out of sight, without rising again. Indeed, they are hardly ever killed in such a way as to be taken on the spot at once; but, dying under water, the carcase of course rises to the surface after two or three days, and is then taken possession of by the natives. Their flesh is eaten with great avidity in times of scarcity; but, generally speaking, they are more valued for the beautiful ivory of their teeth, which are collected and bartered for various articles of European manufacture.

Several natives were seen paddling about the river in their little canoes, apparently without any fear of the hippopotami, and one party of them was spoken to, and appeared harmless and contented; but their invitation to land and look at the country was not accepted, as there was little time to spare, and their treacherous character was sufficiently known to make it imprudent to divide a small party into still smaller ones. They,

however, explained very intelligibly the mode in which they contrived to kill the hippopotami – viz., sometimes by making a regular charge at some of them, singled out on purpose, with their spears. To effect this, they go in large numbers together, but the expedition is attended with considerable danger, and rarely resorted to, except in times of dearth. A more common method is to lay traps of various kinds for them, either upon the banks of the river itself, or among the neighbouring trees, a party being constantly at hand, in concealment, to despatch them at the last moment.

The whole distance ascended, from the junction of the Dundas with the English River was about seven or eight miles, when the water became so shallow that the boats could scarcely proceed. Towards evening, therefore, they again descended with the ebb-tide, having the full light of the moon to guide them down to their ship, after a laborious but very agreeable day, which fully repaid them by the interesting objects which presented themselves to their notice.

Their last day had now arrived; and, with a view to shew them every possible attention, as well as to conciliate their good offices, the governor invited Captain Hall and his officers to a grand entertainment, on which occasion all the delicacies of the African coast had been sought out to do honour to the guests, and nothing was omitted which could contribute to the novelty and perfection of the entertainment.

The exterior of the governor's residence was something like

a good-sized English cottage, consisting of only one floor, as is commonly the case in hot countries, and having two white pillars in front, which supported a portion of the roof, serving at the same time for a verandah. It was ornamented with green branches for the occasion, affording a very necessary protection from the glare of the sun, which was still high and powerful. There were several other smaller cottages disposed around it, something in the form of a square, but not a single tree or other relieving object to soften the burning reflection from the deep sand which formed the site of the fort and of the governor's residence.

The dinner went off with great éclat, and no little amusement at the original attempts of the black waiters (of course slaves) to vie with European refinement. Towards evening, when tea had at length been handed round, the entertainment was concluded with, "for the last time of performance," a dance of the native women belonging to the neighbouring village. The whole affair lasted for about an hour, when, glad to escape the heat and noise, the officers returned to their ship.

Little further remains to be said of Delagoa Bay, though many interesting facts might have been elicited in relation to the slave-trade, had the Nemesis remained there longer. It appears very evident that formerly the trade was carried on with greater atrocity than at present, but enough is still known respecting it to make us look upon the natives themselves as the worst abettors of the traffic. The passions of the savage chiefs seem only to be withheld for a moment, not suppressed, by the difficulty of

procuring slaves; and when they can neither find enemies to seize, nor *culprits to condemn*, they sometimes send a sort of marauding expedition to seize by treachery *their own people*, and sell them into slavery. It is stated by Captain Owen, that, within even a few years, under a former commandant, some of the chiefs had been persuaded to sell their harmless subjects for so trifling a sum as a dollar and a half each, or about seven shillings, to be paid, not in money, but in merchandize of trifling value, and that several cargoes had been obtained in this way for the Brazilian market.

If we look for the most thriving mart for slaves upon the east coast of Africa at the present time, we shall find it at the river Quillimane, a little more than five hundred miles to the north of Delagoa Bay. It lies about midway between that settlement and Mozambique. There the slaves are purchased for coarse cloth, gunpowder, beads, cutlery, &c.; and the "arrival of one of the little traders, with his pedler-kind of stock, among one of the native tribes in the interior, becomes the signal for general warfare, in which the weak become the victims of the strong." A few years ago, no less than five thousand slaves were annually exported, from this mart alone, to Rio Janeiro.

It is indeed astonishing that a place so unhealthy in itself as Quillimane should be able to keep up its constant supply of human export. The soil and the very air are no less pestilential than the traffic which debases it; but the effects of the demand are felt far and wide, and, hundreds of miles in the interior, the

slave hunt, as it may be called, is carried on; and the ramifications of this odious traffic spread themselves like the branches of the upas-tree, not merely poisoning all within its shade, but becoming more and more infectious as it branches out further from the root.

CHAPTER VII

All preparations being at length completed, on the morning of the 17th of August, just twenty days after having so providentially succeeded in reaching her port of refuge, the *Nemesis* was once more ready to continue her voyage.

On the 22nd August, she passed near the group of Rocky Islands, called Bassa da India, which are situated nearly in the middle of the channel, and pursued her voyage under sail. Of course, her progress was slow against an adverse wind, and no little anxiety was felt by her captain, on account of the uncertainty of the compasses, and their discrepancy with each other. She arrived, however, safely at Mozambique on the afternoon of the 31st, without having had occasion to use her engines, except just to carry her into the anchorage.

As she passed through the outer roads, she communicated with H.M. brig *Acorn*, Captain Adams, which was on the look-out for two slavers daily expected to arrive for cargoes; and, the better to entrap them, she had hoisted a sort of decoy-flag at her main, which she had already taken from one of the same description. While a short visit was being paid on board, a pilot had come off from the shore, to conduct the *Nemesis* into the inner harbour, where she was soon brought to within a quarter of a mile of the town. Little time, however, could be spared for the visit, but there was still some necessary work to be done on

board, which could not be completed until the following day.

As the errors of the compasses have been alluded to above, and seem to have occasioned very great anxiety upon this passage, it may be well to make some remarks about them again in this place. It will be remembered, that before leaving Liverpool a long series of experiments had been made, which were intended to provide means of counteracting the local action of the iron of the ship's hull upon the compasses. But no worse place can be imagined than a crowded dock for the purpose of carrying on experiments of such nicety. Disturbing causes were continually operating, and the accident she met with on her way to Portsmouth proved that the correctness of the compasses was very far from being satisfactory. The experiments which were afterwards made at Portsmouth were also very doubtful in their result, in all probability owing, as before explained, to the absence of the boxes of chain or broken iron, which are always used by Professor Airy. It may readily be imagined that the utmost anxiety was always felt on board the vessel on this account, particularly when near the land; and many a long and anxious night has been spent on deck, with frequently a leadsman upon each of the paddle-boxes, to take soundings, and one in the bowsprit besides.

The large magnets, as originally placed in their positions, have never been moved, neither has the compass been changed in the slightest degree. But although they have greatly *modified* the errors, they have by no means sufficed to correct them. It

has been always found the safest course not to put faith in the compasses at all; or rather, in this instance, observation showed that a compass, suspended in a box from a cross spar, at the height of ten or twelve feet above the head of the man at the helm, acted with much more accuracy than any other, and it was always the most relied on whenever it could be used.

It is scarcely to be doubted that the vessel has often made a longer passage than she would have done had the compasses been correct; for, in bad weather, when observations of the celestial bodies could not be taken, she could scarcely have avoided making many errors in her course. But nowhere were these difficulties felt more anxiously than in this passage through the Mozambique Channel, where land could never be very far distant. The necessity for a constant good look-out, and for two or even three men in the chains, produced anxiety and fatigue in itself; while it was also necessary for the officers to have the advantage of taking the altitudes of the stars, whenever the night was clear enough, not only once, but many times during the night. The compasses not only differed from the true points, but differed also from each other; and particularly in the Mozambique Channel, it was observed that they differed more than elsewhere, without being influenced however by the rapid atmospheric changes which prevailed. The more the ship's course was directed towards the true pole, the less was the error of the compass; but gradually, as her course was changed towards the east or west, so did the errors and discrepancies of the compasses

increase.

It is satisfactory to know that the same degree of difficulty was not experienced on board the other iron steamers which were sent out afterwards; and as the *Nemesis* was the first of her class that ever made the voyage, it is right here to record the difficulties she encountered under this head. Many an anxious watch has been spent on deck, trying to catch the altitude of particular stars as they emerged, for a moment, from the dense clouds or haze; and much of this kind of labour, so frequently repeated, would have been saved had her compasses been trustworthy.⁹

It is now time to return to the anchorage at Mozambique, where we left the *Nemesis*. Of course as she passed the principal Portuguese fort, she fired a salute, which was returned, and immediately became the signal to the whole town that something

⁹ With respect to the effects of lightning upon an iron ship, and the danger which was to be apprehended from the attraction, both of the vessel as a body, and of its particular parts as points for the electrical fluid to touch upon in its passage between the clouds and the earth, no inconvenience whatever seems to have been felt. Much had been said about it in England before her departure for a tropical region. The timid, and those less acquainted with the subject, openly expressed their apprehensions; the learned smiled with more of curiosity than fear; but the officers of the vessel itself were too busy about other matters to give themselves time to think much about the question. During their voyage to the southward, when many dangers were encountered, certainly that from lightning was amongst the least thought of; and now, as they were passing through the Mozambique Channel, a part of the world particularly famous for its heavy storms of thunder and lightning, not the slightest effect from it was observed upon the iron vessel. The funnel has a perfectly smooth top, without any ornamental points, such as are sometimes seen; and the main rigging and funnel stays were made of chain at the top, and rope throughout the rest.

uncommon was to be expected. The arrival of a large steamer was soon made known in every direction, and not only became a source of curiosity to all, but an object of great alarm to many. The first impression was that she was sent purposely to put an end to the slave-trade at that place, and the consternation became general; for the governor, of whom more will presently be said, at once encouraged this opinion, which he felt would strengthen his power, as it did his determination, which was proved to be perfectly sincere, to do his utmost to stop the trade. Those most interested in the traffic had already begun openly to defy his power, and had not hesitated to declare to him that they would still carry it on in some of the shallow rivers, where vessels of war could not approach them. But the sight of a large steamer, running along close in shore, almost as if she were a small boat, drawing at the same time only five feet and a half of water, at once damped their ardour. They never could have dreamed that a large heavily-armed vessel could move wherever she pleased through their smallest streams; and their alarm was proportioned to their surprise.

Shortly before this, there had been so strong a disposition to resist the governor's power, that it had amounted almost to a rebellion; and his Excellency, though a bold man, and the first governor of the Portuguese possessions on that coast, who had come with the honest determination to stop the trade at all hazards, felt himself in a very awkward position. He, however, felt himself strong enough to take extreme measures, the moment

he saw the steamer so close to the town. He afterwards admitted that her arrival was most opportune, and so pleased was he, at the same time, that he turned at once upon the slave-dealers; even that very day he seized two large slavers, condemned them at once, and publicly sold them by auction before the day was over. Such vigorous measures had been quite unknown under any former governor, and at once proved, both to the Portuguese and to the world, that his professions were real, and that he meant to keep his word. He had before this taken strong measures against the dealers in slaves, but this bold step was the finishing stroke of his policy, and at once filled all parties with dismay. In fact, trade of all kinds was stagnant for the moment, in consequence of the measures adopted; and large heaps of valuable ivory were lying there useless, in consequence of the impossibility, or, at all events, extreme hazard, of sending the usual slave-ships to sea, which would convey it to a market.

The governor is a brigadier-general in the Portuguese service, by name Joachim Pereira Morinho, and had formerly served under the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula. He had not been long on the coast; but, as he had come with a full determination to destroy the slave-trade, or, at all events, to do his utmost towards it, he had already been long enough there to gain the ill-will of all the Portuguese residents. Indeed, he did not live altogether in security from violence, arising from the vindictive feelings of those interested in the traffic; and he had, therefore, requested Captain Adams, in the Acorn, to remain there as long as he could,

to afford him protection; and had also detained a small brig-of-war, belonging to his own country, named the Villa Flora, to overawe the sea-faring part of the population.

The governor seemed to entertain the best feelings towards the English generally, with whom he had associated a good deal, and particularly inquired what assistance he could give to the Nemesis. As fuel and vegetables were, of course, most in request, they were mentioned. He appeared quite pleased to have it in his power to furnish something that would be of use to her; and, to the gratification of every one, a large boat came off to the ship early in the morning, bringing a fat ox, four sheep, a large pig, and some vegetables and fruit; besides which, there was also a large country boat, full of wood, containing eight thousand pieces. In addition to these very handsome presents, he also proposed to fill up the ship's water free of expense. This was accompanied by a note, in Portuguese, from the secretary-general of the province, Don Antonio Julio di Castro Pinto, of high degree and higher-sounding name, who was charged by his Excellency to offer the good things above-mentioned, "as a mark of his good-will, and of his sense of the service which the visit of the Nemesis would render to the cause of anti-slavery, and, at the same time, as a trifling present to a brother in arms from an old soldier, grown grey in the service of his country, both at home and abroad."

Nothing could have been more acceptable, and, through the active assistance which the Nemesis received, she was enabled to proceed on her voyage, after little more than a day's delay. As an

acknowledgment of his Excellency's attention, a trifling present of some capital hollands, preserved salmon, and English pickles, were sent to him, which were very great luxuries in that part of the world, and appeared to be duly appreciated. His Excellency had never before seen a steamer in those parts; and, the better to acknowledge his good-nature, and increase the sensation her arrival had produced on shore, he was invited by Captain Hall, to come on board to look at the ship, and to partake of such refreshment as she had to offer. This was, accordingly, a grand day for all parties, and the 1st of September, 1840, will, on many accounts, be long remembered at Mozambique.

His Excellency came on board in his state-barge, attended by all his suite, in full uniform, under a salute from the batteries and the Portuguese brig-of-war, while crowds of spectators stood upon every point on shore, whence a good view could be obtained. The deck of the Nemesis, though rather crowded with visitors, presented a gay appearance, from the variety of uniforms and foreign orders, which all those who were entitled to them, not few in number, displayed upon the occasion.

Sufficient time having been spent in viewing the ship and inspecting the machinery, which few of them had ever seen before, the whole party sat down to a grand *déjeûner à la fourchette*. Now, it may seem that a trifling incident of this sort could have no possible connexion with the suppression of the slave-trade; and, moreover, this latter question has been more frequently discussed at tea-drinking parties among benevolent

ladies, than at champagne luncheons among the redoubtable sons of Mars. Yet the impression which a thing makes is often of more consequence than might otherwise be anticipated from the trifling nature of the thing itself.

The healths of the Queens of England and of Portugal were drank with three times three, followed immediately by a salute of twenty-one guns, both from the steamer and the Portuguese brig. The effect of this upon the inhabitants was by no means unimportant; it impressed them more than ever with the conviction, that the governments of the two countries were perfectly united in their determination to suppress the slave-trade; and the sound of the royal salutes ringing in their ears, completely put an end, for the moment certainly, to all their inclinations to resist the governor's authority.

In proof of his determination to do his utmost to suppress the slave-trade, General Morinho had already ordered one of the deputy-governors to be brought up to Mozambique, to be tried by court-martial for disobedience of orders, in permitting the trade under his own eyes; and, it has already been mentioned, that, from the information which was given by the Nemesis, of the slave-brig at Delagoa Bay, lying under the very guns of the fort, the governor of that settlement was also to be sent for.

That no attention might be omitted, after the great kindness his Excellency had shown to all on board, he and his party were steamed some way up the river, to show them the capabilities of the vessel; thousands of boats crowded round her in all directions,

while the house-tops, the fort, the beach, and all the ships in port, were covered with people anxious to see the greatest novelty the place had ever been witness to – the first steamer, moving with rapidity about their fine harbour, and in whatever direction she pleased.

A few words may not be out of place concerning the position of Mozambique, and its eligibility as a place of call for fuel, should steamers be sent more frequently by that route to India. The following description of the harbour, taken from Captain Owen's narrative of his surveys on that coast, will be found perfectly correct. "It is formed by a deep inlet of the sea, five and a half miles broad and six long, receiving the waters of three inconsiderable rivers at its head. At the entrance are three small islands, which, together with reefs and shoals, render the anchorage perfectly safe in the worst weather. Of these islands, that of Mozambique, on which stands the city, is completely formed of coral, very low and narrow, and scarcely one mile and a half in length. It is situated nearly in the centre of the inlet, and just within the line of the two points that form its extremities. The other two islands, called St. George and St. Jago, lie about three miles outside of Mozambique, but close to each other. They are uninhabited, although covered with rich verdure and trees, but upon a coral foundation."

Mozambique was taken from the Arabs by the Portuguese, at the very commencement of the sixteenth century; and the extent of the fort of St. Sebastian, built there by them, and which,

even now, might be rendered a very strong fortification, capable of mounting nearly a hundred guns, if in proper repair, will be sufficient to show the great importance which they attributed to it, even in that early period of its settlement. It still contains large barracks and extensive quarters and storehouses, but only a very small and feeble garrison, of scarcely more than a couple of hundred men, either black or creole sepoys. There are likewise two other smaller forts upon the island, which may therefore be considered strongly fortified, although more indebted to the past than to the present, for the importance, which, at first view, it appears to possess.

The public buildings of Mozambique all bespeak the value of the settlement to its possessors, in the days of Portuguese maritime distinction. The governor's palace must have been, in its best days, a residence worthy of an influential ruler. It is built of stone, is of considerable extent, and has some fine rooms in it; in fact, it speaks much for the importance attached by the Portuguese, in former times, to their eastern possessions. The large stone wharf, built on handsome arches, with the fine Custom House, in a sort of square at the extremity of it, clearly point out the ancient commercial value of the settlement; withered at last, perhaps, more by the paralysing effects of the slave-trade, than by any natural decrease in the commercial capabilities of the east coast of Africa.

In short, the city has retrograded into comparative insignificance; the number of resident Portuguese has become

very inconsiderable, with the exception of some Canareens or creole Portuguese, born in other Portuguese possessions in India, and, though commonly called white, only so "by courtesy," being often quite as black as the true Indians. Bad government and moral deterioration have added not a little to the other causes of its downfall; and it will scarcely be credited, that a distinct law has been passed, that those who were married should be compelled to remain there, or, at least, not return to their own country. The effect of so extraordinary a measure, has been, that nobody is disposed to get married at all; and, so low a tone of moral feeling has come to prevail, that the sexes live together openly, without any matrimonial or moral ties, and with little feeling of shame at the absence of them.

I have dwelt a little upon these particulars concerning Mozambique, because it is the principal of all the Portuguese settlements on that coast; and if, as such, it has fallen so far from its former state, we may judge how the others must now be lingering on between life and death. The fatal influence of the slave-trade appears to paralyse the whole commercial traffic of the country; the natives, being reduced to mutual distrust of each other, and continually living in fear and poverty, are unable to purchase the comforts of foreign manufactures. The selling of slaves is almost the only profit of the chiefs, unfitting them for every other enterprise, and deadening within them every feeling of honour and every hope of improvement. A universal stagnation seems to hang over the mind of man, as well as over

the productions of the earth. Were it not for the industry of the Arab population in the neighbourhood, a periodical famine would inevitably occur. At the present moment, the whole of the Portuguese possessions, along the Rios da Senna, do not supply even enough grain for their own consumption. Yet the country is a remarkably fine one, capable of producing luxuriantly all the fruits of the earth, and, were it cleared and cultivated, would become habitable even for Europeans, through the improvement of its climate; yet, there is much land now neglected and barren, which was once highly cultivated.

The slave-trade is, in fact, a worse pestilence to the country than even the fever itself; and Mozambique, Quillimane, Delagoa Bay, Sofala, and Inhamban, are all fallen to the lowest grade of civilization. If you ask the simple tale of history, what has been the effect of Portuguese rule upon that coast, you will hear neither of savages reclaimed, soil improved, commerce extended, justice and mercy practised, nor Christianity taught. The blight of slavery has poisoned everything on which it rested.

Nevertheless, as a place of call for refreshment, for ships passing through the Channel, Mozambique has some claims to attention. Abundance of vegetables and fruit are to be obtained there; pigs and goats are readily to be purchased, as well as poultry, and, were the demand for bullocks larger, they would soon be brought to market in numbers. At present, however, they are very dear.

But the great treasure of the place remains yet to be developed;

at all events, the subject is well open to investigation. The existence of good coal in that neighbourhood is now, I believe for the first time, made public. There is reason to expect that it will be found in large quantity, and of good quality, although as yet the search for it has not been carried on to any great extent. The all-engrossing subject of the slave-trade seems to darken every other object of attention in that quarter, and the Portuguese are probably afraid that the discovery of coal in their settlements would occasion the continual visits of so many steamers and other vessels, that even greater difficulty would be thrown in the way of the traffic.

Just as the *Nemesis* was leaving the harbour, the captain of an English merchant ship, the only one there at the time, brought off a large piece of excellent coal for inspection. It had all the appearance of coal perfectly adapted for steaming purposes; it was stated to be found at Quillimane, (the settlement before alluded to) about three hundred miles to the southward of Mozambique, and that there is every reason to believe it might be procured in large quantities, and worked without difficulty. This specimen was sent to England for examination, by Captain Hall; but it has since been ascertained that it did not reach its destination. This is on all accounts to be regretted. It was sent down to the Cape of Good Hope from Mozambique, in a box, with directions that it should be forwarded to the India House, but was probably lost, or set aside at the Cape.

If further investigation should prove what is here stated to

be correct, there can be no reason for not searching for coal upon other parts of the coast; and under any circumstances, as Quillimane is so short a distance from Mozambique, the coal might easily be brought up to the latter at little expense; and, if it were to become a more frequented route to India, it would be desirable to moor a large coal-hulk off the town, in which a constant supply of coal could be kept ready, and which could be taken in rapidly, and at little expense, by a steamer running up alongside of her.

But the Portuguese, unfortunately, seem quite blind, even to their own interests; and they cannot perceive, that if they could work coal-mines, they would employ a large population, circulate wealth throughout their territory, and attract a considerable and improving commerce to their port. But then their slave-trade would be ruined: and they are not even wise enough in their own generation to perceive, that out of its very ashes would gradually spring up the healthy and vigorous plant of commerce, upon an extensive scale, not only with foreign parts, but with the native tribes of Africa. These, however, are now continually desolated by the scourge of war and slavery. But they would soon learn to value peace and peaceful arts, and the taste for new articles of manufacture would grow gradually into wants, and wants in course of time give birth to the wish for luxuries. Far above all the profits of the traffic in human beings, would then become the fruits of wholesome trade; the country would advance, instead of being driven back; and the welfare of the community and of the

government be simultaneously promoted.

New regulations respecting trade would in the first instance be indispensable, as at the present time the commandants or little governors of all the minor Portuguese settlements are themselves allowed to trade, and often are the principal, or in a manner the only, merchants in the place. This alone must destroy all healthy competition, the soul of commerce. But, were trade placed upon a proper footing, and coal likely to become an article of demand, it would easily be exported to the Cape, Mauritius, and up to Aden for the Bombay steamers, and to numerous other parts, in which the demand for coal is yearly increasing, and likely to become almost unlimited.

I have here rather assumed that coal will be found in large quantity than proved it; but sufficient has been said to point out the great probability of its existence upon that coast in more places than one, and the question involves such important consequences that it deserves the fullest investigation.

It was at one time thought that coal would be found in some one of the Comoro islands before alluded to, at the northern extremity of the Mozambique Channel; and the *Nemesis* was directed, at all events, to touch there on her way, for the purpose of inquiring into its eligibility as a depôt, and place of refreshment for steamers.

The distance of the nearest of the Comoro islands, Mohilla, from Mozambique, is scarcely two hundred and fifty miles; and from thence to Johanna, which is the principal one, and the

place of residence of the sultan or ruler of the islands, is about thirty miles. Johanna lies as near as possible in the middle of the Channel, between Madagascar and the mainland of Africa, just where it widens into the open sea.

The Nemesis took her departure from Mozambique on the evening of the 1st of September, but did not reach Johanna until the afternoon of the 4th, having made nearly the whole distance under sail only, against a very strong south-westerly current.

The island of Mohilla is, of course, the first seen, and strikes you by its lofty, wooded summit, and the numerous small islets which surround it to the southward. The Channel between Mohilla and Johanna is picturesque, and the high inland mountains every where present a rich and refreshing appearance, being covered with luxuriant wood, and broken occasionally into deep glens, marked by the usual rich tropical verdure. Johanna is the most frequented of all the islands, and affords the best anchorage. But it was quite dark before the Nemesis approached the bay, and an occasional blue light and a rocket were let off, to give notice of her approach, in order that a pilot might come off, or else a signal be made to direct her to the best anchorage.

A large fire was soon lighted on shore for this purpose; and, no sooner did she come within a moderate distance, than numerous boats came alongside; the natives jumped on board, in apparent delight at seeing her come in, not unmixed with extreme surprise at her appearance, and the mode in which she moved through the water. Several of them spoke broken English, and although

they were naturally delighted at the prospect of earning a little money, they were even more so at the sight of her armament, and at once concluded that she was sent purposely to assist the sultan and the people of the island, who were at that time in great danger and trouble.

Johanna is occasionally frequented by English ships, for provisions, which are there abundant and reasonable, and the people have become favourably known in England, in consequence of their kind treatment of numerous poor English seamen, who have from time to time been wrecked on those islands, or on the neighbouring coasts. The great bay, which is on the northern side of the island, is not, however, a very suitable anchorage, except, perhaps, during the S.W. monsoon. At all times, there is a very heavy surf rolling in shore; and, during the N.E. monsoon, which sets directly into it, the heavy swell renders the anchorage unsafe. It cannot, therefore, be considered at all eligible as a coal depôt for steamers, particularly when Mozambique, which has greater claims to attention, is within such a moderate distance. Still, it is a very useful place of refuge for our whaling ships in that part of the world; and, as the inhabitants, as well as the authorities, have always shewn great kindness to the English, and, in fact, consider themselves almost in the light of allies of England, it would seem politic to keep alive the good feeling they evince toward us.

The inhabitants of these islands are principally of Moorish origin, nearly all Mohammedans, and they wear the turban and

loose dress which belong to no part of the neighbouring coast; and a dagger or pistols in their girdle are by no means uncommon. They have a genuine old English or Arab mode of shaking hands, with a gaiety of manner that is very pleasing. Their features are regular, and well formed, and their complexion, though dark, is very different from that of the inhabitants, either of the neighbouring continent, or of the island of Madagascar. In short, it is evident, that they were originally emigrants from some distant part, probably Arab traders, although their appearance has become modified in the course of successive generations.

These islanders appear to be rather favourites of the different men-of-war and merchant ships which touch there; though they have acquired a character for duplicity and cunning, and, consequently, for telling falsehoods, which at the same time they smooth over with the most artful flattery. But high testimony has been often borne to their kindness and hospitality towards Englishmen in distress; and, when the Exmouth grounded there several years ago, with a great number of passengers, on her way home, the Sultan Abdallah, the father of his present highness, particularly distinguished himself, by even attending in person to direct the efforts of his men, who came to assist in getting the vessel off. He paid the utmost attention to all the passengers, particularly to the women and children, taking care that they should be provided with every thing he could furnish for their comfort, until they could pursue their voyage further. Nor is this by any means a solitary instance of the kind services which they

have rendered to our countrymen.

FOOTNOTE:

CHAPTER VIII

The present ruler, or sultan, of the Comoro Islands, by name Alloué, is the son of the late sultan Abdallah, before alluded to as having been particularly kind to distressed Englishmen. He is a young man under thirty, of moderate height, agreeable countenance, and easy, pleasant manners. But his character is not distinguished for energy, and the difficulties with which he has had to contend appear to have been rather beyond his powers. His father, Abdallah, had made a treaty with Colonel Farquhar, when governor of the Mauritius, by which he undertook to suppress, by every means in his power, the extensive trade in slaves which was at that time carried on at the islands which were under his dominion; and he particularly distinguished himself by the zeal and perfect good faith with which he carried out its provisions. Indeed, to this cause, much of the subsequent difficulties of his family, and the impoverishment of his people, seem to have been attributed.

In the latter days of Abdallah's life, he appears to have met with sad reverses; and, judging from the documents which I have been able to examine, it would seem that his determined resistance to the continuance of the slave-trade raised up enemies against him, not only in his own islands, but in the more powerful one of Madagascar, and on the coast of Africa itself. It is certain, also, that he was at all times favourably regarded by

the government of Bombay, for his services to the Company's ships, and, as an acknowledgment of his assistance, a present was sent to him every three years, of a small supply of arms and ammunition. Abdallah's death was, however, at length brought about, after suffering numerous hardships, by the treacherous and cruel treatment of an emissary from Madagascar, or one of the more than half-savage chiefs of that island, into whose hands he at length fell.

This is not the place to enter at large into the subject of Madagascar history; it will be sufficient to remark that the present queen of that country is a most cruel and tyrannical sovereign; that she sets little value upon the lives or blood of her subjects, and that she is supposed to have poisoned her predecessor, the late King Radaman; further, that she did not succeed in winning the throne without sacrificing most of the chiefs who were opposed to her, and that she has since contrived to bring under her subjection many who were formerly independent governors, or chiefs, of the territory they severally occupied. Those who take an interest in missionary enterprises will also have heard of the dreadful cruelties she has exercised upon those unhappy men within her territories, most of whom were barbarously put to death, some in her presence, and partly, it is said, by her own hand. Only one or two of them escaped from the island.

It was not unnatural, under these circumstances, that one or more of the chiefs of the island should have taken refuge in the

neighbouring islands of Johanna and Mohilla. Accordingly, so long ago as 1828, a chief, called Raymanytek, who had been governor of an important province in Madagascar under the old king, and was said by some to be his brother, came over to Johanna with about one hundred followers, and represented to Sultan Abdallah, that he had made his escape from his own country, through fear of the queen, who sought his life, (probably he had tried to get possession of the chief authority himself,) and that, as he understood the inhabitants of the Comoro Islands were allies of the English, *as well as himself*, he came there to beg for an asylum. There was something very suspicious in his story; but, nevertheless, Abdallah received him in a very friendly manner, placing a house and lands at his disposal, and shewing him other civilities.

Probably, however, entertaining some mistrust of his new visitor, Abdallah sent an envoy to Bombay to make known the particulars of his arrival, and to ask whether the government would feel satisfied with his residence upon the islands under his dominion. He suspected, no doubt, that the new chief might soon become a troublesome visitor, and was anxious to endeavour to secure some further assistance from Bombay, should he stand in need of it. It is likely, also, that he wished to obtain some information respecting the character of Raymanytek.

From Bombay, reference was made to the government of the Mauritius upon the subject, as being better acquainted with the political state of Madagascar. In the meantime, the chief,

not content with a residence in the neighbourhood of Sultan Abdallah, went to the opposite or southern side of the island, where he purchased a small native vessel, for the evident purpose of trading in slaves. The little craft made several voyages across to the coast of Africa; and, at length, Abdallah remonstrated with him upon the subject, and informed him that if this clandestine trade were not discontinued, he should make him leave the island altogether. To this no reply was made; and still the vessel went across to the coast, bringing back, on one occasion, nearly two hundred slaves. Many of these were probably re-exported to other parts.

Abdallah hereupon ordered his disobedient visitor immediately to quit the island, upon the ground that the slave-trade could not be permitted within his territory, the more particularly as he was bound by treaty with the English to prevent it in every way he could.

To this summons Raymanytek made no other reply than to bring all his followers together armed, and, by means of bribery and fair promises, to enlist in his cause some of the poorer inhabitants in his neighbourhood, and also to arm as many of his negro slaves as he could prevail upon, and who appeared trustworthy. Money seemed at all times to be at his command, and he is said to have brought a well-filled purse with him when he landed from Madagascar. With the force he had now collected, he made an unexpected descent upon the capital of the island, which, being unprepared, was, of course, unable to

resist him. The consternation was general, in addition to which, his money is believed to have influenced some of the people to remain quiet.

Almost immediately the old Sultan Abdallah was deposed, and his brother Ali took the chief power into his hands. Abdallah, with all the rest of his family, left the island, with the hope of being able to find an opportunity of reaching some English port, where he might represent his case, and ask for assistance. He reached the island of Comoro in safety; but what became of him afterwards, until he was ultimately put to death with extreme barbarity, as before stated, I have hitherto not been able to ascertain.

During this short interval, Raymanytek had been able to get possession of the arms belonging to Abdallah, and which I have stated were supplied every two or three years by the government of Bombay, as a recompence for his friendly assistance when needed; and, having burnt and ruined the greater part of the town, and completely destroyed the crops and plantations in the neighbourhood, he embarked on board his little vessel, and, taking with him all that he could conveniently carry away of any value, he withdrew to the island of Mohilla, and established himself there in a position easy of defence; all the subsequent efforts of the rightful authorities to turn him out were of no avail.

This man must have been supplied, by some means or other, with abundance of ammunition; and it is not unlikely that his speculations in the slave-trade, by means of his own vessel,

may have supplied him not only with money, but also with warlike weapons and ammunition. It is well surmised, too, that he received assistance direct from Madagascar at various times; and it must not be forgotten that the nine or ten years which elapsed between the commencement of these occurrences and the visit of the Nemesis was a period particularly fraught with difficulties in relation to the traffic in slaves, and that it appears *primâ facie*, highly probable that this marauding rebel may have been strongly encouraged, and even aided, in his attempts, by distant parties interested in the traffic. Indeed, unless some assistance of this kind had been furnished to him, it is difficult to see how he could so long have found means to maintain himself.

The sultan applied for assistance on several occasions to the government of the Mauritius, of the Cape, and of Bombay. The letter of the young sultan Alloué, after the death of his father, in 1836, addressed to the governor of the Cape of Good Hope, and to the admiral of the station, asking for assistance, was a really pathetic appeal to their good feelings. It detailed the horrors of poor old Abdallah's death, and the violent acts of the invader; it related the defenceless state in which he found himself on taking the reins into his hands; and then appealed to British generosity, in return for the faithful adhesion of his family to Great Britain, and the hospitality of his people towards all British subjects.

The answer on that occasion was prompt, and worthy of the cause – namely, "that in consequence of the difficulties in which the sultan of Johanna was placed, and in consideration

of the fidelity with which the late Sultan Abdallah had fulfilled his engagements for the suppression of the slave-trade, and the hospitality which he had on all occasions shewn to British vessels touching at Johanna, the governor and admiral readily yield to the earnest desire of the Sultan Alloué for the aid of arms and ammunition, and send an ample supply thereof to Johanna in one of his majesty's sloops of war," &c.

With this assistance, Alloué was once more able to make head for the time against his enemy. But the country still continued in a very unsettled state; and, as the assistance was only temporary, he again fell into extreme difficulty, and addressed himself to the governor of the Mauritius upon the subject. Sir William Nicolai, who was governor and commander-in-chief of that island at that time, referred the application to the consideration of the home government. But it would seem that some little intrigues had sprung up among the sultan's own family, which it is not very easy, and so far very unimportant, to fathom.

The Sultan Alloué's uncle, Seyd Abbas, had about the same time sent two young men, either his sons or nephews, to the Mauritius, to report the unhappy state of the island, and to request assistance in support of the actual Sultan Alloué. Not long afterwards two or three other young men arrived at the Mauritius, also bearing letters from Seyd Abbas to the same purport. As this man was thought to be well disposed towards the English, and had been favourably spoken of by all those who had visited the island, and as, moreover, his object seemed to be

the laudable one of trying to support the young sultan's authority, even though without his highness's acknowledged sanction, it was judged proper to maintain all these young men at the public expense, until an opportunity should offer for sending them back again. After the lapse of some months, a vessel was hired on purpose to carry them back; and it was at the same time distinctly intimated that, "however praiseworthy the intentions of Seyd Abbas may have been in sending his own relations from home as political messengers, and however high he may stand personally in the respect of Englishmen, it would in future be impossible for British authorities to maintain political correspondence with him or with any other person in Johanna than his highness the sultan of the island." The sultan was further recommended henceforth to give Seyd Abbas a share of his confidence in his councils, in consequence of his age and experience, and the apparent sincerity with which he espoused his interest; and, at the same time, the young men were recommended to his notice as very sensible and well-informed persons. The friendly interest and intentions of the government towards the sultan and people of Johanna were then in general terms expressed; and thus, with kind words and kinder hopes for better days for his subjects, the young sultan was left for the present to take care of himself.

It was only a few months before the arrival of the Nemesis that some of the events which have been recorded had occurred. The Sultan Alloué was still in extreme danger; and another letter was addressed by him to the governor of the Mauritius, only

about five months previously. It appears to have been remarkably well written, and contains some ingenious observations which, as being written by a young Moorish prince, the ruler of an island in a remote corner of the globe, under circumstances of great difficulty, it may be worth while to dwell upon it for a moment.

He thanks his excellency the governor of the Mauritius for the kindness he had shewn to the young men, whom he admits to be distantly related to him; but shrewdly remarks that their "clandestine departure from Johanna, contrary to his express orders, and during the night, had given him reason to suppose that they were not quite so friendly disposed towards him as they wished his excellency to believe: and that he feared the object of their journey had been a pecuniary speculation upon the governor's goodness and British hospitality." He proceeds to express his thanks for being apprised that persons had entertained political correspondence with English authorities without his knowledge or consent; and adds, that, although he fully concurs in his excellency's opinion with regard to the age and experience of his uncle, Seyd Abbas, still there are many others in Johanna who possess the same qualities, and whose attachment and loyalty he had *never had occasion to doubt*.

The suspicion here betrayed is self-evident, and sufficiently delicately expressed. The picture he then draws of the state of his country is a pitiable one for a prince himself to be obliged to depict – "The town burnt; the country ravaged; all our cattle killed by the chief, Raymanytek, aided by natives of Mohilla,

under his orders." He distinctly intimates that the rebel chief was receiving "assistance from the French;" and, although he does not state reasonable grounds for the assertion, the statement is not altogether an improbable one, considering that the abolition of slavery in the Mauritius had roused the feeling of the French population against us and our allies: and, moreover, slavery was still in existence in the neighbouring island of Bourbon, where strong feelings against the English had been undisguisedly avowed; while, at the same time, the difficulty of procuring fresh slaves had greatly raised their price.

Intrigues were thought to have been carried on by the French traders in Madagascar itself, where they have long attempted to obtain a footing, but with little success, owing to the deadly nature of the climate. It is, however, perfectly well-known that they are still anxious to strain every nerve to establish themselves in some place eastward of the Cape, in addition to the island of Bourbon, where there is no harbour whatever, but merely an open roadstead. They are, moreover, anxious to get some *point d'appui* whence they may injure British trade, in case of war, in that quarter; and, at the same time, by establishing a little colony of their own, find some means of augmenting their mercantile marine.

One of their latest attempts has been at the Isle Madame; and it is perfectly well known that several other efforts have been made, and still more talked about.

If, however, Raymanytek really did receive any foreign

assistance, it is not probable that it was with the knowledge or connivance of the government of Bourbon, but rather from the restless enterprise of private individuals interested in the slave trade. However that may be, there seems to be very good grounds for our hoping that the Sultan Alloué may be permitted to remain in the peaceable possession of his own rightful territories. It is our evident interest to prevent those fine islands from falling into any other hands, more especially now that the intercourse between the West and East, through the Mozambique channel, is likely to be more extensive than formerly; and that the opening for legitimate commerce, within the channel itself, cannot but attract the attention of British merchants. The trade in slaves will become yearly more difficult, and, indeed, nothing would tend more to cause its total downfall than the gradual extension, under proper government protection, of the legitimate trade in British manufactures along that coast.

The young Sultan Alloué further went on to declare in his letter that numbers of his people had been captured and taken to Mozambique and Zanzibar, where they *were sold into slavery*; and that several such cargoes had already been sent over. He begged earnestly that assistance might speedily be sent to him, in arms and ammunition, and that he particularly stood in need of lead and flints, and a couple of small field-pieces. At the same time, he entreated that some small vessel of war might be sent to his aid; for that such were his difficulties, that, unless speedy assistance should arrive, he feared that he should be driven to

abandon the town, and seek personally an asylum in British India. He then appealed to the magnanimity of the British government, in the hope that he and his people might not be compelled to abandon their homes for want of timely assistance.¹⁰

Such, then, was the unhappy situation of the beautiful little island of Johanna, as described by its own prince, only a few months before the unexpected visit of the Nemesis. Little change had taken place; the town still held out, but it does not appear that any assistance had been sent to it. The very sight of the steamer gladdened the young sultan's heart, and encouraged the people, who stood greatly in need of it; the rebel chief being then at only a short distance from the town.

Late as it was, the captain and Lieut. Pedder landed in uniform to wait upon the sultan at once, as their time was so limited. One of his uncles and his prime minister received them, and accompanied them through a few narrow streets, built in the Moorish style, to the sultan's palace. At the entrance were stationed four half-clad soldiers, with muskets, as a personal guard; and, on reaching the reception room, the sultan was

¹⁰ The sultan very recently went up to Calcutta, to apply to the Governor-general, in the hope that the Company might be induced to take possession of the islands, which he felt he could no longer hold without assistance. He merely asked for himself a small annual stipend out of the revenues. What answer he may have received is not known; but probably his application was rejected, upon the ground of our territory in the East being already quite large enough. But, in reality, the Comoro Islands, or at least a part of them, must be viewed in a political light, as they may be said to command the *navigation* of the straits, and are generally thought to be an object aimed at by the French.

discovered sitting on a high-backed chair, at the further end of the apartment. He immediately rose and advanced towards them in a very friendly manner, welcoming them to Johanna with a good, hearty shake by the hand. Two chairs were placed on his left, for his guests, while, on his right, sat the governor of the town, and several other of the principal people, all on the tip-toe of expectation for the news from England, the more particularly as they were in some hope that the strange-looking "*devil-ship*," as they called her, might have brought a letter from the English government, in answer to his application for assistance.

They were doomed, however, to be again disappointed; but the sultan made many inquiries about the Queen and Prince Albert, and whether an heir to the throne had yet been born, and seemed not a little curious to know if the Thames Tunnel was finished. In short, he appeared to be a very well-bred and courteous young man. He alluded painfully to the distressed state of the island, and to his being surrounded by his enemies under Raymanytek, and begged hard for at least a little powder and shot, with which to endeavour to hold out until better assistance could reach him.

As it was already quite late, the interview did not last long, but promises were made to renew it on the subsequent day, and a party was arranged for an excursion outside the town on the following morning. Accordingly, at daylight, the party were again met by the king's uncle on the beach, who appointed three soldiers to act both as guides and guards. These men appeared quite pleased with the duty assigned to them, and throughout the

whole trip did everything in their power to amuse the party, and to point out to them the objects best worth notice; one man went in search of shells upon the beach, another to procure fruit, and scarcely a wish was expressed that was not immediately gratified.

Having ascended the hills on the eastern side of the valley, they were gratified by a delightful prospect in every direction. The valley below was rich and capable of high cultivation, but only partially cleared of wood, and in other parts covered with long grass and low shrubs, varied by the numerous wild flowers which were then in blossom. In the rear were high and thickly-wooded mountains, picturesque in themselves, but shutting out the view of the opposite side of the island, while, in the other direction, the eye could trace the long line of picturesque coast, giving altogether a very favourable impression of the character of the island, the more particular as some of the timber is very fine, and calculated for repairing ships.

The town itself could only be viewed from the top of a higher hill behind it, which was now ascended, and its character well made out. Its little white flat-topped houses and turreted walls, with very narrow streets, pointed out its Moorish origin. But there was nothing to render it otherwise striking.

The whole population appeared to be abroad, each struggling which should gratify his curiosity the quickest, in running down to the beach to catch a glimpse of the strange vessel, the like of which none had ever seen before. Boats were seen crowding round her on all sides, and, as she lay there, decked out with all

her flags, the scene was both animated and picturesque.

On descending the hill, the party were again met by the sultan's uncle, who invited them to breakfast with his highness, and accompanied them, first to his own house, where they met the sultan himself, and thence to the palace, which was close at hand. But it was still rather an early hour for a reception, and on entering the palace, it was very evident that the preparations had not yet been completed for their arrival. His highness's ladies, the sultana and her companions, had only just time to make their escape, leaving everything in disorder, and, in short, breakfast was not quite ready.

His highness was very condescending, but it was clear that his attentions were being divided between two or more objects at the same time, one of which was readily guessed to be the ladies fair, who had so suddenly decamped. But this was not the only one, and, in the little intervals between his exits and his entrances, an opportunity was taken to ask his uncle, who was present, what it was all about. The mystery was solved. His highness was condescending to superintend the preparation of the breakfast for his guests, that it might be worthy of them. The kitchen was on this occasion converted into the council-chamber, and quite as weighty matters there discussed, and certainly with equal warmth, and probably, too, with the full "ore rotundo" of hungry eloquence, as are often treated of with greater solemnity in higher conclaves.

The result, indeed, was worthy of the cause. The breakfast was

pronounced capital, and ample justice done, after the morning's walk, to the wisdom of his highness's deliberations. He himself seemed quite delighted, and his uncle declared to Captain Hall, in his absence, that the young man's greatest pleasure was to contrive some new means of gratifying the English who came in his way, and that there was nothing he would not condescend to do for them, in his enthusiastic admiration of the nation. A little of this might be said and done for effect, but there has always been good reason to believe that he was on all occasions a sincere, and, in some respects, useful ally.

The same day, a grand entertainment was to be given by some relation of the Sultan's, in his uncle's house, in honour of the performance of the first Mohammedan rite upon the young infant, his son and heir, upon the eighth day after its birth. The sultan himself, with his chief minister, accompanied them to see the festivities. On this occasion, the ladies of the court were all found to be in the apartment adjoining the reception room, and only separated from it by a large screen or curtain before the door. Now, according to all the prescribed rules of civilized life, it may reasonably be supposed that the fair damsels, secluded as they usually were, had just as much curiosity to see the lions of the day, the English officers in uniform, as the latter had to catch a glimpse of eastern beauty, the more sought the more forbidden. Every now and then you could see the curtain moved gently on one side, and a young lady's head peep out; and then another would steal a quiet look on the other side; then again, by

pressing against each other, more of them would be seen than they intended, but quite enough to make you wish to see more still. In the meantime his highness had retired, or perhaps they might not have been so bold.

As the gallantry of the sons of Neptune has at all times been famous, so in this instance it innocently got the better of their discretion, and, with an apparently accidental, though well-premeditated charge at the curtain, which was most gallantly pushed on one side, a full view of all the fair ladies was obtained, much more to the apparent horror of the old uncle, who was a spectator of the achievement, than to that of the fair damsels themselves, who, nevertheless, quietly retreated in some trepidation. The ladies were all very handsomely and gaudily dressed, it being a gala-day, but they were not altogether the most Venus-like of beauties.

But a more curious scene was brought to view on being conducted to another apartment, where a large and merry party of ladies of less distinguished rank were amusing themselves with dancing and singing, but certainly without much grace in the one or melody in the other. There was only one good-looking female among the whole assembly, and she appeared to be the queen of beauty, or mistress of the feast, for she was treated with the utmost attention and deference by all the rest.

On returning again to the presence of the sultan, refreshments were handed round, and, as the weather was hot, a whole train of the female servants of the house were ushered into the room,

each with a fan, or sort of portable punka, in her hand. They were all very neatly and cleanly dressed, and immediately set their fans most dexterously to work, taking their stations behind each person of the party.

In the midst of this scene the sultan disappeared, followed by his uncle, and, after a few minutes' consultation, the attendance of Captain Hall was requested in his highness's private apartment. Something important was evidently about to happen, but, before there was much time to conjecture what it might be, he found himself alone with the sultan. His highness frankly confessed the alarm which the strength of the chief named Raymanytek had excited in his mind, that he was even then not far from the town, and that he himself was determined at once to march out against the rebels, if he could get a sufficient supply of powder and shot. At the same time he begged that, if necessary, he might have the assistance of the steamer to protect his town.

Only one reply could be given, namely, that the visit of the steamer was a mere casual thing, with a view to ascertain the nature of the harbour; that the service she was engaged on would admit of no delay, but that, as long as she was there, which could not be many hours more, she should give protection to himself and his family, as well as to the town, if in danger, and that a small supply of ammunition should be given to him to enable him to defend himself. He appeared quite satisfied, and pleased with the reply. At the same time, as the danger was imminent,

and much blood might otherwise be shed, he requested that, since the orders by which the steamer was obliged to abide would necessitate her immediate departure, the British flag might be hoisted upon his citadel before she started, and receive the proper salute, in order to intimidate the rebel chief; and further, that a letter might be written to the latter, stating that the sultan of Johanna was an old ally of Great Britain, and that the taking up arms against him could no longer be permitted; in short, that he had, therefore, better take himself off as quickly as possible, and return to obedience.

This was a request which demanded very serious consideration. It was evident that Captain Hall had no authority whatever to interfere in the matter. And such, consequently would have been the only reply of many officers, perhaps most, under the same circumstances. But, there was now something of humanity called into play, something of pity, and something, perhaps, of pride. It was impossible not to feel a deep interest in the unhappy position of the young sultan, more particularly as he and all his family had on so many occasions behaved with kindness and humanity towards Englishmen in distress. He had, moreover, stated his positive wish to become not only the ally, but even the subject of Great Britain, and that he would rather give up the island altogether to the English, and, if necessary, retire from it elsewhere, than see it in its then state of misery from the incursions of Raymanytek.

There was, in fact, something in Alloué's appeal, which

was altogether irresistible; and after much reflection, and well knowing the responsibility incurred, it was agreed that the British flag should be hoisted upon the citadel, under a salute of twenty-one guns. This was accordingly done, and for the first time, the flag, which so many millions look upon with pride, waved over the citadel and walls of Johanna. The sultan smiled, and appeared to take far greater pride in that unstained ensign, than in his own independent flag, or his own precarious authority.

Great were the rejoicings of the whole people of the town; in fact, the day had been one of continued excitement to all parties. To crown the whole, a letter was written to the rebel chief, according to the tenour of what has been stated above, and which, it was hoped, would induce Raymanytek to retire peaceably for the present, and to defer to an opportunity less favourable for himself, if not altogether to forego, his treasonable designs, which had evidently been to depose the sultan, and probably put him to death, and banish all his family, assuming the whole authority himself in his place.

This had been a long and eventful day for the Nemesis, and while we have been relating what was passing on shore, those on board had been busy taking in water and wood for the immediate continuance of the voyage. One thing, however, yet remained; the sultan was to visit the ship, and see what to him were wonders. He came on board in the afternoon, with several attendants, in full Moorish dress, and, of course, evinced the utmost astonishment at the arrangement of the ship, the machinery, &c. To him and

his followers all was new. As they steamed round the bay, their wonderment increased more and more at the ease and rapidity with which she moved; and having partaken of a little fruit and bread, and taken a most friendly and, to all appearance, grateful leave of Captain Hall, and all on board, he was landed in the ship's boat, with his own flag flying upon it.

On landing, he seemed quite overwhelmed with thankfulness for the timely assistance rendered to him, and unaffectedly sorry at parting with friends, he had so recently made.

On the afternoon of the 5th September, 1840, the interesting little island of Johanna was left behind, with many good wishes for the success of the sultan's arms, and for the speedy restoration of peace and plenty to his harassed subjects. It is feared, however, that these hopes have scarcely yet been realized.¹¹

¹¹ The following letter concerning the fate of the Comoro Islands, and the violent proceedings of the French in that quarter, appeared in *The Times* of January 30th, 1844. The facts stated in it have every appearance of exaggeration, but the interference of the British government would seem to be called for. "The French have, within the last month, obtained, by fraud, possession of the islands of Johanna, Mohilla, and Peonaro; they had already, by the same means, obtained the islands of Mayotte and Nos Beh. There are at present out here eleven ships of war – the largest a 60-gun frigate; more are expected out, in preparation for the conquest of all Madagascar; and also, it is said, of the coast of Africa, from latitude 10 S. to 2 S.; this portion includes the dominions of the Imaum of Muscat. At this place (Nos Beh) a system of slavery is carried on that you are not aware of. Persons residing here, send over to places on the mainland of Africa, as Mozambique, Angoza, &c., money for the purchase of the slaves; they are bought there for about ten dollars each, and are sold here again for fifteen dollars; here again they are resold to French merchant vessels from Bourbon and St. Mary's for about twenty-five to thirty dollars each. Captains of vessels purchasing these use the precaution of making two or three of the youngest free, and then have

them apprenticed to them for a certain term of years, (those on shore,) fourteen and twenty one years. These papers of freedom will answer for many. It is a known fact, that numbers have been taken to Bourbon, and sold for two hundred and three hundred dollars each. Those who have had their freedom granted at this place, (Nos Beh,) as well as others, are chiefly of the Macaw tribe. The Indian, of Havre, a French bark, took several from this place on the 20th of September last; she was bound for the west coast of Madagascar, St. Mary's, and Bourbon. L'Hesione, a 32-gun frigate, has just arrived from Johanna, having compelled one of the chiefs to sign a paper, giving the island up to the French. On their first application, the king and chiefs of Johanna said, that the island belonged to the English. The French then said, that if it was not given up, they would destroy the place; they, after this, obtained the signature of one of the chiefs to a paper giving up the island to the French. "I remain, Sir, &c., &c.," Henry C. Arc Angelo. "Supercargo of the late Ghuznee of Bombay." *Nos Beh, Madagascar, Oct. 6th, 1843.* "The account given in the above letter is partly borne out by the following announcement, which appeared in the *Moniteur*, the French official newspaper, in March, 1844; the substance of it is here copied from *The Times* of the 14th March, and there can be little doubt concerning the object of the French in taking the active step alluded to. We must hope, therefore, that our interests in that quarter will be properly watched, particularly when we remember what serious injury would be inflicted upon the whole of our Eastern trade, in case of war, by the establishment of the French in good harbours to the eastward of the Cape. The announcement is as follows: – "Captain Des Fossés has been appointed Commander of the station at Madagascar, and Bourbon, which was hitherto placed under the orders of the Governor of Bourbon. This station now acquires a greater degree of importance. Captain Des Fossés having under his orders *five* or *six* ships of war, will exhibit our flag along the *whole coast of Africa*, and in the Arabian Seas. He will endeavour to extend our *relations with Abyssinia*, and our *influence in Madagascar.*"

CHAPTER IX

The next place towards which the *Nemesis* was destined to shape her course was the island of Ceylon, where at length was to be made known to her the ultimate service upon which she was to be employed. It was not until the 10th that she lost sight of Comoro island, the northernmost of the group of that name, and, if measured in a direct line, considerably less than one hundred miles from Johanna.

Horsburgh particularly notices the light, baffling winds, and the strong, south-west and southerly currents, which prevail during the months of October and November among the Comoro Islands. But it was found upon this voyage that these difficulties presented themselves sometimes much earlier than stated by him. It was now only the beginning of September, and the southerly current was found setting down at the rate of even sixty miles a day. Indeed, both the winds and currents in the Mozambique Channel had been found very different from what had been expected. It was the season of the south-west monsoon when she entered it in the month of August; and as it is usually stated that this wind continues to blow until early in November, the *Nemesis* ought to have had favourable winds to carry her quite through, even later in the season. On the contrary, she met with a strong head-wind, and a much stronger southerly current than she had reason to expect.

The opinion of Horsburgh seems to be fully confirmed, that late in the season it is better for ships to avoid the Mozambique Channel, and rather to proceed to the eastward of Madagascar, and then pass between Diego Garcia and the Seychelle Islands. Steamers, however, would have less need of this were coal to be had at Mozambique.

From the equator, the current was always easterly; but nothing particular occurred worth noticing, except that, as she approached the Maldivé Islands, she encountered very heavy squalls, accompanied with rain.

On the following day, the 1st October, the Maldives were in sight; and, in order to carry her through them rapidly, steam was got up for a few hours, until she came to, in the afternoon, within a quarter of a mile of the shore, under one of the easternmost of the islands, named Feawar, having shaped her course straight across the middle of the long, and until lately, much dreaded group of the Maldivé Archipelago.

This extensive chain or archipelago of islands lies in the very centre of the Indian Ocean, and, being placed in the direct track of ships coming from the south-west towards Ceylon, and the southern parts of Hindostan, it was long dreaded by mariners, and shunned by them as an almost impenetrable and certainly dangerous barrier. It is stated by Horsburgh, that the early traders from Europe to India were much better acquainted with these islands than modern navigators, and that they were often passed through in these days without any apprehension of danger. The

knowledge of their navigable channels must therefore have been, in a great measure, lost; and, although the utmost credit is due to the indefatigable Horsburgh for his arduous efforts to restore some of the lost information, it is to the liberality of the Indian government, and particularly to the scientific labours and distinguished services of Captain Moresby and Commander Powell, of the Indian navy, that we are indebted for the minute and beautiful surveys of all these intricate channels which have been given to the world since 1835.

This archipelago is divided into numerous groups of islands, called by the natives Atolls, each comprising a considerable number of islands, some of which are inhabited, and abound in cocoa-nut trees, while the smaller ones are often mere barren rocks or sandy islets. The number of these islands, large and small, amounts to several hundred; and the groups, or Atolls, into which they are divided, are numerous. They are laid down with wonderful accuracy and minuteness by Captains Moresby and Powell; so that, with the aid of their charts, the intricate channels between them can be read with almost the same facility as the type of a book. Thus one of the greatest boons has been conferred upon navigators of all nations. They are disposed in nearly a meridian line from latitude $7^{\circ} 6' N.$ to latitude $0^{\circ} 47' S.$, and consequently extend over the hottest portion of the tropics, for the distance of more than three hundred and seventy miles.

As the *Nemesis* passed through these islands, she found that all the former difficulties had now vanished. So accurate were

the soundings, and given on so large a scale, that it was more like reading a European road-book than guiding a vessel through an intricate labyrinth of islands.

The very sight of a steamer completely frightened the inhabitants of the little island of Feawar; who, although they at length came alongside without much fear, could never be persuaded to come on board the vessel. However, they had no objection to act as guides, for the purpose of shewing what was to be seen upon their island; and, while a little necessary work was being done to the vessel, Captain Hall and two or three of the officers landed, and were soon surrounded by a crowd of natives upon the beach, quite unarmed.

A stroll along the shore, covered with pieces of coral, soon brought them to a mosque and burial-ground, which was remarkable for the neatness with which it was disposed. The little ornamented head-stones, with inscriptions, and flowers in many places planted round them, probably refreshed by the sacred water of a well close at hand, proved, at all events, the great respect paid to their dead, which is common among all Mohammedans. Indeed, the inhabitants of all these numerous islands are mostly of that persuasion, and consider themselves to be under the protection of England, the common wish of almost all the little independent tribes of the East.

The village itself appeared to be at least half deserted, the poor people, particularly the women, having hastily run away, leaving their spinning-wheels at their doors. They appear to

carry their produce, consisting of oil, fish, rope, mats, &c., to Ceylon and other parts of India, in large boats of their own construction, bringing back in return rice and English manufactured goods. Indeed, an extensive traffic is carried on between all the northernmost of this extensive chain of islands, or submarine mountains, and the nearer parts of the coast of India.

On the same evening, the *Nemesis* continued her voyage, and, on the afternoon of the 5th October, reached the harbour of Pointe de Galle, in Ceylon. She came in under steam, with about eight tons of coal remaining, having been exactly one month from Johanna.

The mystery attending the *Nemesis* was now to end. Scarcely had she fairly reached her moorings, when a despatch was delivered to the captain from the government of India, containing orders from the Governor-general in council, to complete the necessary repairs, and take in coal and provisions, with all possible expedition, and then to proceed to join the fleet off the mouth of the Canton River, placing himself under the orders of the naval commander-in-chief.

Great was now the rejoicing of both officers and men. Her captain had already been made acquainted with his destination, as far as Ceylon, before leaving England, but no one on board, until now, had any certain information as to what particular service they were to undertake afterwards. The road to distinction was now made known to them; they were at once to be engaged in active operations, in conjunction with her majesty's

forces.

Notwithstanding, however, the unremitted exertions of all on board, the *Nemesis* could not be got ready to proceed on her voyage in less than eight clear days from the time of her arrival at Pointe de Galle. Added to this, the whole of the stores and supplies had to be sent by land from Columbo, a distance of seventy-two miles, as it was not then so well known that all these things could be readily obtained at Singapore, and that therefore a smaller quantity would have sufficed. Indeed, from the more frequent communication with Ceylon, through vessels touching at Pointe de Galle for supplies, which has since taken place, every provision has now been made at that port, without the necessity of sending for stores to so great a distance as Columbo.

Under all circumstances, no time was to be lost; and the anxiety to proceed on the voyage as quickly as possible was so great, that Captain Hall determined to start off for Columbo the same evening, in order to wait upon his Excellency the Governor, and expedite the sending on of the requisite stores. A highly respectable merchant, Mr. Gibb, who was going over, kindly offered him a seat in his gig, and, after considerable exertion and fatigue, they arrived at Columbo late on the following evening.

On the following morning, the country presented itself in all the rich tropical aspect of these regions. The whole road to Columbo pointed out a fertile and luxuriant country, and was in itself admirably adapted for travelling.

For my own part, the more I have seen of tropical countries,

the more I have everywhere been fascinated by their luxuriance, and enjoyed the brilliancy of their skies. There is much to compensate for the occasional oppression of the heat, which, after all, is less troublesome or injurious than the chilling blasts of northern climes; and, generally speaking, with proper *precaution*, it has been hardly a question with myself whether the *average* degree of health and buoyancy of spirits is not far greater than in less favoured though more hardy regions. Every day that passes is one in which you feel that you really live, for every thing around you lives and thrives so beautifully. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that, after a few years spent in so relaxing a climate the constitution becomes enfeebled, and is only to be restored by a visit to more bracing regions.

Governor Mackenzie seemed to take much interest in the steamer, and in her probable capabilities for the peculiar service likely to be required of her in China; he had evidently made the subject his study, and upon this, as upon other questions, evinced great intelligence.

Little need here be said about the island of Ceylon, which has been recently so well described and treated of by able and well-informed writers. The fine fortifications of Columbo, (the capital of the island,) the governor's palace, the barracks and public offices, are all worth seeing; indeed, it is to be regretted that arrangements have not yet been made, by which the steamers from Calcutta to the Red Sea, touching at Point de Galle, might allow some of their passengers, instead of wasting the valuable

time necessary for taking in fuel at Point de Galle, to cross over to Columbo. The steamers might then, with a very trifling additional expense, touch at Columbo to pick them up, together with other passengers likely to be found there, now that the overland route is daily becoming more frequented.

The most curious sight at Columbo is the little fleet of fishing-boats, in the shape of long, narrow canoes, each made out of the single trunk of a tree, with upper works rigged on to them, falling in in such a way, that there is just sufficient room for a man's body to turn round. They start off with the land-wind in the morning, and run out a long distance to fish, returning again with the sea-breeze in the afternoon. Both ends are made exactly alike, so that, instead of going about, they have only to shift the large lug-sail, the mast being in the middle, and it is quite indifferent which end of the boat goes foremost. To counteract the natural tendency of so narrow a body to upset, two slight long spars are run out at the side, connected at the outer ends by a long and stout piece of wood, tapering at either extremity, not unlike a narrow canoe; this acts as a lever to keep the boat upright, and is generally rigged out upon the windward side. If the breeze freshens, it is easy to send a man or two out upon it, as an additional counterpoise by their weight, and there they sit, without any apparent apprehension.

The healthiness of Ceylon is within the last few years greatly improved, principally owing to the extensive clearing of land which has taken place. The plantations of coffee having been

found at one time, as indeed they are still, to yield a very large profit, induced a great number of persons to enter into the speculation. Land was readily purchased from government as quickly as it could be obtained, at the rate of five shillings an acre; and the result has been a considerable increase in the exports of the island, as well as an amelioration of its condition.

Coals, provisions, and stores of all kinds, were sent on board the *Nemesis* with the utmost expedition, and, on the afternoon of the 14th October, she was once more ready for sea. The public interest in the events gradually growing up out of the negotiations which were then being carried on with the Chinese had gradually been raised to a high pitch, and a passage to China, to join the force as a volunteer, was readily provided for the governor's son, Lieutenant Mackenzie. Crowds of people gathered upon the shore in all directions to witness her departure, and the discharge of a few signal-rockets as soon as it was dark added a little additional novelty to the event.

Ten days sufficed to carry the *Nemesis* to the island of Penang, or Prince of Wales's island. Her passage had been longer than might have been expected, owing in a great measure to the badness of the coal, which caked and clogged up the furnaces in such a way that, instead of requiring to be cleaned out only once in about twenty-four hours, as would have been the case with good coal, it was necessary to perform this process no less than four times within the same period; added to which, the enormous quantity of barnacles which adhered to her bottom (a frequent

source of annoyance before) greatly retarded her progress.

The island of Penang, which lies close upon the coast of the peninsula of Malacca, from which it is separated by a channel scarcely more than two miles broad, would seem to be a place particularly adapted for steamers to touch at. Indeed, it has become a question of late whether it should not be provided with a sort of government dockyard, for the repair of the increased number of ships of war and transports, both belonging to the service of government and the East India Company, which will necessarily have to pass through the straits of Malacca, now that our intercourse with China is so rapidly increasing. The harbour is perfectly safe, the water at all times smooth; coals can easily be stored there, and good wood can be obtained on the spot; moreover, it lies directly in the track of ships, or very little out of it, as they generally prefer passing on the Malacca side of the straits, particularly during the south-west monsoon. The heavy squalls which prevail on the opposite coast are so severe, that they have at length taken its very name, and are called Sumatras. They are accompanied with terrific lightning, which often does great mischief, and they are justly looked upon with great dread.

Penang is very properly considered one of the loveliest spots in the eastern world, considering its limited extent; and, from the abundance and excellence of its spice productions, which come to greater perfection in the straits than in any other part in which they have been tried, (except, perhaps, in the island of Java,) this little island has proved to be an extremely valuable

possession. It abounds in picturesque scenery, heightened by the lovely views of the opposite coast of Malacca, called Province Wellesley, which also belongs to the East India Company. The numerous and excellent roads, the hospitality of the inhabitants, and the richness of the plain, or belt, which lies between the high, wooded mountains in the rear, and the town and harbour are, perhaps, unequalled. This plain, together with the sides of some of the adjoining mountains, is covered with luxuriant plantations of nutmegs, cocoa-nut-trees, and spice-trees of all kinds; and altogether Penang is one of the most attractive, as it is also one of the healthiest spots in the East. It has by some been even called the "Gem of the Eastern seas." There is a fort not far from the fine, covered jetty, or landing-place, of considerable strength; and, with very moderate trouble and expense, there is little doubt that Penang could be made a valuable naval depôt.

The short passage down the straits of Malacca, towards Singapore, was easily performed in three days. But here again some detention was inevitable. The north-east monsoon had already fairly set in, and as vessels proceeding up the China Sea, at this season, would have the wind directly against them, it was necessary that the steamer should take in the greatest possible quantity of fuel she could carry, before she could venture to leave Singapore. On this occasion, every spare corner that could be found was filled with coal, and even the decks were almost covered with coal-bags. By this means, she was enabled to carry enough fuel for full fifteen days' consumption, or about one

hundred and seventy-five tons.

The small island of Singapore being situated just off the southern extremity of the peninsula of Malacca, from which it is separated only by a very narrow strait, must necessarily lie almost directly in the track of all vessels passing up or down the straits of Malacca, either to or from China, or any of the intermediate places. Being easy of access to all the numerous half-civilized tribes and nations which inhabit the islands of those seas, and within the influence of the periodical winds or monsoons which, at certain seasons, embolden even the Chinese, Siamese, and other nations to venture upon the distant voyage, it is not surprising that in the space of a few years it should have risen to a very high degree of importance as a commercial emporium.

The wisdom of the policy of Sir Stamford Raffles, in establishing a free port in such an advantageous position, has been proved beyond all previous anticipation. The perfect freedom of commercial intercourse, without any restriction or charges of any kind, has given birth to a yearly increasing commercial spirit among all the surrounding nations. It is impossible to see the immense number of curious junks and trading-vessels which arrive from all parts during the proper season, without admiring the enterprising commercial spirit of all those different tribes, and acknowledging the immense value to England of similar distant outports, for the security and extension of her commerce.

The intercourse with Singapore has been rapidly increasing every year, but especially since the commencement of the war in China. Of course, all our ships of war and transports touch at so convenient a place, where supplies of every description can easily be obtained, and where every attention and kindness are shewn to strangers, both by the authorities and by the resident merchants. Much credit is due to the late governor, Mr. Bonham, for the intelligence and activity which he exhibited, in everything that could in any way forward the objects of the expedition, and for the readiness with which he endeavoured to meet all the wishes of those who were concerned in it. His hospitality and personal attention was acknowledged by all.

In some respects, Singapore forms a good introduction to a first visit to China. It has a very large Chinese population, (not less than 20,000,) to which yearly additions are made, on the arrival of the large trading junks, in which they come down voluntarily to seek employment. Hundreds of them arrive in the greatest destitution, without even the means of paying the boat-hire to enable them to reach the shore, until they are hired by some masters. They are the principal mechanics and labourers of the town, and also act as household servants, while many of them are employed in the cultivation of spices and of sugar, or in clearing land. There is no kind of labour or employment which a Chinaman will not readily undertake; and they appear to succeed equally well in all, with the exception of tending sheep or cattle, which is an occupation they are little fond of.

The town has something of a Chinese aspect, from the number of Chinamen who are employed in every capacity; and the fruits and vegetables are principally cultivated and brought to market by people of that nation. In Java, Penang, and elsewhere, they are also to be met with in great numbers; which is quite sufficient to prove (were proof wanting) how much they are naturally disposed to become a colonizing people. There is hardly any part of the world to which a Chinaman would refuse to go, if led and managed by some of his own countrymen. But, wherever they go, they carry the vice of *opium-smoking* with them, and it is needless to say that it thrives at Singapore to its fullest extent, and that a large revenue is annually derived from the monopoly of the sale of the drug.

The climate of Singapore is healthy, although the soil is wet, owing to the constant rains; and the heat is, perhaps, never excessive, although the place is situated only about seventy miles from the equator.

It might be expected that the recent opening of the new Chinese ports, from some of which large trading junks have annually come down to seek their cargoes at Singapore, would prove injurious to the future trade of the latter, since it would no longer be necessary for the Chinese to go abroad to seek for that which will now be brought to them at their own doors. This apprehension, however, seems to be little entertained on the spot, because there can be little doubt, that whatever tends to augment the general foreign trade with China must benefit Singapore,

which lies on the highroad to it, to a greater or less extent. Singapore has nothing to fear as regards its future commercial prosperity, which is likely rather to increase than to diminish, in consequence of the general increase of trade with China and the neighbouring islands.

On the 4th of November, the Nemesis resumed her voyage, and passed the little rocky island of Pedra Branca early on the following morning. This dangerous and sometimes half-covered rock lies nearly in the direct track for vessels proceeding up the China Sea; and on its southern side are two dangerous ledges or reefs, running out from it to the distance of more than a mile, which, at high water, can scarcely be traced above the surface. On the opposite, or northern side, there is deep water in not less than sixteen or seventeen fathoms, close in to the rock; and, moreover, the tides in its neighbourhood are very irregular, not only in point of time, but also in direction and velocity. Nor are these the only dangers to be met with in this locality. Hence it will readily appear that a lighthouse placed upon Pedra Branca would be of essential utility to all navigators who have occasion to pass up or down the China Sea. A ship leaving Singapore for Hong-Kong, for instance, might then start at such an hour in the evening as would enable her to make the light on Pedra Branca before morning; by which means, her true position being ascertained, she might stand on without fear of any danger. The expense of erecting the lighthouse would not be great, as the elevation would only be moderate, and the expense of maintaining it might

be defrayed by levying a small light-duty at Singapore upon all vessels passing up or down the China Sea.

It has been often suggested that this would be a most advantageous site for the proposed monument to the memory of the distinguished Horsburgh, to whom too much honour cannot be paid for his inestimable works, so much relied on by all navigators who frequent the eastern seas. It would be difficult to find a more advantageous or appropriate position, for the best of all monuments to his fame, than this little, dangerous island of Pedra Branca, situated as it is in the very centre of some of his most valued researches; while the recent opening of the new ports in China, and the possession of Hong-Kong, give an increased importance to subjects connected with the navigation of those seas. There is not a single vessel, either British or foreign, which traverses those regions, which is not indebted to Horsburgh for the instructions which render her voyage secure; and a lighthouse upon Pedra Branca would do no less service to navigators than it would honour to the memory of Horsburgh.

The Nemesis had now passed this rocky little island, and at once found the full strength of the north-east monsoon blowing steadily against her, so that "full steam" was necessary to enable her to proceed. On the afternoon of the 16th, the high land of the Spanish possessions of Luconia (better known by the name of the capital town, Manilla) came in sight; and, on the following morning, the Nemesis passed very near the port, but without venturing to enter it, on account of the delay which it would

cause, although fuel was already much wanted.

The appearance of the island was very striking. Bold, picturesque mountains, fine woods, with here and there a few sugar plantations extending along the valleys, and rich, green, cocoa-nut groves, to vary the prospect – all these combined, or alternating with each other, made the aspect of the island very attractive.

Unfortunately, no time could be spared to visit the interior of the country, as the voyage had already been much protracted, and the north-east monsoon was blowing directly against the vessel. Her progress was therefore slow, and the want of fuel began to be much felt.

On the 24th, the Lieu-chew Islands came in sight; but these are not the same islands which were visited by Capt. Basil Hall, whose descriptions excited so much attention.¹²

At daylight on the following morning, the 25th of November, the *Nemesis* steamed through the Typa anchorage, which lies opposite Macao, and ran close in to the town, where the water is so shallow that none but trading-boats can venture so far. The sudden appearance of so large and mysterious-looking a vessel naturally excited the greatest astonishment among all classes, both of the Portuguese and Chinese residents. The saluting of the Portuguese flag, as she passed, sufficed to announce that something unusual had happened; and crowds of people came

¹² Captain Hall of the *Nemesis* was at that time serving as midshipman under Capt. Basil Hall.

down to the Praya Grande, or Esplanade, to look at the first iron steamer which had ever anchored in their quiet little bay. Her very light draught of water seemed to them quite incompatible with her size; and even the Portuguese governor was so much taken by surprise, that he sent off a messenger expressly to the vessel, to warn her captain of the supposed danger which he ran by venturing so close in shore. It is probable, however, that his excellency was not quite satisfied with the near approach of an armed steamer, within a short range of his own palace; and, moreover, the firing of a salute, almost close under his windows, had speedily frightened away the fair ladies who had been observed crowding at all the windows with eager curiosity.

As soon as the first excitement had passed, Captain Hall waited upon the governor, to assure him that he had come with the most peaceable intentions, and to thank his excellency for the friendly warning he had given, with respect to the safety of the vessel. At the same time, he begged to inform his excellency, that he was already thoroughly acquainted with the harbour and anchorage of Macao, from early recollection of all those localities, as he had served as midshipman on board the *Lyra*, during Lord Amherst's embassy to China, in 1816.

It was now ascertained that the English admiral, the Hon. George Elliot, was at anchor with his fleet in Tongkoo roads, below the Bogue forts; and, accordingly, the *Nemesis* proceeded to join the squadron, after the delay of only a few hours. Her arrival was announced by the salute to the admiral's flag, which

was immediately returned by the Melville, precisely as if the Nemesis had been a regular man-of-war.

The Nemesis now found herself in company with the three line-of-battle ships, Wellesley, Melville, and Blenheim, together with H.M.S. Druid, Herald, Modeste, Hyacinth, and the Jupiter troop-ship. Thus, then, after all her toil and hardships, the gallant Nemesis had at length reached the proud post towards which she had so long been struggling. Her voyage from England had, indeed, been a long one, very nearly eight months having elapsed since she bade adieu to Portsmouth. But her trials had been many during that period. She had started in the worst season of the year, and had encountered, throughout nearly the whole voyage, unusual weather and unforeseen difficulties. She had happily survived them all, and the efforts which had been already made to enable her to earn for herself a name gave happy promise of her future destiny.

The excitement on board was general, now that she at length found her *iron* frame swinging, side by side, with the famed "wooden walls" of England's glory; and the prospect of immediate service, in active operations against the enemy, stimulated the exertions of every individual. For some days, however, she was compelled to content herself with the unwelcome operation of "coaling" in Tongkoo Bay. In the meantime, the ships of war had sailed, leaving her to follow them as soon as she could be got ready; and now, while this black and tedious process is going on, we cannot be better employed than

in taking a short survey of the events which had immediately preceded her arrival, and of the more important occurrences which led to such momentous consequences.

CHAPTER X

The abolition of the privileges of the East India Company in China, and the difficulties which soon resulted therefrom, concerning the mode of conducting our negotiations with the Chinese, will be remembered by most readers; and, whatever part the questions arising out of the trade in opium, may have *afterwards* borne in the complication of difficulties, there is little doubt that the first germ of them all was developed at the moment when the general trade with China became free. This freedom of trade, too, was forced upon the government and the company in a great degree, by the competition of the American interests; and by the fact, that British trade came to be carried on partly under the American flag, and through American agency, because it was prevented from being brought into fair competition in the market, under the free protection of its own flag.

The unhappy death of the lamented Lord Napier, principally occasioned by the ill treatment of the Chinese, and the mental vexation of having been compelled to submit to the daily insults of the Chinese authorities, in his attempts to carry out the orders of his government, will be remembered with deep regret. With the nature of those orders we have here nothing to do. No one can question Lord Napier's talent, energy, and devotedness to the object of his mission.

The attempts of Captain Elliot, when he afterwards took upon

himself the duties of chief superintendent, to carry out the same instructions, were scarcely less unfortunate. And finding, as he publicly stated, that "the governor had declined to accede to the conditions involved in the instructions which he had received from her majesty's government, concerning the manner of his *intercourse* with his Excellency," the British flag was struck at the factories at Canton, on the 2nd of December, 1837, and her majesty's principal superintendent retired to Macao.

During the year 1838, very serious and determined measures began to be adopted by the Chinese authorities, directed generally against the trade in opium; and imperial edicts threatened death as the punishment, for both the dealers in, and the smokers of the drug. Several unfortunate Chinese were executed in consequence. Attempts were now made to execute the criminals in front of the foreign factories along the river side, contrary to all former usage and public right. A remonstrance followed, addressed to the governor, who, in reply, gave them a sort of moral lecture, instead of a political lesson, and, then, condescendingly admitted, that "foreigners, though born and brought up beyond the pale of civilization, must yet have human hearts."

Nevertheless, in the following December, 1838, the insulting attempt was again repeated, close under the American flag-staff, which was not then placed, as it has since been, in an enclosure, surrounded with a brick wall, and high paling. The flag was immediately hauled down by the consul, in consequence of the

preparations which were going on, for the erection of the cross upon which the criminal was to be strangled.

At first, a few foreigners interfered, and, without violence, induced the officers to desist from their proceedings. But, gradually, the crowd increased, and, a Chinese mob, when excited, is fully as unruly as an English one; and, thus, each imprudent act, as usual, led to another. No Chinese authorities were at hand to control the disturbance; stones began to fly in all directions; and the foreigners, who, by this time, had come forward, to the aid of their brethren, were at length, through the increasing numbers of the mob, fairly driven to take refuge in the neighbouring factories. Here they were obliged to barricade the doors and windows, many of which, were, nevertheless, destroyed, and the buildings endangered, before a sufficient force of Chinese soldiers had arrived to disperse the mob. In the evening, however, quiet was perfectly restored.

In the meantime, the alarm had spread to Whampoa, whence Captain Elliot set out, accompanied by about one hundred and twenty armed men, for Canton, and arrived at the British factory late in the evening. Both parties were now clearly placed in a false position, yet one which it would have been very difficult to have avoided. During many preceding months, the unfortunate Hong merchants had been in constant collision with their own government on the one hand, and with the foreign merchants, on the other. There was scarcely any species of indignity, to which they were not exposed, and they were even threatened

with death itself. The Chinese government had daily become more overbearing towards all foreigners; and its habitual cold and haughty tone had grown into undisguised contempt and unqualified contumely. Their treatment of Lord Napier had been considered on their part as a *victory*; and their successful repulse of all Captain Elliot's advances, was viewed by them as an evidence of their own power, and of Great Britain's weakness.

It has been already stated in the first chapter, that Sir Frederick Maitland, who had a short time previously paid a visit to China, in a line of battle ship, had left those seas altogether, just before the collision took place; and, in proportion as the foreigners were left unprotected, so did the Chinese become more overbearing.

At the same time, it cannot be denied, that their determination to put a stop, as far as possible, to the opium-trade, *was for the time sincere*; though their measures might have been hasty and unwarrantable. A few days after the preceding disturbance, Captain Elliot distinctly ordered, that "all British owned schooners, or other vessels, habitually, or occasionally engaged in the illicit opium traffic, *within* the Bocca Tigris, should remove before the expiration of three days, and not again return within the Bocca Tigris, being so engaged." And they were, at the same time, distinctly warned, that if "any British subjects were feloniously to cause the death of any Chinaman, in consequence of persisting in the trade within the Bocca Tigris, he would be liable to capital punishment; that no owners of such

vessels, so engaged, would receive any assistance or interposition from the British government, in case the Chinese government should seize any of them; and, that all British subjects, employed in these vessels, would be held responsible for any consequences which might arise from forcible resistance offered to the Chinese government, in the same manner as if such resistance were offered to their own or any other government, in their own or in any foreign country."

So far Captain Elliot evinced considerable energy and determination; but he, probably, had scarcely foreseen that the shrewd and wily government of China would very soon put the question to him, "if you can order the discontinuance of the traffic *within* the Bocca Tigris, why can you not also put an end to it *in the outer waters beyond the Bogue?*"

As it seems scarcely possible to avoid all direct allusion to the difficult question of the traffic in opium, I shall take this opportunity of saying a few words upon this important subject. A detailed account of its remarkable history, and of the vicissitudes which attended it, both within and without the Chinese empire, would afford matter of the greatest interest, but could hardly find a place in this work.

In former times, as is well known, opium was admitted into China as a drug, upon payment of duty; and, even the prohibition which was ultimately laid upon it, was regarded by the Chinese themselves as a mere dead letter. Indeed, precisely in proportion to the difficulty of obtaining the drug, did the longing for it

increase.

The great events which sprang out of this appetite of a whole nation for "forbidden fruit," on the one hand, and of the *temptations* held out to foreigners to furnish it to them, on the other, may be considered as one of those momentous crises in a nation's history, which seem almost pre-ordained, as stages or epochs to mark the world's progress.

It is curious enough, that, at the very time when a *mercantile* crisis was growing up at Canton, a *political* intrigue, or, as it might be called, a cabinet crisis, was breaking out at Peking. In fact, strange as it may appear, it is believed in China, upon tolerably good authority, that there was actually a reform party struggling to shew its head at Peking, and, that the question of more extended intercourse with foreigners, was quite as warmly discussed as that of the prohibition of the import of opium, or of the export of silver.

Memorials were presented to the emperor on both sides of the question; and his Majesty Taou-kwang, being old, and personally of feeble character, halted for a time "between two opinions," alternately yielding both to the one and to the other, until he at length settled down into his old bigotry against *change*, and felt all the native prejudices of a true son of Han, revive more strongly than ever within his bosom.

But the question of the Opium-trade, or Opium laws, which for some time had been almost a *party* matter, like the corn laws in our own country, became at length a question of interest

and importance to the whole nation, and was magnified in its relations by the very discussion of the points which it involved.

It is said that the head of the reform party (if it can so be called) in China was a Tartar lady, belonging to the emperor's court, remarkable for her abilities no less than her personal attractions, and possessed of certain very strong points of character, which made her as much feared by some as she was loved by others. She was soon raised even to the throne itself, as the emperor's wife, but lived only a few years to enjoy her power. Her influence soon came to be felt throughout the whole of that vast empire; it was the means of rewarding talent, and of detecting inability. She seemed to possess, in a marked degree, that intuitive discernment which sometimes bursts upon the female mind as if by inspiration. The tone and energy of her character were in advance of her age and of her country. She had many grateful friends, but she had raised up for herself many bitter enemies; party feeling ran high, and became at length too powerful even for an empress.

Gradually her influence diminished, the favour of the emperor declined, her opponent again got the upper hand, and at length she pined away under the effects of disappointment, and perhaps injustice, and died. But her influence, so long as it lasted, was unbounded, and was felt through every province.

Her principal adherents and dependents naturally lost their power when that of their mistress was gone. The question of more extended trade with foreigners was now again set aside;

the old feelings of bigotry and national pride resumed even more than their former vigour. Opium at once became the instrument, but ostensibly PATRIOTISM became the groundwork of their measures. The old national feeling against foreigners throughout the empire was revived; and in the midst of it all, as if ordained to hasten on the momentous crisis which waited for its fulfilment, *the son of the emperor himself died in his very palace, from the effects of the excessive use of opium.*

Even before this unfortunate event, strong measures had begun to be adopted in some parts of the empire against the preparers and smokers of the drug. As is usually the case when one party has become victorious over another after a severe struggle, the course which they advocate is followed up with even more than their former vigour. When once the advocates of a severe compulsion for stopping the use of opium, and with it the export of silver, had gained the upper hand in the cabinet, measures of a very stringent kind were immediately adopted, as if with the full determination of giving them a fair trial.

The evil had certainly reached a very high pitch; and from having been formerly confined to the wealthier and more indolent classes, it spread its deadly grasp among the lower grades, so that even *the lowest* at length came to be confirmed debauchees. Not that their fair earnings could generally enable them to procure enough of so costly an article, but because they were led to deprive themselves and their families of other comforts, and even necessaries, in order to obtain the

means of gratifying their irresistible longing for the poison. Not unfrequently was even crime itself committed in order to obtain the means; and the opium shops, particularly in the maritime towns and villages, became the last resort of all the thieves, vagabonds, gamblers, and bad characters throughout the district.

The demand for opium, and consequently its price, increased remarkably, and the numerous statements which have been published under this head have not been by any means exaggerated. It penetrated the most secret haunts, in proportion as the danger of using it more publicly increased; and the more numerous were the edicts which were issued against it, the greater did the craving for the forbidden luxury, amounting almost to a national MANIA, go on increasing day by day. The moral lectures of the emperor, which appeared in the Pekin Gazette, were very pretty to read, but very futile in their effects. And if the great despotic ruler over hundreds of millions of people, whose very word was law, still found himself totally unable to exclude the drug (even under the severest prohibitions) from his *own palace*, is it to be wondered at that all his strongest measures should have totally failed in withdrawing the mass of the nation from the temptation?

The enormous profits derived from the clandestine sale of opium induced many of the Chinese to embark in it as a speculation, who neither used it themselves, nor were habituated to any other commercial traffic. Official men both smoked and *sold it*; hundreds of people gained a livelihood by

the manufacture or sale of opium-pipes, and other apparatus connected with its use; and even the armed soldier often carried an opium-pipe in his girdle, with the same unconcern as he did the fan-case which is very commonly a part of his costume.

All this was going on throughout a great portion of the empire during the time that the question of its legalization or of its sterner prohibition was being so warmly debated at court, and discussed throughout the country. But the general impression was, that the importation of the drug would be legalized, and there was little apprehension of the violent persecution which soon commenced.

Instead of the foreigners imposing upon them the barter of opium as a condition of trade, it was the Chinese themselves who begged and prayed that it might be supplied to them; who sought out the opium-selling vessels at long distances, and were even then only permitted to receive it by paying hard cash for it. So determined were the Chinese to possess it at any cost, that they frequently were willing to purchase it for *its own weight* in silver, balanced fairly the one against the other in the scales. Boats belonging to the Custom House engaged in the traffic. The governor of Canton himself, Tang by name, was known to have employed his own boat to fetch it; and so publicly and undisguisedly was the traffic carried on, that a stipulated sum was paid to the officers for every chest landed, precisely as if it had been a bale of cotton or a box of glass.

It cannot be doubted, however, that after the death of the

emperor's son, public attention throughout the empire became more strongly than ever directed to the increasing evils of the use and abuse of opium. Many instances of its pernicious effects now rose to the recollection of individuals who would otherwise have scarcely dwelt upon them. The agitation of the question had indeed led to party feeling upon the subject. The thunders of the emperor against foreigners began to take effect; measures of a severer kind now began to be adopted; and the reaction throughout the empire was almost universal. The shock had not been expected, and it came upon them like an earthquake.

Yet the justice of it appeared evident to many, for the evils had been concealed from none. It seemed as if all on a sudden the highroad to official favour and distinction could be found solely through the degree of energy shewn in ferreting out the lowest opium-smokers, and in publicly giving up the very pipes which were used; indeed it has been said that this enthusiasm was carried so far, that pipes were actually *purchased* for the purpose of giving them up to the officers, as if it indicated a voluntary surrender of a vicious habit. These were all displayed as emblems of victory, and the most zealous were the best rewarded, while the government itself became astonished at its own apparent success. It now thought itself irresistible, and despised the foreigners more than ever.

A grand crisis was produced by these proceedings in the interior of the country. *All traffic* of an extensive kind became nearly stopped; the prisons were filled with delinquents; and a

great parade was made of the "stern severity" of the government, on the one hand, and of the obedient submission of the people, on the other. Yet, in spite of all this public display, that traffic itself was in reality as flourishing as ever, although perhaps it might have changed hands. Opium was more eagerly sought after than before; the price of it rose in proportion; and, precisely as had been predicted by the free trade or reform party in Peking, it was found impossible to prevent its introduction into the country by the people themselves, even by the threat of death itself. Fishermen carried with them a single ball, and made a large profit by its sale; in short, the temptations and the profits were so large and irresistible, that hundreds of modes were discovered for conveying it from place to place, in spite of the penalties which awaited detection. The beheading of a few men, and the imprisonment of others, did not deter the mass; the delicious intoxication of the precious drug proved far too attractive to be controlled by the horrors of death or torture.

The truth is, however specious the edicts and writings of the Chinese may appear *on paper*, they are perfectly futile in reality, when the will of the people and the absence of any early prejudice is opposed to their accomplishment.

Without further pursuing a subject which, though deeply interesting, has been already so much a matter of discussion, we may at once come to the conclusion, that the passion of the Chinese for the pernicious intoxication of opium, was the first link in the chain which was destined to connect them at some

future day with all the other families of mankind. The abolition of the privileges of the East India Company first opened the door for the *general* trade of all foreign nations upon an extended scale; but the trade in opium, which the Chinese were determined to carry on, in spite of all opposition of their own government, and with a full knowledge of the pernicious consequences which resulted from it, was the *instrument* by means of which the haughty tone and the inapproachable reserve of their government were to be at length overcome.

We now come to the period of the famous Commissioner Lin's appointment to Canton. This was indeed the climax of all the perplexities. Lin himself was the Robespierre, the terrorist, the reckless despot, who represented a certain party in the empire, who conscientiously believed that they could *terrify* not only their own countrymen, but even foreign nations, into patient submission to their will.

This singular man seems to have been composed of good and bad qualities in equal proportions, but always of a violent kind. In any other country than China, he would have been either distinguished as a demagogue or branded as a tyrant, precisely as circumstances chanced to lead him into a particular channel. He was reckless of consequences, so long as he could carry out his will without control. He was violent, yet not selfish; changeable, yet always clinging to his original views; severe, and even cruel and inexorable, in the measures by which he sought to gain his ends; yet, in reality, he is believed to have meant well for his

country, and to have had the interests and the wishes of the emperor, his master, always at heart. He certainly believed that he could control both the people under his own government, and the foreigners who came into contact with them, *by force*; and his very errors seem to have arisen from excess of zeal in the cause which he adopted. His talent was unquestionable.

Lin became intoxicated with his own success (for the time, at all events) in whatever he undertook; and expected all his orders to be executed with the same energy and facility with which he gave them utterance. It is said, moreover, that he procured a copy of a remarkable work called a "Digest of Foreign Customs, Practices, Manners," &c., in which bad deeds rather than good ones, and even the names of individual merchants, were brought forward; and that he studied this book with constant pleasure.

On the 10th of March, 1839, this redoubtable commissioner reached Canton, having travelled with extraordinary speed from Peking, whither he had been called to receive his appointment at the hands of the emperor himself; who is said to have even shed tears, as he parted with him.

He lost not a moment, upon his arrival at Canton, in setting all the powerful energies of his mind to work, to devise means of accomplishing his ends. He determined to endeavour to put a complete stop to the traffic in opium, both on the part of his own people and on that of foreigners; and his great aim was to "control, curb, and humble," the foreign community generally.

From this time forth, it became very evident, that great and

complicated events must be looked for upon the political horizon. Even Captain Elliot himself could hardly hope that his little star of diplomacy could light the road to a solution of the difficulties, without an ultimate resort to arms.

It is true, that for a brief interval previous to Lin's arrival, the prospect seemed to brighten considerably. Captain Elliot had partially succeeded in establishing direct official intercourse with the governor of Canton; for it had been at length agreed, that all sealed communications coming from the chief superintendent, should be delivered into the hands of the governor, and the seal broken by him only. This was a great point gained; and Elliot seems to have managed it with considerable tact. Nevertheless, the correspondence could not be said even now, to be carried on upon terms of "perfect equality;" and even this concession was quite as much a matter of necessity to the governor, as it was to Captain Elliot; for the cessation of intercourse had been a source of equal embarrassment to them both.

This Governor Tang was a crafty, cringing, self-interested man; he derived immense sums from opium, and his own son was said to be employed in the clandestine traffic, against which, the father was uttering severe denunciations, followed by severer persecutions.

Lin afterwards suspected, and, perhaps, even discovered his delinquencies; and Tang became a willing and submissive instrument, if not a cringing sycophant. But his day of punishment came at last.

CHAPTER XI

It is worthy of notice that, just previous to the arrival of Commissioner Lin at Canton, the opium-trade had received such a check, that it might be said to have been for the time almost entirely suspended. We have seen the strong measures taken by Captain Elliot against it, which proved that he looked upon it with no favouring eye; and, in short, at that time the opium vessels had left the river altogether. But Lin was not a man to do things by halves. He had formerly, when governor of a province, earned the character of the people's friend; and he seemed now more determined still to win the appellation of the foreigner's enemy. He had belonged to the party opposed to the empress's influence, and, had she survived and continued in power, he would never have been sent on so dangerous a mission. But, when once the liberal party, and the advocates for the legalization of the opium trade, upon the grounds of the *impossibility* of excluding it by prohibition, had been defeated, it became almost a point of honour, certainly of pride with Lin, to shew how successfully he could carry out the views of the high Chinese, or exclusive party.

From the very moment of Lin's arrival, clothed with unlimited power, his restless energy, and his quick penetrating eye, made every officer of his government cower down before him. Indeed, there was hardly an officer of the province, from the governor downwards, who did not feel conscious of guilt, corruption, and

peculation. From high to low, from rich to poor, Lin determined that a reign of terror should commence. He had lists prepared, containing observations upon the characters of all the public officers, of the Hong merchants, and even of the foreigners. He seemed determined to wage war with everybody. And, as a proof that his intentions against the foreign community were anything but conciliatory, within a few days after his arrival he sent round the Hong merchants to the different factories, to ascertain, by intrigue and persuasion, *what weapons the foreigners were in possession of*, and what means they had at hand for their own immediate defence.

Having privately arranged all his plans, and, believing that the foreigners were sleeping, Lin now ordered that all the opium in the inner waters, and also in the store ships in the "*outer waters*," should be given up to the officers of his government; and that a bond should be drawn up in "Chinese and foreign character, stating clearly that the ships afterwards to arrive there shall never, to all eternity, dare to bring any opium; or, if they did so, that their whole cargo should be confiscated, and all their people put to death, [by *Chinese* officers,] and, moreover, that they would willingly undergo it as the penalty of their crime."

This proclamation certainly caused a little panic in Canton, and it was precisely what the commissioner desired; and, the more the foreign merchants seemed disposed to meet his excellency's views, as far as lay in their power, so much the more did the demands of the commissioner rise. Every concession on

the part of Captain Elliot, or the merchants, was to him a victory gained, and the forerunner of greater ones. Threats thundered forth against the heads of the Hong merchants rebounded in threats of all sorts, and alarming statements from them to the foreigners.

There seems to be some reason for supposing that, in the commencement of the business, it was intended by Lin that a certain compensation should be granted to foreigners for the value of the opium surrendered. Gradually, however, as he thought himself getting stronger, this intention was quite lost sight of; and almost at the same time an edict came out, forbidding all foreigners to apply for permission to go down to Macao – in fact, preventing them from leaving Canton or Whampoa.

At this period, not ten days had elapsed since Lin's arrival at Canton, and there had not been sufficient time even to reply to his proclamation, *only issued the preceding day*, respecting the opium and the bond. Lin's impatience hurried on one event upon another, in his headlong career; he issued orders, without waiting to see whether his previous ones had been attended to. Whatever unfortunate results may have ultimately sprung from his policy, it can never be questioned that for the time his darling object was, not only to "humble the foreigners," but to carry out, to the letter, the express directions of his Emperor, which were delivered to him in these words: – "to scrub and wash away the filth, and to cut up the opium-evil by the roots, and to remove calamities from

the people."

Within a few days after his arrival, we have seen that Lin was embroiled with the whole foreign community; and, in the short space of twenty-four hours, edicts appeared, as has been stated, commanding the surrender of all the opium, whether strictly in the Chinese waters or not; and placing under arrest every foreigner, both at Canton and Whampoa, without alleging any grounds for the proceeding.

The drama was now fast spreading out into its different acts and scenes. An agreement that one thousand chests should be delivered up, only led to the demand for more, and *four* thousand chests were then required.

Next, Mr. Dent, one of the principal merchants, was to be brought before the commissioner *within* the city; and, in order to save, as he believed, the heads of some of the Hong merchants, he agreed that he would go, provided that he should receive beforehand a safe-conduct from the imperial commissioner himself, guaranteeing his safe return; but upon any other condition he refused to put himself voluntarily in his power. The reply to this was, "that, if he did not come of his own free will, he should be dragged out of his house by force;" and the threat was added, that, in that case, the high commissioner would assuredly kill him.

A circular from Captain Elliot now required that "all ships belonging to her Majesty's subjects at the outer anchorages should proceed at once to Hong-Kong, since her Majesty's

subjects were then detained at Canton against their will." It will scarcely be credited, that at this time the only British man-of-war in the Chinese waters was the small sloop, the *Larne*. This was perfectly well known to the Chinese, who, consequently, conceived themselves strong enough to proceed to the highest degree of violence and indignity. And, when the *Larne* afterwards went up to the Bogue, and demanded certain explanations of the Admiral Kwan, (who, we have before seen, was on friendly terms with Sir Frederick Maitland, on a previous occasion, when he visited the Bogue in a *line-of-battle ship*,) the only answer that Kwan condescended to give to the *little Larne* was, "that she (or rather her captain) ought to know her own weakness, and be reverentially obedient, as Maitland had been before."

At the critical juncture I have above described, Captain Elliot resolved to come up to the British factory in person, in a small open boat, and, for a moment, our flag was again hoisted, when all were virtually prisoners, whom the flag could not protect. He now declared his intention of demanding passports for all her Majesty's subjects within *ten days*— (should he not have demanded them *at once*?) but, having no armed force that he could call to his aid, all he could do was to say, "that, if they were refused for the period of three days after his application, he should be forced into the conclusion that British subjects were all to be violently detained as hostages, in order that they might be intimidated into unworthy concessions."

Lin now had Elliot completely in his power, and was doubtless much surprised himself at the success of all his schemes. At that moment, neither the flag nor the guns of England could protect her people: they were prisoners in their own halls; and it is a positive fact that, for some time, the only chance of relief or protection which they had to look to, was the expected arrival of two *American ships of war*, which were known to be on their way out, having been applied for by the consul of that country, upon the first appearance of the difficulties.

This was a grand opportunity for pushing their fortunes in that quarter, which the Americans knew well how to profit by. In reality, the whole foreign trade was for a time in jeopardy; but the Americans profited precisely in proportion to the increase of our difficulties, and their trade increased exactly as ours declined. The moment was an advantageous one for proving to the Chinese that Americans were not Englishmen; although they cleverly made them understand that they *had been* so once, but at last had conquered for themselves a name, a flag, and a nation.

It has been said that, at a later period, an American merchant had more than one interview with Lin, in which various suggestions were made as to the measures to be adopted; but, whether they were of a favourable or unfavourable nature to English interests, it is impossible to say with confidence. The results of the conference were kept very secret.

Having secured all the foreigners within his grasp, Lin's next step was to withdraw all the native servants from the factories,

and to forbid the sale of provisions to foreigners in any shape. Armed men were posted on every side, to prevent any one from attempting to escape, while the river was blockaded, and all the foreign boats which could be found were drawn up high and dry on shore, or else destroyed. In the meantime, however, no provisions were supplied by Lin himself; consequently, the foreign prisoners were in a worse plight, in that respect, than the actual malefactors in the cells of the public prisons of the town; and his object was evidently to *starve* them into compliance with his wishes, if, indeed, he knew himself what the full extent of his wishes really was.

Captain Elliot was now called upon to deliver up *all* the opium, wherever it might be found. And yet it was clear enough that Captain Elliot could not possibly know *where* all the opium was, or how much it might be; and, having already agreed to the demand for, first, one thousand, and then four thousand chests, it would clearly be necessary to stipulate some quantity as a satisfactory equivalent for all.

Even in their present dilemma a more decided show of firmness, and a threat of the retribution which would fall upon him hereafter for his violent proceedings, might, possibly, have restored to the commissioner some little portion of his reasonableness, if not his reason. Nevertheless, as the whole community of foreigners (not the English only) were now under a course of starvation and imprisonment, and were in a degraded position in the eyes of all Chinamen, it is difficult to say if any

other course could have been adopted than the one chosen by Captain Elliot. A bond was signed, under the influence and by the compulsion of existing circumstances, by all the parties, that they would not deal any more in opium; but they did not accede to the penalty of death, &c. &c., which Lin had originally attempted to impose. And, at the requisition of Captain Elliot, they agreed to deliver up all the opium then in their *possession*, "for the service of her Majesty's government."

The quantity of opium to be delivered was not stipulated at the time. But, after returns had been very honourably and equitably sent to Captain Elliot, it appeared that he could command the enormous quantity of 20,283 chests; and he accordingly agreed that that immense number should be delivered up to officers deputed by Lin to receive it. It was also stipulated that, as soon as one-fourth should be given up, the servants should be restored; that, after one-half had been delivered, the passage-boats should run as usual down to Macao; that trade should be opened as soon as three-fourths had been given up; and that, when the whole of it had been surrendered, "things should go on as usual."

As yet scarcely three weeks had elapsed since Commissioner Lin had come down, with this enormous power upon his shoulders; and yet it had sufficed to enable him to effect this vast change in the relations which existed between the Chinese and the foreign community, and to astonish even his own countrymen by the energy and rashness of his measures.

The commissioner was perfectly surprised at his own success,

and equally so at the enormous quantity of opium which Elliot declared himself able to procure. But, in point of fact, there were not so many as 20,000 chests of opium in the "*Chinese waters*" at that time, although that amount was at last procured, for vessels were sent to a distance even to seek for it, and to purchase it for Captain Elliot. Some of it was lying at Manilla, whence it was brought over for the purpose.

The next step in Lin's political delinquency was, that he broke the very agreement he had just made; and, instead of allowing the passage-boats to pass down to Macao, as usual, as soon as one-half of the stipulated number of chests had been surrendered, as agreed, he selected the names of sixteen gentlemen out of the whole community, and issued the strictest orders against *their* departure; and directed that every one of the passage-boats should be examined, to see if any of these gentlemen were on board, and to prevent their escape.

Nevertheless, at this time the commissioner would seem to have had some misgivings about the posture of affairs, and became at one time inclined to recommend the "obedient" foreigners to the notice of the Emperor, for the purpose of having some mark of favour conferred upon them. This was thought to point at some kind of compensation for the value of the opium surrendered, but nothing further was heard of it.

On the 21st of May, 1839, the last portion of the stipulated quantity of 20,283 chests of opium was delivered up at the Bogue, where the rest of it was stored, awaiting the Imperial

pleasure. Many questions arose as to how it was to be disposed of, but at last Lin himself hit upon the clever expedient of destroying it by lime and oil, in pits dug for the purpose, and then pouring the fluid compound into the sea. Double guards were placed to prevent any of the drug from being stolen, and death was to be the punishment of every delinquent. There were checks and spies in all directions, and the process of destruction was carried on with great parade. Nevertheless, it is believed that some of it was purloined, both on shore and on its way from the ships to the landing-place, where mandarin-boats and war-junks were collected in great number.

As soon as possible after he had regained his liberty, Captain Elliot sent intelligence of all these occurrences to Bombay, (for the overland mail,) by a fast sailing vessel, hired expressly for the purpose, called the *Ariel*; and, at the same time, H.M. sloop *Larne* was despatched to Calcutta, to report them to the governor-general of India. Consequently, there was then *not a single British ship of war* of any description in the Chinese waters, for the protection of British life and property. Luckily, the arrival soon afterwards of the American ships of war, the *Columbia* and the *John Adams*, served to reassure the drooping spirits of the whole foreign community.

Other acts of atrocity and bad faith had also been committed by the Chinese authorities; but it is remarkable that Captain Elliot, whose personal courage and natural ability have never been questioned, seems to have entered no public protest, nor

addressed any strong remonstrance to the commissioner, either upon this subject, or upon that of his own imprisonment, or rather confinement, at Canton. The probability is, that he thought it useless to do so, unless he were prepared to back his remonstrance by a demonstration of force. Nevertheless, after the foreigners were released, he issued a notice that all trade on the part of his countrymen with the Chinese should be stopped. And this notice was repeated in still stronger terms after the departure of the Larne; for he declared that "he saw no prospect of such an arrangement of existing difficulties as to admit of British ships proceeding within the Bocca Tigris, under the sanction of his authority, until the opinion of her Majesty's government could be made known to him." And at a later period, he thought it necessary to warn all the merchants, (dated the 29th of July,) "that he had moved her Majesty's and the Indian governments to forbid the admission of tea and other produce from China into Great Britain and India, during the existence of the preceding prohibition in Canton, unless their manifests were signed in his presence."

The stoppage of the trade by Captain Elliot irritated Lin excessively. It was turning the tables against himself, defeating him with his own weapons; it savoured of presumption in his sight; and, moreover, it materially diminished his revenue. It proved that, however bombastic and ridiculous their professions of *indifference* to the trade of foreigners might be, they really stood very much in need of it themselves, and, in fact, they felt

the stoppage of it on our part quite as much as we ever did on theirs. It made Lin actually spiteful; he tried every art to induce the English to act *contrary* to Elliot's orders; and, subsequently, when he went down to Macao to see with his own eyes what the Portuguese were about, he went so far as to make it a matter of accusation against Elliot, that "he had *prevented* the merchant ships of his country from entering the port of Canton."

Such gross inconsistency, probably, was never before presented to view in so short a period of time by any public man. Lin was, in fact, completely at bay, and he, moreover, had probably heard by this time that more than one British man-of-war was expected. Nevertheless, he by no means relaxed in his feelings of bitter hostility; he listened to everything that was said or written against the English and against opium; he so alarmed the Portuguese, as to make them expel all the English, out of the town, (or, what is the same thing, he threatened to attack the town if the English remained in it;) and he made them prohibit the importation of opium, which had formerly been permitted upon payment of duty; though, to this day, the traffic is continued by them in full vigour at the outer anchorages, and in the Typa near Macao, although it is prohibited to be landed at the town, under the eye of the authorities. Nevertheless, a sufficient quantity of it is brought into the town for local consumption.

Lin now appeared to have reached the pinnacle of his power. He flattered himself that his schemes had been all successful; his power appeared irresistible, because no effectual opposition to it

had yet been offered. The more concessions were made to him, the more exacting he became; and having got the English out of Macao, and made the Portuguese submissive to his will, he then assumed a very bland and condescending tone.

In the interim, it was very evident that a storm of a new kind was brewing, which was likely soon to burst upon his head. Moreover, all the attempts he had made to control his own people failed; his executions, his denunciations, and his moral lectures, were alike unavailing. He gave the people a year, within which they were to break off the habit by degrees, and to reform their manners; and, at the end of that time, he vowed he would execute every man amongst them that persisted in it. In the meantime, he hit upon the last and darling expedient of every Chinese statesman and philosopher, that of making men mutually responsible for each other. Thus the whole people were to be divided into tens, as they were elsewhere in the days of Alfred the Great, and each one of the party was to be made personally responsible for the good behaviour of all the rest with whom he was associated.

Notwithstanding all these strong measures, urged with all the sincerity of an enthusiast, they both failed at the time, and have failed ever since to eradicate the evil. The demand for the drug increased with the difficulty of procuring it; the indulgence became dearer owing to the danger which attended it; and, after all that was said and done, opium continued to be sought and enormously paid for. It was more generally used than ever; and

even attention became directed to the cultivation of the poppy on Chinese soil, when the difficulty of procuring it from abroad became more urgent.

Lin rose into high favour, for a time, with the Imperial court, as might naturally be expected, and he was appointed governor of the second province in the empire. But long before the time came for him to remove to his new post, his star began to wane, his difficulties increased, and ultimately his fall was as great as his rise had been rapid.

For several months, as I have before stated, no British ship of war was present in the Chinese waters. It was in this interval – namely, in the month of July, 1839 – that the great difficulty arose which excited so much attention at the time, and has done so since, arising out of the death of a Chinaman, by name Lin Wiehe, at Hong-Kong, during an affray with some British merchant seamen. This event was eagerly taken advantage of by the commissioner to attempt to enforce certain claims against the foreigners. Without entering into tedious details, many of which are already well known, it will suffice to mention that the man's death was really occasioned by a drunken row at a village near Hong-Kong; that the commissioner, in accordance with what had formerly been done on a similar occasion at Canton, demanded the surrender of the *murderer* to be tried by Chinese judges, and that Captain Elliot denied the jurisdiction altogether; but, at the same time, he himself preferred an indictment for murder against a seaman before a British grand-jury at Hong-Kong, who

ignored the bill. But several men were ultimately found guilty of an assault only, and it appeared that one party was just as much to blame as the other.

The commissioner then grew more angry than ever: he caused the few English who still remained at Macao to be still further persecuted, and it was only through the friendly assistance of individual Portuguese families that they were enabled to obtain their daily food. The result was, that the whole British community left the place, together with Captain Elliot, and went to live on board the different merchant ships in harbour.

Things could not remain long in such a state of embarrassment; and, fortunately, on the 11th of September – that is, about three months and a half after the Larne had left those seas – the Volage, under Captain Smith, arrived. That gallant officer immediately perceived that active steps of some kind must be taken, and he accordingly issued a notice of blockade of the port of Canton, upon the ground "that the regular supplies of food had been prohibited to her Majesty's subjects; that the Chinese people had been ordered to fire upon and seize them wherever they went; and that certain of her Majesty's subjects had been actually cut off."

The immediate effect of this notice was to bring the Chinese, in some measure, to their senses; their proclamations against Englishmen were withdrawn – provisions were no longer prohibited; and, consequently, Captain Smith very properly withdrew his notice of blockade. Negotiations were entered into,

and it was at length agreed that trade should be resumed *outside* the port of Canton.

Yet, all on a sudden, even this arrangement was violated by the Chinese; and, on the 26th October, notice was issued that they now required that ships should enter *within* the port of Canton – that is, within the Bocca Tigris. They repeated the demand for the murderer of Lin Wiehe to be given up, and that a bond should be signed by all, agreeing to be tried by *Chinese officers for offences declared by them, before trial, to be capital*. If this mandate were not obeyed, the whole of the foreign ships were to depart within three days, under a threat of immediate destruction.

The whole fleet, therefore, was now recommended to anchor in Tongkoo Bay, or Urmston's Harbour, which afterwards became the rendezvous of all the ships of war.

It is not necessary here to enter into minute details; it will be sufficient for the full understanding of the future operations to state that difficulties continued to increase on both sides, without much prospect of any solution. The Hyacinth having now arrived and joined the Volage on the 29th October, these two vessels proceeded with Captain Elliot to Chuenpee, some distance below the Bogue, to endeavour to obtain from the commissioner some explicit declaration of his intentions. On the 3rd of November they were attacked by the Chinese admiral with twenty-nine sail of war-junks, which, of course, they soon beat off: and thus occurred the first direct hostile encounter between the armed forces of the two nations. War now became more than ever

inevitable. Yet, at the end of the following month, these two ships of war were again compelled to proceed to the Bogue, in consequence of the seizure of a British subject by the Chinese (not engaged in selling opium) at the anchorage of Tongkoo Bay.

The blockade of the river and port of Canton was therefore renewed by Captain Smith on the 15th January, 1840; but the gentleman who had been seized, Mr. Gribble, was at once restored, and the blockade was consequently raised.

Scarcely had this taken place, when down came to Macao a new Chinese governor of that district, and issued a positive edict for the immediate expulsion of all the English. Captain Smith, with becoming spirit, instantly ordered the *Hyacinth*, Captain Warren, to proceed into the inner harbour for the protection of his countrymen, which measure seemed to give great umbrage to the Portuguese governor, Da Silveira Pinto; and, in consequence of his representations, she was withdrawn on the following morning.

Occasion was taken to make as much as possible out of this occurrence, as if the Portuguese really possessed some authority in the place beyond that over their own countrymen, and very futile appeals were made to treaties with the Chinese government. After all, the utmost that could be said of it was, that if it was a little deficient in courtesy towards the Portuguese governor, the latter should have rather volunteered his consent to it. Nevertheless, the energetic spirit which it evinced undoubtedly tended to check the presumption of the Chinese authorities, and

thus far to give some little security to British subjects. Captain Smith very properly put it upon the ground of its strengthening the Portuguese governor's hands, which in reality it did, and which that functionary stood greatly in need of. At the same time, Captain Smith very laudably expressed a hope that the language in which his Excellency would "demand the immediate removal of the Chinese forces, *declaredly* sent here to seize or destroy my countrymen, (to the deep insult of the Portuguese crown,) will be not less stringent, and as successful in its operation, as that in which your Excellency has been pleased to order the withdrawal of the Hyacinth."

During the whole of this time, preparations were being made by the Chinese for future operations in the Canton River; fireships were prepared, guns collected, and troops exercised.

On the 24th March, 1840, the fine frigate the *Druid*, commanded by Lord John Churchill, arrived off Macao, and thence proceeded to Tongkoo Roads, a most welcome reinforcement. About this time, also, the Chinese purchased the English merchant ship the *Cambridge*, intending to turn her into a man-of-war, and built some strange-looking little schooners upon a European model, with the view of employing them in some novel way or other against the British ships.

It is said that, at one time, Commissioner Lin got up a sort of sham fight at the Bogue, and dressed some of the assailants in red clothes, in order to habituate the defenders to the sight of the colour of the enemy's costume. Of course the red gentlemen

were thoroughly beaten. Matters had now proceeded so far, that it was impossible that any solution of the enigma could be arrived at without speedy employment of force. The success of their first measures, and the helpless condition in which foreigners then found themselves, had emboldened the Chinese beyond reason, and had fed their presumption even till it burst with its own self-applause.

Lord John Churchill, who was now, of course, senior officer, unhappily died, after a few weeks' illness, on the 3rd of June. Few days had elapsed before the Chinese sent a number of fireships to endeavour to destroy the English merchant-ships collected at the anchorage of Capsingmoon, but they proved a complete failure.

The British naval force now rapidly gained accession to its strength. The tidings of the events at Canton had spread to all parts of the world. Preparations had been immediately commenced in England and elsewhere for the coming contest. The Alligator, from New South Wales, under Sir Gordon Bremer, arrived about this time, as also did the Honourable Company's steamer, Madagascar, and likewise the Wellesley, 74, in which Sir Gordon Bremer hoisted his broad pendant; and, on the 28th of June, 1840, Commodore Sir Gordon Bremer established a blockade of the port and river of Canton and all its entrances, by command of her Majesty's government. Ships of war now continued to arrive as fast as possible; the force in the Chinese waters was considerable; and, within two or three days after the commencement of the blockade, the chief command

was assumed by Rear-Admiral the Honourable George Elliot, who had just arrived in the Melville, 74.

CHAPTER XII

It will be generally admitted by all who have seen the Canton river, or, as the Chinese call it, Choo-keang, that, in point of size, depth, and picturesque character, it is one of the finest navigable rivers in the world. Merchant ships of the largest size, perhaps the proudest which float, have navigated it for nearly two hundred years, to within a distance of nine or ten miles from Canton, with little difficulty, and very inconsiderable danger. No foreign commerce with any one port has been so valuable, so extensive, or carried on with so much facility. The difficulties of our intercourse, which have arisen within the last few years, have formed an epoch in the world's history, and stand forth as a leading beacon in the stream of time, pointing towards greater eras yet to come.

An archipelago of numerous islands, most of them rocky, and only partially productive, warns you of the approach to this celebrated river. Strictly speaking, only that portion of it above the Bocca Tigris has been called the river; while all below that point, even from beyond Macao upwards, (the latter lying at the distance of from forty to fifty miles from the Bogue forts,) has been called the outer waters; nevertheless, it ought properly to be included within the precincts of the river itself.

Since the questions connected with the opium-trade have been brought so prominently forward, it has been maintained by some,

that the "outer waters" ought not properly to be considered within Chinese jurisdiction. But this position would hardly seem to be tenable; and there can be no sound reason for maintaining that these waters should not be considered as much, and *even more*, within their jurisdiction as the sea-coast or river islands of any part of Europe are within the jurisdiction of the country to which they belong, to the distance of a certain number of miles from the land itself. In reality, the little peninsula of Macao on the west, and the island of Lintao (not to be confounded with Lintin) on the east, may be considered as the proper boundaries of the entrance to the Canton River.

These points are about fifteen to twenty miles apart, while between them lie several small islands, through which are the two principal navigable passages (the western and the Lintao passages) into the river itself. But the island of Lintao, called Tyho by the Chinese, is a long, narrow, mountainous piece of land, broken up into numerous bays and projecting points, stretching from south-west to north-east, separated at the latter extremity from the mainland only about the distance of a mile. The passage and anchorage between them is called Capsingmoon, and is made use of occasionally even by large vessels, which pass towards the river or across from Macao towards the island of Hong-Kong, which lies off the mainland at about five or six miles to the eastward of Lintao.¹³

The anchorage of Tongkoo Bay, towards which the *Nemesis*

¹³ See map.

was to proceed to rejoin the fleet, and which is also known by the name of Urmston's Harbour, from having been recommended by Sir James Urmston, formerly President of the Company's factory at Canton, is situated about six miles due north from Lintao, between the little islands called Tongkoo and Sowchow, near the mainland, as you proceed upwards within the outer waters of the Canton River, along its eastern shores. It was here that the fleet anchored in 1823, in consequence of some discussions with the Chinese, arising out of the affair of the Topaze frigate, which occurred in the preceding year.¹⁴

About five miles distant from Tongkoo Bay, more towards the centre of the river, and a little to the northward, is the small island of Lintin, terminating in a very remarkable, high, conical peak, which is a guide to all vessels passing up or down. It has become famous as a place of rendezvous for the opium vessels, particularly within the last few years; and a merchant brig, bearing its name, has been recently sold to the Chinese as a man-of-war, though old and not very serviceable. This island must not be confounded with that of Lintao, before alluded to, and from which it is about eight or nine miles distant.

¹⁴ Some of the sailors of the Topaze were attacked and wounded on shore by the Chinese; and, in the scuffle, two Chinamen were killed. Remonstrances followed on both sides; and at length the Chinese demanded that two Englishmen should be delivered up to them for punishment. This was refused, as might be expected; upon which the Chinese authorities stopped the trade, and the fleet of merchant ships withdrew from Whampoa, and came to anchor in Tongkoo roads, henceforth called Urmston's Bay or Harbour.

Having now got fairly into Tongkoo Bay with the fleet, and feeling something of the interest and excitement which were awakened in the breasts of all who were brought together in such a place and at such a time, we will next proceed to recount a few of the remarkable events of the year 1840, reserving the description of the other parts of the river for those portions of the narrative with which they are connected.

Towards the end of July, 1840, the British force assembled in China had become considerable: comprising no less than three line-of-battle ships, with a Rear-Admiral and a Commodore; thirteen other ships of war, of different kinds, and a large troop-ship; together with four armed steamers, belonging to the East India Company. To these must be added twenty-seven transports, having on board the 18th, 26th, and 49th regiments, a body of Bengal volunteers, and a corps of Madras sappers and miners. The marines and seamen were of course prepared to co-operate on shore. This was undoubtedly a formidable force, especially when we reflect that little more than a year had elapsed since there was *no armed force whatever* in the Chinese waters, and the flag of England had ceased to wave even upon the Factories.

The measures adopted by the Governor-general of India, when once the crisis had arrived, were sufficiently energetic and decisive. The consequences of the rupture were now easily foreseen; and the interest which the state of our relations with China had begun to awaken, both in England and in India, was daily becoming more general.

On the first arrival of the large force mentioned below,¹⁵ it did not appear to alarm Commissioner Lin, and his obsequious satellite, Governor Tang, nearly so much as might have been expected. On the contrary, Lin continued to organize means of defence, to enlist soldiers, and to arm his forts. It was, moreover, at this moment that he hit upon his notable expedient of offering immense rewards for the destruction, in any manner whatever, of British ships, either men-of-war or merchant vessels, and also for the capture or slaughter of British officers. But the reward for taking them alive was to be greater than for killing them. There was also a reward for taking soldiers or *merchants*, but only one-fifth of the sum if they were killed. A reward was also to be given for the capture of *coloured people*, soldiers, or servants, although its amount was not mentioned.

All this followed after the declaration of blockade by Sir Gordon Bremer, and after a public complaint had been made by Captain Elliot against Lin and Tang, for various treacherous

¹⁵ LIST OF NAVAL FORCES BELONGING TO H. B. MAJESTY IN CHINA, IN JULY AND AUGUST, 1840. Melville, 74, flag-ship, Rear-Admiral the Hon. George Elliot, C.B.; Captain the Hon. R. S. Dundas. Wellesley, 74, bearing the broad pendant of Commodore Sir J. J. Gordon Bremer, C.B.; Captain Thomas Maitland. Blenheim, 74, Sir H. S. Fleming. Senhouse, K.C.B. Druid, 44, Capt. Smith. Blonde, 44, Capt. F. Bouchier. Volage, 28, Capt. G. Elliot. Conway, 28, Capt. C. D. Bethune. Alligator, 28, Capt. H. Kuper. Larne, 20, Capt. J. P. Blake. Hyacinth, 20, Capt. W. Warren. Modeste, 20, Capt. H. Eyres. Pylades, 20, Capt. T. V. Anson. Nimrod, 20, Capt. C. A. Barlow. Cruiser, 18, Capt. H. W. Giffard. Columbine, 18, Capt. T. J. Clarke. Algerine, 10, Capt. T. S. Mason. Rattlesnake, troop-ship, Brodie. *Hon. Company's armed Steamers*. Queen, Mr. Warden. Madagascar, Mr. Dicey. Atalanta, Commander Rogers. Enterprise, Mr. West.

acts, such as attacking our vessels at night (merchant vessels), poisoning the water, and preventing supplies of food from being brought to the factories, &c.

It was now very evident, that although no formal declaration of war had been made on our part, it had become impossible to avoid warlike operations on an extended scale, and at no distant time.

Rear-Admiral Elliot had now been associated with Captain Elliot in his diplomatic functions, and they were nominated Joint-Plenipotentiaries for settling the matters in dispute with the Emperor. That object appeared little likely to be attained by wasting time in negotiations with irresponsible and overbearing public officers at Canton; it was, therefore, wisely resolved to take advantage of the best season of the year while it still lasted, and to proceed northward with the bulk of the force, in order to bring the emperor and his ministers to their senses, by exciting alarm as near as possible to the imperial capital. The Peiho river, therefore, which commands one of the great channels of intercourse with the metropolis, and is connected with the Grand Canal, through which all the wealth of China flows to Peking, was now avowedly the chief point to which the expedition was to be directed.

This movement was by no means a mere demonstration for the purpose of giving *éclat* to the conduct of the negotiations, but was in reality a *hostile* operation; at all events, it became so as it proceeded, and the results of it may, in reality, be called

the First Campaign in China. It was commonly called the first "China Expedition;" but the appellation was afterwards changed to the "Eastern Expeditionary force," which was also applied to the second expedition, as will be afterwards seen.

A small force being left at the Bogue to maintain the blockade, the bulk of the expedition, together with the two plenipotentiaries, sailed to the northward at the end of June; part of the force above mentioned did not arrive until after the rest had sailed, but it soon followed the rest.

The first encounter with the Chinese took place at Amoy, in the beginning of July, 1840. The Blonde, forty-four, Captain Bouchier, was sent into the harbour of Amoy, to endeavour to hand over a letter from the English naval commander-in-chief, addressed to the "Admiral of the Chinese nation." This high officer was not there, and the local mandarins refused to receive it, and fired upon a boat which was sent to the beach bearing a flag of truce at the bow, and conveying Mr. Thom, as interpreter, for the purpose of delivering the letter to the mandarins, for transmission to the Chinese admiral. The officers and crew of the boat had a narrow escape, for, besides being received with every possible indignity, the boat was fired at and *struck*, while preparations were evidently being made for an attack upon the frigate itself. Indeed, nothing could possibly be more hostile and insulting than the conduct of the Chinese officers, who met Mr. Thom at the landing-place. They shewed some inclination even to seize the boat in which he came, and declared they neither

feared him nor the ship either.

The result of their hostile bearing and of the attack on the boat was, that the guns of the Blonde were directed with terrific effect upon the Chinese batteries and the war-junks, immediately the boat reached the frigate. By this fire great damage was done, and the Chinese troops, who had assembled on the beach, were dispersed in all directions. Having inflicted this merited chastisement, as an example to the Chinese, the Blonde again set sail to join the main body of the force, in order to report the circumstances to the admiral.

On the 5th of July, the town of Tinghai, the capital of the island of Chusan, the principal of the group of islands bearing that name, fell to her Majesty's arms after a very slight resistance. But as this and other operations to the northward, during this brief season, have been well described by Lord Jocelyn, it will be sufficient merely to allude to them in a cursory way, particularly as they were of minor importance compared with subsequent events.

The failure of the attempt to deliver a letter from Lord Palmerston to some of the authorities at Ningpo, to be transmitted to the cabinet at Peking, became a matter of serious importance, after what had taken place at Amoy, and, in consequence, a blockade of the coast was established from Ningpo to the mouth of the Yangtze River, the most frequented and most commercial part of the whole sea-board of China.

Nothing was more likely to make a deep impression upon the

Chinese government than the stoppage of this valuable trade, upon which the daily sustenance of a large part of the population of the interior actually depended. The ultimate conclusion of peace, which was brought about by the more active prosecution of these very measures, will be sufficient to prove their wisdom at that time; and it is due to Captain Elliot to mention, that the blockade of the Yangtze River was at all times one of his most favourite projects.

About the middle of August, the bulk of the squadron arrived off the mouth of the Peiho, below Tientsin, having been preceded two or three days by Captain Elliot, on board the Madagascar steamer.¹⁶ Lord Palmerston's communication was there at length received, by an officer deputed for that purpose by Keshen, the governor of the province, and was forwarded to the emperor. Subsequently, a conference was held on shore between Keshen and Captain Elliot; and, whatever the results may otherwise have been, it is well known that the plenipotentiaries were persuaded, by the ingenuity of Keshen, that the future negotiations could be conducted with more satisfaction at Canton (provided a new commissioner were sent down from Peking for that express purpose) than within a hundred miles of the emperor's palace.

In the meantime, however, while an answer was expected from the emperor to the communication addressed to his ministers by Lord Palmerston, the principal part of the squadron, which had come up to the Peiho, sailed further northward, up the gulf

¹⁶ She was afterwards accidentally destroyed by fire.

of Petchelee, to the great wall of China, which has so long been classed among the wonders of the world. The effect of the emperor's answer, and of the negotiations with Keshen was, that this squadron withdrew from the neighbourhood of the capital; and Keshen himself was appointed Imperial Commissioner, to proceed at once to Canton, to open negotiations with the plenipotentiaries. He was to supersede Lin, whose course seemed almost run, and who was ordered to Peking in haste, to answer for his conduct. Nevertheless, he was subsequently allowed to remain as viceroy, or governor, at Canton, but never succeeded in obtaining the higher government which had been previously promised to him elsewhere, in the heyday of his favour.

By the end of September, the squadron had returned to Chusan from the Peiho. A truce was about this time announced and published at Chusan; and a common impression prevailed that a general armistice had been concluded at Tientsin with Keshen, pending the result of the negotiations to be carried on at Canton. This, however, was soon found to be erroneous; for, in a letter addressed to the merchants by Admiral Elliot, in Tongkoo Bay, on the 26th of November, (the very day after the *Nemesis* had reported her arrival to the admiral,) it was publicly declared that "the truce had been only entered into with Elepoo, the governor-general of that province [Che-keang], and did not extend further." It must, however, have included the port of Ningpo, and other parts of the coast of the mainland, within the

limits of the governor's authority.

The plenipotentiaries, Captain Elliot and the Honourable George Elliot, returned to Macao on the 20th of November. It was on the following day that The Queen steamer was fired at and hit, as she passed the Chuenpee fort with a flag of truce. She had orders to proceed up to the Bogue, to deliver a letter which had been entrusted to her captain from "Elepoo," (probably concerning the truce he had concluded,) addressed to the Imperial Commissioner Keshen at Canton. In return for this attack, she threw a few shells and heavy shot into the fort, and went back to Tongkoo Bay *re infectâ*. This was the second time a flag of truce had been fired at, although the Chinese perfectly understood the peaceful purpose which it denoted. The despatch, however, was forwarded the same evening to Keshen at Canton, through the sub-prefect of Macao, into whose hands it was delivered by Captain Elliot. It was also reported that the commandant at Chuenpee sent up some of The Queen's heavy shot, which had lodged in the fort, as a present to the authorities at Canton, probably to shew how brave he had been to withstand such weighty missiles. He did not lose the opportunity to claim a victory for having *driven* her off!

A heavy force was by this time collected at the mouth of the Canton River, reinforced as it had been by the arrival of the Calliope and Samarang, and also of the Nemesis, and by the addition of a fresh regiment, the 37th Madras native infantry.

Keshen arrived at Canton on the 29th of November, and sent

an official notification to that effect to the plenipotentiaries; and it is remarkable that, almost at the same moment, Admiral Elliot was compelled to resign the command of the fleet, and also his duties as joint-plenipotentiary, through sudden and severe illness. A few days afterwards he embarked for England in the *Volage*, leaving Commodore Sir Gordon Bremer as commander-in-chief, and Captain Elliot for the time as again the sole plenipotentiary.

In order to render complete the general sketch of passing events to the close of 1840, I must not omit to mention the gallant affair at Macao under Captain Smith, commanding the *Druid*, which happened in the month of August, at the period when the main body of the expedition was engaged in the operations to the northward, already alluded to. It will be remembered that Captain Smith had once before thought it necessary to sail into the Inner Harbour, for the protection of British subjects, but had retired upon a representation being made to him by the Portuguese government.

In the month of August, however, strange rumours of a rather threatening character began to prevail, but not of a very definite kind. One of the principal Chinese officers of Macao had been absent for some time at Canton, and, on his return, accompanied, or rather followed, by a body of troops, it became very evident that some hostile measure was in contemplation. A number of war-junks were likewise collected in the Inner Harbour, having troops on board. A considerable body of men were

also encamped upon the narrow neck of land which separates Macao from the mainland, and across which there is a so-called Barrier, which forms the line of demarcation, beyond which the Portuguese have no jurisdiction.

This Barrier is composed of a wall, with parapets and a ditch running across the isthmus, and having a gateway, with a guard-house over it, in the centre. Beyond the Barrier the Chinese had very recently thrown up a flanking field-work, mounting about twelve guns, with a view of protecting the rear of the Barrier from the attack of an enemy attempting to land in boats. The war-junks were also placed so close in shore, in the Inner Harbour, as to be able to protect the Barrier on that side.

These movements were quite sufficient to prove that some attack was actually contemplated upon Macao itself, and the result of it, if successful, cannot be thought of without horror. But the promptitude and energy of Captain Smith anticipated the designs of the Chinese, and, by a most decisive and admirably combined movement, he soon scattered the whole Chinese forces like chaff before the wind. Taking with him the *Larne* and *Hyacinth*, with the *Enterprise* steamer and the *Louisa* cutter, he sailed boldly up towards the Barrier, and ran in as close as the shallowness of the water would permit. He then opened a spirited fire upon the whole of the Chinese works and barracks, which the Chinese returned. Their soldiers were seen mustering from different points, for the defence of the position.

In the course of an hour, the firing of the Chinese was almost

silenced, and then a single gun was landed upon the beach, which raked the Chinese position, while a small body of marines, under Lieutenant Maxwell, with some small-arm men from the Druid, under Lieutenant Goldsmith, and about two companies of Bengal volunteers, under Captain Mee, altogether about three hundred and eighty men, landed, and drove the Chinese, with considerable loss, from every one of their positions. On the British side, four men only were wounded. The Chinese guns were spiked, but none were carried away, and the whole of their troops were dispersed, nor did they afterwards approach the Barrier, except to carry off the spiked guns. The barracks and other buildings were burned; and all our men having re-embarked late in the evening, the vessels returned to their former anchorage in Macao roads.

Seldom has a more signal service been rendered in so short a space of time, than this well-timed and energetic measure adopted by Captain Smith.

There still remain one or two points worth noticing, in order to complete the series of events which happened in the year 1840. Among these, one of the most important was the issuing of an Order in Council, for the establishment of courts of admiralty in China, for the adjudication of prizes, &c. It was to the effect that, "in consideration of the *late injurious proceedings* of certain officers of the Emperor of China towards certain of our officers and subjects, and, whereas, orders had been given that satisfaction and reparation for the same should be demanded from the Chinese government, it was necessary, for the purpose

of enforcing those orders, that all vessels and goods belonging to the Emperor of China or *his subjects* should be detained and brought into port; and that, in the event of reparation and satisfaction being refused by the Chinese government, a court of admiralty should be formed for the purpose of adjudging and condemning them as prizes."

This order in council was not acted upon, except on a very limited scale, and for a very brief period. It was afterwards considered more equitable that the burden of the war should be made to fall as much as possible upon the *government* of China, and as little as possible upon the people; and this highly judicious and humane determination was carried out as much as possible, and with the best results, during all the latter part of the war, much to the credit of all concerned.

During the year 1840, very little progress was made in our endeavours to gain over the Chinese people to our interests, or to conciliate their forbearance, in any of the places in which we were brought into contact with them. At Chusan, in particular, they evinced the most hostile spirit towards us, and lost no opportunity of exhibiting their hatred of the foreigner. It was not without great difficulty even that provisions could be obtained for our men; there was evidently some secret influence which operated to prevent the people from meeting us amicably, and made them, for some time, resist even the temptation of gain, so difficult for a Chinaman to withstand. Nothing tended to exhibit their hostile spirit so much as their persevering attempts to carry

off our men by stealth, whenever they could find an opportunity; and indeed the kidnaping system was followed up with many circumstances of barbarity, to the very close of the war.

This embittered our men very much against the Chinese, and we may almost wonder that their prisoners, when they fell into our hands, received such lenient treatment in return. The story is well known of Captain Anstruther's capture at Chusan, at the distance of only two or three miles from the town, his being tied up in a sack, and subsequently carried over in a boat to Ningpo on the mainland, and the curious history of his confinement in a bamboo cage, three feet long by two feet broad; and other instances of a similar kind, in which the prisoners were treated with the utmost barbarity, have been so often recounted, that a passing allusion to them will here be sufficient. Captain Anstruther, however, would seem to have been more leniently treated than many of the other prisoners: and I have heard him declare that, with respect to the better class of mandarins at Ningpo, he had little cause of complaint to urge against them, considering that he was a *prisoner* in an enemy's hands. His talent for drawing, however, enabled him to conciliate their good will, and to earn for himself some indulgences which others were not fortunate enough to procure. He sold his drawings and particularly his portraits, for a tolerable price. Many of the other prisoners, however, were treated with frightful barbarity, and, in some instances, they were put to death.

A much more formidable enemy to us than the Chinese

was soon discovered, in the terrible sickness which broke out among our troops at Chusan, and carried off many a brave man prematurely to his grave. The low, swampy rice-grounds surrounding the town, the want of proper drainage, the exposure to the hot sun, and the use of the deleterious spirit which the Chinese call samshoo, made from rice, (of which a vast quantity was manufactured on the island for exportation,) all these causes combined sufficed to produce fever, dysentery, and various complaints, which committed great havoc among the men. The island was subsequently, however, rendered less unhealthy by better arrangements, and by enforcing greater cleanliness.

At Amoy, after the affair of the Blonde, a strict blockade was maintained by the Alligator and other vessels, which interrupted the whole trade of that important commercial city. But none of our ships astonished and alarmed the Chinese so much as the steamers; they were particularly alluded to in the official reports to the emperor, and were described as "having wheels at their sides, which, revolving, propelled them like the wind, enabling them to pass to and fro with great rapidity, acting as leaders;" and it is not surprising that the Chinese should soon have christened them the "Demon Ships."

The effect of our operations to the northward had already been to excite great alarm in the mind of the emperor and of his ministers; indeed the panic created by the first approach of a hostile force was so great, that a very small body of men might have marched almost from one end of China to the other, so

little were the Chinese prepared for resistance. But gradually they recovered their energy, improved their means of defence, adopted better weapons, and cast heavier guns. As far as personal bravery could aid them, they were by no means an enemy to be despised. The spear and the bayonet frequently crossed each other; perhaps more frequently than the bayonets of Europeans do; and, in not a few instances, the *long* spear was more than a match for the shorter bayonet. Hand to hand encounters with the Tartar troops were not uncommon towards the close of the war; and, indeed, many of our men learnt, to their cost, that they had held the Chinese far too cheap. Instances occurred in which the powerful Tartar soldier rushed within the bayonet-guard of his opponent, and grappled with him for life or death.

We may now revert to the period of the arrival of the new Imperial Commissioner Keshen at Canton, with a view to treat with the plenipotentiaries, according to the terms agreed upon at the Pehio, as before mentioned. His predecessor, Lin, whose fall had now commenced, could not resist giving a parting warning to the people, against the continuance of their pernicious habits; and he even assured them that, if they still persisted, "they would assuredly, one and all of them, be strangled."

In the beginning of December the greater part of our naval forces had again assembled below the Bogue, although a squadron was still left to the northward. Notwithstanding that Keshen had arrived for the ostensible purpose of inquiring into and settling all matters in dispute, it was evident that the Chinese

were making hostile preparations, with a view to a very different mode of settlement of the question. A feeling of uncertainty and apprehension prevailed, such as generally precedes some great movement. The Chinese, on their side, were collecting troops, and raising new works; while, on our side, every precaution was taken, in case a resumption of hostilities should be called for.

On the 13th, the *Nemesis*, which had been for some days at anchor with the fleet, a few miles below Chuenpee, conveyed Captain Elliot down to Macao, while the rest of the fleet moved nearer up towards the Bogue, as if with the object of supporting the "negotiations" by a firm display of power. Captain Elliot's stay at Macao was very short, and from the increased activity of our preparations at the Bogue, it became evident that the "negotiations" were not going on satisfactorily.

Numerous communications were passing between Macao and our fleet at the Bogue; Captain Elliot himself went backwards and forwards several times in the *Nemesis*, and the moment seemed fast approaching when some very decided blow was to be struck.

The following description of the scene of operations will therefore be found interesting. About twenty-two to twenty-five miles above the island of Lintin, before described, and consequently about the same distance above Tongkoo Bay, on the same side of the river, is a projecting headland, about a mile and a quarter wide, distinguished at a considerable distance by the high peak in which its summit terminates. On either side of it

there is a fine sandy beach, off which there is a good anchorage. This is Chuenpee.

The hill, which is its principal feature, stands rather towards the northern side of the promontory, and is divided into two conical eminences, upon one of which there was a high building, resembling a watch tower, which was now fortified, and formed a conspicuous object as you ascend the river. At the bottom of the hill there were a considerable stone battery and other works. The whole of these had been very recently strengthened and extended. A line of entrenchment, with mud batteries, had also been carried round the rear. Behind the hill also, in an opening looking towards the north, or into Anson's Bay, another small battery had been erected, with an enclosed space or square for barracks, surrounded by a parapet wall.

The extent of these works was not properly known, until the attack upon the place had commenced. It was generally believed that the promontory and hill of Chuenpee were connected with the mainland, and it was not until some time after the place was taken that the discovery was made, as will presently be described, that Chuenpee was, in reality, *an island*.¹⁷

On the opposite or western side of the river, which is here about three miles wide, is another smaller promontory, called Tycocktow, with a line of strong batteries close along the shore, faced with granite: This was also subsequently found to be an *island*. The whole of the country which borders the river is

¹⁷ See map.

mountainous and picturesque.

Returning again to the east side, about four to five miles above Chuenpee, we come to the high hill and fortifications of Anunghoy, the most important of the works at the Bogue. Between Chuenpee and Anunghoy lies the beautiful bay called Anson's Bay, about two miles deep; on one side of which it was at one time proposed to found an English town. Anunghoy, like Chuenpee, was discovered to be also an *island*; and that circumstance, as will be afterwards seen, was a source of great anxiety to Keshen, who saw the consequent weakness of the position of Anunghoy, and reported it to the emperor. In fact, our light squadron might have probably gone up the river by the passage at the back of Anunghoy, without passing through the Bogue at all. But these facts were not then known.

The works at Anunghoy consisted of two very strong, heavy batteries, built of excellent granite, and partly of the composition called chunam. The masses of stone were afterwards found to be of immense size, so much so, that it was no easy task to blow the works to pieces, even after they were taken. The two principal batteries were connected together by temporary works of recent construction; and according to the usual Chinese practice, a semicircular wall was carried round the rear of each fort along the side of the hill.

The breadth of the river from Anunghoy to the opposite side is from two to three miles, being somewhat less than it is lower down between Chuenpee and Tycocktow. But in the very middle

of the river in this part are two rocky islands, called North and South Wantung, of moderate elevation, and also a smaller rock, scarcely visible at high water. Hence there are two channels up the river, one on either side of these islands, but that on the east side towards Anunghoy is the one which had always been frequented by foreign ships, and was considered to be the Bocca Tigris, or Bogue.

The passage on the western side of Wantung was not only not frequented by Europeans, but not even known to be navigable, until our preparations were made for the capture of the Bogue forts, when some of our ships passed up on that side to the attack of North Wantung. The true Bogue, or eastern passage, is only about three quarters of a mile wide; the current, or rather the tide, is very rapid, on which account ships generally prefer keeping rather near to the Anunghoy side. Of the two islands called Wantung, the northern is the highest and largest, lying quite opposite Anunghoy, and was very strongly fortified. South Wantung, the smaller island, was not fortified by the Chinese, being not considered by them of sufficient importance to require it. It lies some distance lower down the river, and looking at their relative positions, you would hardly suppose they were within effectual gun-shot distance from each other. Such, however, was the case; and the Chinese forts on North Wantung were shelled from South Wantung by a small battery, constructed by a detachment of our troops in a single night, being covered during their work principally by the Nemesis, which ran close in shore

for that purpose, being herself sheltered by the island.

Further to obstruct the passage up the Bogue, the Chinese had carried an immense chain, or rather a double chain, across it, supported by large rafts from one side to the other, one end of it being secured at Anunghoy, and the other end being fastened into a rock near South Wantung, which was nearly covered at high water. To complete the account of these famous defences, it only remains to mention another fort on the western side of the river, nearly opposite Wantung, which was called Little Tycocktow, and was not of recent construction. By the Chinese themselves, these extensive works were considered impregnable, for they had not yet experienced the tremendous effect of the concentrated fire of line-of-battle-ships.

Tiger Island can scarcely be said to form part of the Bocca Tigris; it lies nearly two miles above Wantung; and, although there was a considerable stone battery on its eastern side, it was not likely to be of any service, and the Chinese wisely abandoned it, and removed the guns. This island, however, is a remarkable feature in the general aspect of the river, being in reality a high rocky mountain, cleft in two at the top, and presenting to view several deep chasms on both sides, yet clothed with verdure in some parts, while it is rudely broken up in others. It is altogether a very peculiar object, although it cannot be said to bear much resemblance to a tiger's head, from which it takes its name.

CHAPTER XIII

The Imperial Commissioner Keshen now wisely resolved to gain as much time as he could by negotiation; and seemed in the first instance to have almost equalled his predecessor Lin, in his desire "to control the foreigners, and to reduce them to submission." His conferences with that functionary, who now remained at Canton as viceroy, were numerous and confidential; but, instead of precipitating the crisis by mad violence, he professed to trust rather to the "employment of *truth* and the *utmost reason*" to attain his ends.

Keshen's cautiousness was at once shewn by the instructions which he issued respecting the nature of the *white flag*, and by his enjoining that for the future the troops were "not rashly to open their artillery, without *first* ascertaining what was the purpose of the approach of any boat bearing such a flag." And, moreover, that "they were not to *provoke* hostilities, by being the first to fire on the foreign ships, nor in their *desire for honours* to endeavour to create trouble." On his side, likewise, Captain Elliot was quite as anxious to avoid a collision as Keshen himself; and thus affairs went on until the close of the year, without any approach whatever to a solution of the difficulties. Keshen exhibited a vast deal of tact and

" – *cunning*, which in fools supplies,

And amply, too, the place of being wise."

Great as our force already was even at that period, it does not at all seem to have intimidated Keshen, who appeared to gain courage as he gained time. Indeed, it could hardly be expected that the ancient barrier of Chinese pride and self-sufficiency would crumble down before a single blow, however strong; and even the chief actor in the scene himself hesitated long to strike, when he knew that it would make an empire tremble.

But the great, the haughty, the mysterious China was at length destined to open her portals to the resistless "barbarian." Among the important personages who contributed indirectly to bring about this wonderful result, perhaps not the least remarkable was the Empress herself, to whom some allusion has already been made. Very little was heard concerning her at the time, in remote parts of the world, and therefore a few additional notices must be interesting. She must, indeed, have been a person of no ordinary character, who could have raised herself, by her talents and her fascinations, to a seat upon the throne of the Emperor of China. Her early history is little recorded, but her influence was secretly known and felt in almost every part of the empire, even before she obtained the short-lived honours of an empress.

It is difficult to imagine how any woman, brought up in the subordinate position which is alone allotted to the sex in China, with the imperfect education which is there attainable, and with all the prejudices of her early life, and the proud assumption

of superiority of the other sex to contend against, could have had imparted to her the peculiar tone of character which she possessed. In her attempts to reform and to improve, she never ceased to be *Chinese*; indeed, she seems to have thought that to *restore* what was fallen to decay was the best kind of reform. She sought the removal of abuse, the purification of public offices, and the improvement of the details of administration throughout the country. Her influence became paramount; and those who could not be gained by her arguments are said to have been led by her fascinations.

The words of the Emperor's public eulogy of the Empress, after her death, will in a measure point out this feature in her character. He declared that "she was overflowing of kindness to all, lovely and winning." She held control over the hearts of those about her, not by dint of authority, but by gentleness and forbearance. "Her intercourse," he added, "lightened for me the burden of government, and the charms she spread around conciliated all hearts. And now I am alone and sad."

In her choice of persons for high employment, the Empress possessed the most valuable of all talents to those who are called upon to exercise their power of selection – that of distinguishing not merely abstract merit, but of discerning those less conspicuous qualities of the mind which constitute *fitness* for office and aptitude for public distinction.

The greatest influence of the Empress seems to have been exercised about the years 1835 and 1836, and it was just at that

period that the question was so keenly debated, at court and elsewhere, whether opium should be permitted, under certain modified regulations, or whether it were possible to put an end to the traffic by force, and to *drive the nation* from its use by fear. This was evidently the commencement of a new era in that country, for whatever might be the result of the debate upon this important question in the Chinese cabinet, the effect of it was to occasion the agitation of the subject throughout the empire.

Agitation in China!

But a spirit of change had now begun to tincture even the minds of true Chinamen, and the amiable Empress herself became affected by, and even in a measure encouraged, that movement. The vice-president of the sacrificial board, by name Heu Naetze, and others, amongst whom was reckoned also Keshen, belonged to the immediate favourites of the Empress, and but for that high protection it is probable that Heu Naetze would hardly have ventured to present his famous memorial in favour of the legalization of the opium-trade.

His chief and most important argument was, not that it would be a good thing in itself, but that it would be perfectly impossible to prevent it by any means the government could adopt; and also that foreign trade generally was of importance to China, from the revenue which it produced, and the employment which it gave to the people. He shewed how totally ineffectual every increase of punishment, even to death itself, had proved, for the prevention of the practice, which, on the contrary, had increased tenfold;

and he then went on to make it evident that "when opium was purchased secretly, it could only be exchanged with silver; but that, if it were permitted to be bought openly, it would be paid for in the productions of the country." And he cleverly adds: "the dread of the laws is not so great among the people as the *love of gain*, which unites them to all manner of crafty devices, so that sometimes the law is rendered wholly ineffective." But he would still prohibit all public officers, scholars, and soldiers, from using it, under pain of instant dismissal from the public service.

It is known that the Empress received this recommendation with particular favour, but the Emperor referred it for the consideration of the crafty old Tang, the Governor of Canton, who was at the very time deriving a large revenue from winking at the clandestine sale of the drug. The answer of Tang and his colleagues was decidedly favourable to the project. They declared that "*the circumstances of the times* rendered a change in the regulations necessary." They openly admitted that the payment of distinct duties would be far less onerous than the payment of *bribes*; that the laws could then be administered, and would be *respected*; and that the precious metals which were now oozing out of the empire would then be retained in it. They even went so far as to say that the *dignity* of the government would by no means be lowered by it; and they farther declared that the prohibition of the luxury made it more eagerly sought for.

Here, then, was clearly another triumph on the Empress's side; and those who were opposed to her principles feared it as

such, and redoubled their efforts to produce her fall. But the recommendation did not even stop at that point; for it went so far as even to encourage the cultivation and preparation of the poppy within the empire, in order to exclude a portion of the foreign article from the market.

One might have supposed that the influences which were now at work to produce a better state of foreign trade, backed by the countenance of the Empress, and supported by the apparent neutrality of the Emperor, would have sufficed to occasion some modification in the existing laws.

Keshen himself, who had what is called a long head, though in good favour with the Empress, and influential in the country, seems to have remained at that time neutral upon the question in agitation. Others, however, shewed a bitter hostility to every change, but bitterest of all to the whole race of foreigners. When they could no longer argue with success against the principles of what might be called the free-trade party, they raked up all the smouldering ashes of deadly hostility to foreigners, because they were *not Chinese*, (however estimable they might otherwise be,) and they appealed to an old saying of the Emperor Kanghe, the grandfather of his present Majesty – namely, "that there is cause for apprehension, lest, in centuries to come, *China may be endangered by collision with the various nations of the West, who come hither from beyond the seas.*" Indeed, it is well known that there prevailed in China a tradition to that effect; and also another, "that China would be conquered by a woman, in time to

come." And so generally were these two predictions or traditions remembered during the war, that the impression came to prevail among many of the people that it would be useless to resist us, because we were a people from the far west, and were ruled by a queen.

The two principal memorials on the opposite side of the question have been pretty generally circulated; one being by Choo Tsun, a member of council and of the Board of Rites, the other by Heu Kew, a censor of the military department. They argued for the *dignity* of the empire, and the danger "of *instability* in maintaining the laws." They called for increased severity of the law itself, not only to *prevent* the exportation of *silver*, but to arrest the *enervation* and destruction of the people, and they openly declared their belief that the purpose of the English was to weaken the people and to ruin the central land; and they further appealed to all the "luminous admonitions" of the emperors and others of olden days against the influence of foreigners. Memorials also came in from many of the provinces, particularly those along the coast, shewing that even the army had become contaminated by opium, and that soldiers sent against the rebels in recent seditions were found to have very little strength left, though their numbers were large. In short, the whole of the memorialists on the *anti-importation* side argued to the effect that increased severity could stop the use of opium, and therefore that it *ought* to be stopped, because it tended to enervate the people, and make them an easy prey to the foreigner, while

the quantity of silver exported enriched the latter in proportion as it impoverished the former. Thus the hatred of opium and detestation of the foreigner became very nearly synonymous.

At length, when the Emperor's beloved son died from the effects of opium in the imperial palace, then the grief of the Emperor, and the conviction of the misery produced by the drug, worked upon his feelings fully as much as upon his judgment. An attempt was made to place the question upon *moral* grounds; and the Emperor affected on a sudden to weep for the misfortunes of the nation, and to lament the depravity of his "dear children;" and his paternal heart, in the exuberance of its benignity, determined to cut off all their heads, if they would not mend their ways. Thus, by degrees, the reformation of morals became the subject of agitation quite as much as the principles of trade had been before. By this time, the influence of the Empress had quite declined. She forgot that in making many friends she had made many influential enemies. Neither her beauty nor her talents could save her, and she fell rapidly from her pinnacle of power. She only lived to share the Emperor's throne for about five or six years; a very short but remarkable reign. She could not survive the loss of her power; and when her opponents so completely recovered theirs, her proud spirit sunk under the weight which pressed upon her.

Nothing could be more touching than the expressions of the Emperor, published in the Pekin Gazette. He calls her a perfect pattern of "filial piety;" and therefore bestows upon her the

posthumous title of the "perfectibility of filial obedience." It should be here remarked, that what they call "filial piety" is the highest moral attribute in the Chinese system of ethics.

The Empress died in the beginning of 1840, and was buried with great pomp; the whole nation was ordered to go into mourning for a month, and the public officers were not to shave their heads for one hundred days, as a mark of their sorrow. Her death left the Emperor Taou-kwang surrounded by troubles and dangers in his old age, with few about him whom he could trust, and none to comfort him in his difficulties. She left two or three young children. But he had six children by his former wife, of whom nearly all, or, it is believed, more than half have died.

The Emperor was born on the 20th September, 1782, and is therefore upwards of sixty-two years old. He ascended the throne in 1820. The troubles and continual disturbances which have marked his reign, the frequent rebellions and disorders which have long been the constant theme of his animadversions in the Peking Gazette, may perhaps be considered less as the result of his own measures than as the marking features of the present era in Chinese history. He ascended the throne when disorders were almost at their height, and when a conspiracy had already broken out in his father's palace. Indeed, he was expressly selected by his father to be his successor, (although not the *eldest*, but the second son,) because he had on a former occasion distinguished himself by his energy and success in crushing a traitorous attempt within the palace.

The Emperor appears to be an amiable but weak man, well intentioned towards his people, sensible of the difficulties of his country, but, at the same time, blinded and misinformed by the favourites about him, and retaining too many early prejudices to be able thoroughly to cope with all the difficulties which have from time to time beset him.

The next most important character who figured at the period which has been already alluded to was Commissioner Lin, of whom so much has been said. The principal features of his character have been already delineated. He is described as having been stout in person, with a vivacious but not unpleasant manner, unless highly excited; with a keen, dark, penetrating eye, which seemed to indicate that he could assume two opposite characters, according as it might suit his interest or his ambition. He had a clear, distinct voice, and is said to have rarely smiled. His countenance indicated a mind habituated to care. In the course of his proceedings at Canton, he seems never to have permitted himself to adopt the character of a "negotiator," but invariably to have assumed that of a "dictator," which was more natural to him. His word was law. He was not dismayed by sudden difficulties, and appears to have been quite sincere in all his wishes to arrest the progress of the evils he complained of, and to reform the morals of the people. With this object, he closed all the gaming-houses at Canton, which were as numerous as the opium-shops, or more so, and were generally maintained in conjunction with the latter; so much do vices court each other's

company.

In reality, Lin feared the foreigners as much as he hated them. But the intercourse he now had with them led him to value their knowledge more highly, and probably he knew full well that knowledge is power. He had portions of English works translated for his own use, such as Thelwall's pamphlet against opium, Murray's geography, (parts,) &c.; and he had in his employ three or four young Chinamen, who knew something of English, and of English habits, having visited the straits' settlements, and one of them the United States.

Lin was by no means wanting in energy to meet the great crisis which he had contributed so much to produce. In addition to the enlisting of troops, the preparation of defences, the casting of guns, building of fire-vessels and gun-boats, &c., he directed that many passages of the river should be blocked up with stones, and others staked across with piles.

In short, Lin was a bold, uncompromising, and specious man. He tried to console the Emperor, by assuring him that he was quite certain that, along the northern coast, sickness and cold would carry off all the barbarian forces, even if the want of food, and the exhaustion of their powder and shot, did not reduce them to extremities; but he never once alluded to any probability of being able to beat off the barbarians in fair fight.

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