



*The Bancroft Library*

University of California • Berkeley

---





Dr. William ...

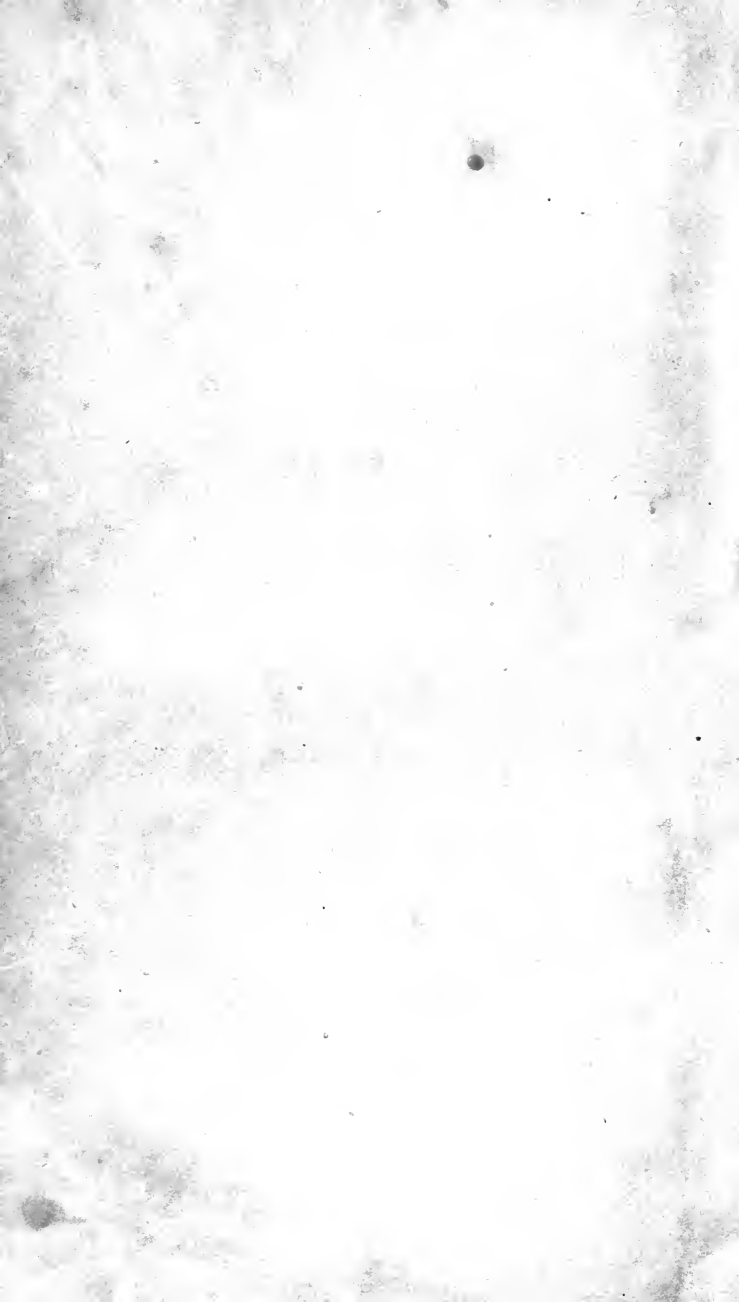
Paint  
112

ABK  
12.50

Field #4645  
Sabin 2/280

James E Bayles

1911













CAPT. JACOB DUNHAM.

# JOURNAL OF VOYAGES:

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF

THE AUTHOR'S BEING TWICE CAPTURED BY THE ENGLISH

AND ONCE BY

**GIBBS THE PIRATE;**

HIS NARROW ESCAPE WHEN

CHASED BY AN ENGLISH WAR SCHOONER;

AS WELL AS HIS BEING

CAST AWAY AND RESIDING WITH INDIANS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

Some account of the Soil, Products, Laws and Customs of Chagres,  
the Musquitto Shore, and St. Blas, at the Isthmus of Darien.

*With Illustrations.*

---

BY CAPTAIN JACOB DUNHAM.

---

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR,

And Sold by Huestis & Cozans, 104 and 106 Nassau-street.

.....  
1850.

---

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty, by JACOB DUNHAM, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern District of New-York.

---

.....  
D. Fanshaw, Printer and Stereotyper,  
35 Ann, corner of Nassau-street.  
.....

# CONTENTS.

	page.
AUTHOR'S APOLOGY, . . . . .	9
EARLY LIFE OF THE AUTHOR, . . . . .	11
CHAPTER I.—Sloop Rover—Capture by the English—Sale and sinking of the Sloop Rover, . . . . .	13
CHAP. II.—Sloop New-York—Second capture by the English— Exchange of Prisoners, . . . . .	30
CHAP. III.—Sloop Biddle—Captain's Mitchell and Lafitte, the Pirates, . . . . .	37
CHAP. IV.—Casting away of the Sloop Biddle near Waa-waa River—with some account of the Indians, . . . . .	52
CHAP. V.—Pearl Key Lagoon, and more of the Indians, . . . . .	70
CHAP. VI.—Runaway Negroes among the Indians—The Sooker- man, . . . . .	77
CHAP. VII.—Visit to Corn Island, . . . . .	89
CHAP. VIII.—Visit to Bluefields—Permit of George Frederick, King of the Musquitto Nation, . . . . .	92
CHAP. IX.—Mode of Taking Turtle—Musquitto Laws—Pro- duce—Customs, &c. . . . .	98
CHAP. X.—Some description of the country and inhabitants of the Musquitto Nation, . . . . .	105
CHAP. XI.—Sloop Governor Tompkins, . . . . .	111
CHAP. XII.—Schooner Price, First Voyage—Leading the dance in Old Providence—A ball at St. Andreas, . . . . .	115
CHAP. XIII.—Schooner Price, Second Voyage—Landing at St Blas, . . . . .	120
CHAP. XIV.—The harbor of Little Cordee—Trading with the Indians, . . . . .	125
CHAP. XV.—Schooner Price, Third Voyage—A fleet of Patriots (or pirates) at Old Providence, . . . . .	140
CHAP. XVI.—Schooner Price, Fourth Voyage—Our Boats fired into at Corn Island. . . . .	151

	page
CHAP. XVII.—Schooner Enterprise, . . . . .	160
CHAP. XVIII.—Schooner Felicity—Republicans and Royalists of Port-au-Prince. . . . .	162
CHAP. XIX.—Schooner Felicity, Second Voyage—The smartest Padre (or priest) in the West Indies; . . . . .	167
CHAP. XX.—Schooner Combine—Captured by the Pirates— Placed in the ring to be shot—Capture of the Aristides by Pirates, . . . . .	170
CHAP. XXI.—Schooner Combine, Second Voyage—Our trade in Horses—The Yellow Fever at Port-au-Prince—Counterfeit Coin—Arbitrary Laws, . . . . .	187
CHAP. XXII.—Schooner Combine, Third Voyage, . . . . .	194
CHAP. XXIII.—Capture of the Piratical Vessels by Lieutenant Commandant Allen, . . . . .	199
CHAP. XXIV.—Schooner Allen—Chased by an English Schoo- ner—Horrible atrocities committed by Pirates on the Spanish Main, . . . . .	205
CHAP. XXV.—Schooner Frances—Trading Voyage to Musquitto Shore, Chagres, Porto Bello, &c.—The Author officiates at a christening, . . . . .	216
CHAP. XXVI.—Voyage to New Orleans—The Hospital—Dire- ful visitation of the Yellow Fever—Disposal of the Dead, . . . . .	226
CHAP. XXVII.—Schooner Horizon—Peak of Teneriffe—Queer Carpenter, . . . . .	236
CHAP. XXVIII.—The Sloop First Consul—Sinking of the Sloop— and return home penniless, . . . . .	240

## AUTHOR'S APOLOGY.

---

*In presenting the following Voyages to the public, I must inform my readers that I have had but a common school education, and am unaccustomed to composition. I can only tell my story in a plain straight forward way, not being able to ornament it with flowery language.*

*My Voyages were all written by myself. I employed competent persons to copy the work from my manuscript, and they corrected the small inaccuracies that had escaped my observation.*

*I thought, that although my book might contain many defects, if composed by myself, that it would still gain more than it lost, by being the production of the very person who had seen and taken part in the scenes he related, and could vouch for the truth of all he had witnessed. It is not given to the public as a specimen of the beautiful in style, but as the story of an old sea captain who had lived in one of the most eventful periods of our country's history; and one who had nearly arrived at his last anchorage.*

*With this brief outline of my life, and this short explanation, I commit my little book, with confidence, to an indulgent public.*

*Jacob Dunham.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS.

---

Captain Jacob Dunham, having applied to the Congress of the United States, for relief, on account of losses sustained by him by piratical robbery, We, the undersigned, do hereby certify that we are well acquainted with the said Jacob Dunham, have known him for many years past, that he is a man of truth and veracity, and that his statements are entitled to full faith and credit:

THOMAS O'HARA CROSWEL,  
Post-Master, Catskill.

ABEL BRUCE, M. D.  
ROBERT DORLON, ESQ.

ORRIN DAY,  
President of Tanner's Bank, Catskill.

HON. MALEBONE WATSON,  
Judge of Supreme Court, New-York.

HON. JOHN ADAMS.

CALEB DAY, ESQ.

J. D. BEERS,  
President of Bank of North America, New-York.

JACOB HAIGHT,  
Treasurer of State of New-York.

HON. ZADOCK PRATT.

T. K. COOKE,  
Member of New-York Assembly.

JAMES POWERS,  
State Senator

CALVIN BALIS,  
Alderman of New-York City.

W. P. HALLETT,  
Clerk of the Supreme Court of State of New-York.

EDWIN CROSWELL,  
State Printer, Albany, New-York.



## EARLY LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

---

On the twenty-seventh day of April, 1779, in the town of Colchester, in the State of Connecticut, I was launched into the world, and entered on the tempestuous voyage of life.

While yet an infant at the breast, FATE snatched me from my mother's arms, viewed me with a scornful eye, and exclaimed, "I doom this babe *a slave to hardships, dangers, and disappointments.*"

The following pages will show how far the prophecy has been fulfilled. My father, Samuel Dunham, was a Warrant Officer in the American Navy during the Revolutionary War, and followed the sea during almost his whole life-time. Whether the occupation of my father before me has had anything to do in shaping my course in life, the author is not wise enough to say, but leaves it to those who make greater pretensions than himself.

In the year 1785, the Author emigrated, along with his father, to where the village of Catskill now stands. The whole village contained but seven houses, and was cut up into cultivated fields and gardens. My father having bought half an acre of ground situated about where the Greene County Hotel now stands, built himself a small house. After living in Catskill about one year, my uncle sent for me to come to Connecticut and live with him, which I did. I returned to Catskill in the Spring of 1793, and then went as an apprentice to the Messrs. Thomas O'H. & Mackay Crosswell, Printers, who then published a small newspaper called *The Catskill Packet*. I lived with the Crosswell's about six years and a half, where I was well treated. Having a great desire to see some of the world, I went to Charleston, South Carolina, where I found em-

ployment in a Printing Office for a few months. During that winter I witnessed a large funeral procession in that city in commemoration of the death of General Washington. In the Spring of 1800, I returned to Catskill, and found some employment in the coasting trade, on the Hudson River. During the summer and the winter following, I made three voyages to Charleston and Savannah, and then returned to Catskill and worked at the Printing business about two years. I then made one voyage to the Island of St. Croix as a seaman. During this time I was married, in Catskill, in August, 1801, to a young woman named Fanny Morgan. I then found employment in the coasting trade in different vessels for one or two years, when I entered the employment of Messrs. T. B. & A. Cooke, as one-fourth owner of a packet sloop which sailed between Catskill and New-York, where we did a good business for many years. Not being content in doing well and making money in a moderate way, and a war breaking out between England and America, I determined to try my luck again on the Ocean; picturing to myself a rapid increase of the little property I had gained by hard and slow earnings.

From the time I left this safe business to embark on the Ocean, my adventures predicted by dame Fate, commenced. Since that time I have been rudely driven by winds and storms, captured by enemies, robbed by pirates, and have made many hair-breadth escapes both by sea and land, until the present time. I have now brought my poor old sheer hulk to anchor in the harbor of Catskill.

Not having much to occupy my mind, I frequently take a survey of my past life, which has been checkered with many frightful scenes.

Being strongly urged by many old friends, for several years past, to publish some account of my unfortunate adventures, I have reluctantly yielded to their request. In so doing, I must crave the indulgence of my readers.

CAPTAIN DUNHAM'S  
NINETEEN VOYAGES.

---

CHAPTER I.

“The sailor ploughs the raging main,  
“In hopes a competence to gain,  
“And when his toil and danger's o'er,  
“Safe anchors on his native shore.”

**Sloop Rover.**

About the middle of May, in the year 1813, having a great desire to engage in some adventure; and hoping that fortune would smile upon my undertakings, I purchased of Messrs. Coddington & Thorp, of New-York, one quarter of an old Sloop called the Rover; for which I paid one hundred and twenty-five dollars. Messrs. Coddington & Thorp, and Captain Silus S. Vail, were owners of the other three-quarters.

The Rover was an old condemned sea vessel, having old thin sails, two deck beams broken, without top-mast, and a large piece of leather two feet square nailed over a rotten plank in her bottom.

As this was during the last war between the United States and England, the port of New-York

and our whole north-eastern coast was closely blockaded by English shipping. It therefore became necessary for our citizens to transport large quantities of flour and other commodities from Baltimore and adjoining towns, to New-York by land; and from thence to be conveyed to the Eastern markets. The expense of transporting flour and other heavy articles by land, caused speculators and traders to seek shipments by water to Eastern ports. Freights of course were high, and but little attention paid by merchants to the crafts they chartered. A number of old vessels were offered for freight, the Rover rating No. 1 among them. The carrying business being well up, and much in that line offering, I embraced a proposal of one dollar per barrel for transporting 500 barrels of flour and 70 barrels of bread from New-York to Providence, Rhode Island.

I sailed from New-York about the 20th of May, intending to run through the most exposed places in the night, watching the movements of the blockading vessels closely, and when I got into a good harbor I intended to remain there until another dark night.

In heavy gales of wind the blockading ships generally put to sea for their own safety; which gave me an opportunity to make my passage unmolested.

I arrived, after a passage of forty-eight hours, at Stonington Connecticut, without discovering any of the vessels of the enemy. I found a number of vessels had taken shelter in that harbor to avoid an

English frigate which was cruising between Block Island and Newport. I remained at Stonington a few days, when a dark night appearing, I again made sail, and arrived at Providence, my port of destination, in safety. We landed our cargo, and Mr. Thorp, one of the owners, who had accompanied me for that purpose, was left to dispose of it.

Two or three days after unloading my vessel, I again sailed for New-York. We anchored at the mouth of Newport harbor for the purpose of awaiting an opportunity of returning when the blockading frigate should stand out to sea. I had to wait but a few days; as soon as I saw she was far enough from the port I made sail, and by keeping near the shore, arrived at Stonington without molestation from the enemy. Here I learned that New London, a port between me and my destination, was closely blockaded by a British fleet consisting of two 74 gun ships and two frigates. There were ten or twelve sail of coasting vessels then lying in the harbor at Stonington, most of which had been East with cargoes, and were waiting for dark nights or other favorable opportunities to pass the blockading squadron. I remained here eight or ten days. During this time the inhabitants of the town were much alarmed, fearing the enemy would send in armed boats to cut out our vessels, and by that means annoy the inhabitants and fire the town.

To show our patriotism and courage, a meeting was called of the officers and crews of all the vessels

in the harbor. We volunteered our services to stand night watches, and do all in our power in case an attack should be made. Our means of defence were scanty; a few fowling guns being the only weapons we had on board our vessels.

Some of the inhabitants finally procured for us an old ship gun, which we loaded with powder, but could not procure balls to fit it. We at length found one which we imagined we could force into the gun. After a long time, with a sledge and crowbar, we succeeded in driving it within six or eight inches of the cartridge.

The captains drew lots for the first watch, which fell upon me. I took charge of the watch until 12 o'clock that night, and was much pleased that we were not annoyed by the enemy, as I concluded that the firing of our own gun would make more havoc among us than all the enemy could bring against us. At the close of my watch I learned that two Sag-harbor vessels were getting under weigh, intending to pass through Plum Gut, which would conduct them some distance from where the enemy lay at anchor. As it was a dark night, and not being myself a good pilot through that passage, I concluded to follow them. The wind being light, they outsailed my vessel until I lost sight of them. About break of day it was so calm that I could not pass the fleet or get back to Stonington. I soon discovered a barge in pursuit of me, but there was no way of escape. The boat had on board a lieutenant, a midshipman,

and twelve armed men. They left a prize master and two men to take charge of my sloop, and then proceeded to capture another small vessel at that time in sight. They soon overhauled her; but as she had nothing of value on board, having only some household furniture, and women and children, they let her pass. Three of the British vessels after firing a number of guns toward the shore proceeded to sea, while my vessel was taken within a small distance of the commodore's ship, which remained at anchor.

And here, as I deem it will not be altogether uninteresting to my readers, I will make a slight digression, in giving a brief description of the personal history of Commodore Hardy; for such was the name of the officer who had command of the fleet which had captured us. Although some Americans are under the impression that nothing good can come from British officers, which idea in many instances has been justified; yet, with regard to Sir Thomas Hardy, it might truly be said, that he was "One of Nature's noblemen;" for such his conduct to myself and crew fully showed him to be. He appeared to be a man about forty-five years of age, about six feet in height, elegantly formed, and possessing a benign expression of countenance, scarcely to be expected from one who had been following, from his youth, a sea-faring life, and had been engaged in some of the most bloody naval battles on record. When a poor boy he was taken on board the Eng-

lish fleet by Lord Nelson, continued with him during his various engagements, and became Nelson's principal fighting commander. At the battle of Trafalgar the admiral died in his arms.

On a signal being made we were ordered on board the commodore's ship. My vessel being old and shabby, I thought it best to keep on my working clothes to show my apparent poverty, which would excite some sympathy, but I had a good suit of clothes in my chest. When I got on board I found I was in his majesty's ship *Ramillies*, Sir T. W. Hardy, commander. I cast my eyes about in as awkward a manner as I could; the officers gathered round to have a little sport with a poor Yankee. They commenced their conversation by asking me if I were ever on board of a seventy-four before; I answered in the negative. The captain of marines then, taking hold of my striped cotton pantaloons, asked me if we made such fine cloth as that in our country. I told him a little, just to cover our nakedness during the war. Soon after a message came for me to go aft to see the commodore. I thought I would show myself very submissive by taking off my hat and putting it under my arm. The first salutation I had from him was, "Put on your hat, sir. Did you know that we were lying here." "Yes, sir," was my reply. He said, "How dare you venture out." I answered that I had been lying at Stonington a number of days, waiting for a dark night to get past him. He then told me he must burn my vessel and send me



to Halifax. I told him if the sentence was irrevocable, I had nothing to offer. I then left him and went forward and sat down on a gun in a pensive manner. He soon accosted me by asking me to go and get some breakfast, saying, "If I keep you I will not starve you to death." I thanked him, but told him I had taken breakfast before I left his prize. I kept my seat on the gun for a long time, until I excited the attention of the sailors, one of whom accosted me by saying, "Captain, don't look so sorrowful, our captain is a damned clever fellow; I guess he will give up your old serving mallet," as he called my sloop. "Yes," said another, "I would willingly give up my share, for it will not be enough to make more than a glass of grog apiece." The officers made themselves merry by passing many jokes with me, supposing they had a green Yankee to sport with. In the afternoon the commodore said, pointing towards my vessel, "That is a fine large sloop of yours; can't you give me fifteen hundred dollars for her; I am going to send two officers on board to prize her." I told him that was three times more than she was worth, and five times more than I was worth; that she was an old condemned vessel; that he could not send her to Halifax or Bermuda. I told him I thought if I could get on shore I could raise one hundred dollars, and perhaps that would be a compensation for the trouble he had in capturing her; that I presumed he would make a target of her to fire at if he retained her. He then left me: about half-an-hour

after he called me into his cabin and said that he wanted to raise a little money to distribute among his crew; that he had not enough to allow one dollar apiece to them. Said he, "I want to use your old sloop for about three days. If you think you can raise one hundred dollars by going on shore, you can take your boat and go; and if you return in three days with the money, you shall have your sloop restored to you."

My two men immediately hauled the boat alongside ready for embarking. I bid the commodore good-by, and was going over the ship's side, when he called me back, saying, "I must parole you before you go!" "Just as you please," said I. "He said he was only doing me a favor, for then my own countrymen could neither draft nor impress me after I landed." I then took my boat and proceeded to Stonington, and arrived there that evening. I found most of the vessels that I left there before my departure. The captains assembled around me, eager to learn the news. I related my story and the bargain I had made with the commodore. Some thought I had made a good bargain, while others thought me foolish; saying, that if I returned on board he would keep my hundred dollars and send me to Halifax as a prisoner. The next day I negotiated with a merchant of that place for a loan of eighty dollars, by giving a draft on my friend in New-York for eighty-six dollars, and pledging my watch, quadrant, charts, &c. and a note I held against a merchant in New-York of one hun-

dred dollars, as a security for the payment of the draft. This, with thirty dollars in bills, which I had in my pocket, was more than sufficient to ransom my vessel.

I returned to the Ramillies that afternoon. The boatswain, a grave looking old gentleman, very hospitably took me by the hand and asked me to go and live with him. He conducted me down two or three pair of stairs into his own room, which I found well furnished, but had no other light than a lamp, as his room was below the water. He told one of his boys to make a clean cot for me to sleep in, and to wait on me if I wanted anything. He treated me with some old rum he said he had kept on board for three or four years. He lamented much that England and America were at war with each other; that he never could realize us as prisoners, because we both spoke the same language and sprung from one nation.

The next morning I rose early, put on my best suit of clothes and went on deck. I saw the first lieutenant on the starboard side of the deck with his hands in his breeches pockets, walking very gracefully to and fro. To amuse myself I put my hands in my pockets, and commenced walking the opposite side of the deck in the same manner. He immediately stopped and looked at me with some surprise, exclaiming, "Is that you? Damn it, you have better clothes than I have. When we captured and brought you on board you had on an old short jacket

and cotton trowsers, and looked so pitiful that most of the crew offered to give up their share of your old shallop if the commodore would let you go. But I give you credit for it. You have Yankeed us better than any one we have taken yet." I looked about to see my old vessel which I left at anchor about half a mile from the ship, but she was missing. He asked me if I was looking for my old sloop. I told him I was. He said that I would never see her again. I told him I was not alarmed about it, for I had the commodore's word for it. He said he would be damned if I ever got her again. I told him the commodore had promised me to give her up in three days, and if he did not keep his word I would take my boat, land at New London, and get a warrant for him. He was pleased with the joke and soon after called his brother officers around him, who took me into a room and treated me with wine, segars, &c. They were very polite to me during my stay on board.

New London appeared from the deck of the ship to be four or five miles distant. Fishing boats came every day from the town and fished within a mile, without interruption. On their return they were often hailed from the ship to come on board, and the officers and crew purchased what fish they wanted, and paid a liberal price. I could see from the deck, with the spy glass, colors flying, and troops marching and re-marching in the city of New London. Above the city were the frigates United States and

Macedonia, and the sloop-of-war *Wasp*, at anchor. During my stay of four or five days on board, the commodore would every afternoon send for me to come into his cabin, for the purpose of having some humorous conversation, which caused the time to pass very agreeably. The remainder of my time was passed among the officers, some of whom had relatives living in the city of New-York, with whom I had formerly traded. We became familiar, and they insisted on taking my name and number of my boarding house, saying, that when they took the city of New-York they would come and take a bottle of wine with me. I told them if ever they saw me in the city of New-York after they had captured it, it would be without a head.

The day before my departure from the ship, finding the commodore in good humor, I told him that I was a poor man and had a large family to support with my old sloop, that flour was worth only seven dollars per barrel in New-York, and was worth fourteen dollars in Boston, and that it would do him no harm to give me a passport to carry a cargo to Boston or neighboring ports. He paused for awhile, and then with a smile said, "You look like a pretty clever fellow, and if you go to New-York and take in a cargo, and come back here before I leave this station, which will be in about three weeks, I will then give you a passport. But if you attempt to run by me in the night, I shall make a

prize of you." The next day my old sloop returned to the Ramillies with a quantity of beef on board. I made some complaint to the first lieutenant that the sailors had eaten up all my provisions and lost my lead-line, and hand-saw, &c. He remunerated me by giving me five times the value of what I had lost. I paid the commodore the ransom money, received their best wishes for a prosperous voyage, and departed.

On my arrival in New-York I was much interrogated to know why I had not obtained a license from Commodore Hardy; to which I gave evasive answers. Congress having about this time passed some stringent laws requiring our vessels of war to overhaul and search all vessels bound to, or coming from an enemy's ship, I thought best to keep my own secrets. An acquaintance of mine called on me and asked me if I thought it safe to take a cargo to Boston or some of the Eastern ports. I told him if I were able to purchase one, I would try it. He told me to call on him in a short time, as he thought he could procure a freight for me. He soon obtained five hundred barrels of flour, and seventy barrels of bread, at one dollar per barrel for freightage, and three per cent commission for selling. I was to remit the proceeds by mail, or pay it to their correspondents in Boston.

About the 20th of June I sailed from New-York and arrived within about five miles of the Ramillies, where I anchored. At daylight I found a barge





Blowing up of the old Schooner near the Ramalies.



coming towards us. My seamen were frightened, and attempted to make their escape to the shore, a distance of two miles; by threats and persuasion I prevented them. Soon after the barge came alongside. The commanding officer asked me what cargo I had on board, and sundry other questions. He then said, "You must be crazy. It was only last week we had you prisoner, when we pitied you so much that we volunteered to give up our shares in your old sloop if the commodore would let you go." I told him I thought the commodore would let me pass. He replied, "You need not expect any favor from him, as he has sworn vengeance against all Americans. Yesterday morning we discovered a schooner lying at anchor near where you now are. I was ordered to go and capture her. I proceeded towards her, and saw the crew take her boat and pull for the shore; when I boarded her I found no person on board. In the cabin I found a manifest of her cargo, and in the list, some naval stores which we wanted for the ship's use. We got the schooner under weigh, beat her up within half a mile of the ship and came to anchor. Mr. Collingwood, our second lieutenant, whom you well know, was sent to relieve me, and I went to report to the commodore. The hatches were taken off and the tackle hooked on to a barrel of naval stores, when the schooner blew up. There were fourteen men on board, and all were killed except three seamen who were furling the fore-topsail. Those three were thrown some twenty rods, when

the fore-mast was blown out of her. You cannot expect any favors of the commodore." Before leaving New-York I learned that some persons who had been captured by the commodore, ascertained, while on board, that he was in want of naval stores; as soon as the news got abroad, some merchants purchased by subscription an old schooner, and placed thirty casks of powder in her hold. Some machinery was attached to the powder by a string, which was also fastened to a barrel of naval stores, and when it was raised had caused the explosion, as related by the lieutenant.

My sloop was soon brought and anchored within half a mile of the ship. I was taken on board the ship and conducted to the commodore, who spoke to me in a pleasant manner. "Well, sir," said he, "I see you have arrived here again. What does your cargo consist of? Where are you bound?" I told him my cargo was flour, and that I was bound to Boston and some of the neighboring ports. He gave me a passport to protect me from capture by the English ships, and told me I could proceed on my voyage. I then steered for Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where I sold some of my flour at sixteen dollars per barrel. Finding the market dull, I proceeded to Newburyport, where I found an abundant supply. From thence I proceeded to Boston, where I sold the remainder of my flour at auction, at fourteen dollars per barrel.

After my flour was disposed of I purchased a

cargo of boards to carry to Providence, Rhode Island. I loaded the sloop, intending to be ready to sail in the morning, but the tide receding during the night, the Rover was left aground at the Long Wharf. When I awoke in the morning I found my vessel had fallen over on her side, and had five feet of water in her hold. I procured a caulker, who, with myself and crew, went into the mud and water and commenced stopping the leaks, while the water was running out from her bottom from almost every seam. We caulked the largest with table knives, wooden wedges, &c. We then took four pounds of candles and a quantity of wood ashes and made a kind of putty, with which we stopped the remainder. In the mean time my two seamen were arrested for stealing and sent to jail. I hired a number of men and bailed and pumped out the water. I then shipped a new crew and proceeded to Providence. On my arrival there I was cordially greeted by the inhabitants, and disposed of my cargo very advantageously. In consequence of my good fortune a number of Quaker, and other persons, who were strangers to me, urged me to take charge of a good brig; supposing that I could protect their property. I declined taking another vessel, as my passport would not protect me with any other than the one I had. I, however, did not state to them the reason.

The rage for shipping in the Rover was so great that I could get about five times more for freightage than I could in time of peace. I took on

board 31 pipes of brandy, 20 hogsheads of sugar, and 100 ceroons of tallow, and sailed for New-York. When I arrived at Hell Gate and was attempting to pass it, the wind being light, the sloop drifted upon the rock called the Hog's-back, and the tide falling, her bottom was left half out of water. At about 11 o'clock at night I made out to remove her off from the rocks, having four feet of water in her hold. She drifted back out of the Gate, when I succeeded in hauling her on shore and made her fast to the rocks. As it was dark and rainy, we could not tell at the time where we were. On groping my way into the cabin I found the water six inches deep on the cabin floor. I then lay down with clothes wet through to my skin. At daylight I found the Rover, the tide having left her, some rods high and dry upon the rocks, and the water running from most of her seams. I called all hands and went to caulking with table knives, &c. We then applied a few pounds of putty and ashes to the seams. At high water she again floated. After hiring four negroes to go with us to New-York to assist in pumping and bailing, we proceeded on our course.

When we got to the city we hauled her into Coenties Slip, where the bottom is soft and muddy. The mud having filled up her seams in a few hours, she ceased leaking, and passed for a tight craft. I notified my consignees of our arrival and then landed the cargo. Five hogsheads of sugar were damaged in consequence of the leaking of my vessel. The

consignees paid me for all the freight, and threw the loss of the damaged sugar upon the underwriters in Providence, who insured a considerable amount in the cargo.

As I had now been some time absent from my family, who resided in Catskill, I concluded to make them a visit. I agreed with my partners in the sloop to sell her at auction during my absence. The Rover was visited by multitudes of people, who pronounced her the most lucky vessel in the harbor. Many of them, I suppose, thought her to be a phantom ship. For myself, I felt well satisfied, as I had over two hundred dollars per month during the three months I sailed her, on a capital of one hundred and twenty-five dollars.

The fame of the Rover was so great that she sold for \$480. The purchaser took her up the Sound to Long Island, and laid her on shore at high water. He then loaded her with wood by driving alongside at low water. But when the tide rose he found her sides broken in and her hold filled with water. My hand trembles while I write of the untimely end of the charming sloop Rover.

## CHAPTER II.

**Sloop New-York.**

About the first of November, 1813, having added a little to my small capital by my late adventure in the Rover, and feeling eager to add more, again trusting to the smiles of fickle fortune, I purchased a small sloop called the New-York, of 28 tons burden. Soon after I sold one-fourth of her to Messrs. T. B. & A. Cook, merchants in Catskill, and one-half of her to two merchants in the city of New-York. They considered it a kind of lottery adventure. One of the new owners in New-York had correspondents in Norfolk, Virginia, who informed us of the high prices of Northern produce in that city, and the situation of the English squadron in Lynhaven Bay, and advised us to procure a small vessel of light draught of water, and that by sailing in over a shoal called the Horse-shoe, in a dark night, we might avoid coming in contact with the enemy's fleet.

The American coast was closely blockaded by the English vessels, but heavy gales of wind frequently drove them off the coast for a short time, which offered some chance of making passages by keeping near the land.

The high prices of Northern produce in Southern markets held out great inducements to shippers to.

Engage in exporting it. Our correspondents at Norfolk, stated potatoes to be worth one dollar and fifty cents per bushel; onions, sixteen dollars per hundred ropes; salt, two dollars and fifty cents per bushel, and cheese twenty-five dollars per cwt.

We loaded the sloop with four hundred bushels potatoes, two hundred bushels salt, three thousand four hundred and fifty ropes onions, and eight thousand six hundred pounds of cheese; all shipped on the joint account of the owners.

I was to purchase and sell the cargo, and when I arrived at Norfolk was to buy three or four old brigs or schooners, load them with coal, and when a favorable opportunity occurred by the enemy being driven to sea by the wind, send them to New-York. Vessels could be purchased in Norfolk at that time for one-third of their real value in time of peace; and the price of coal in New-York was three or four times as much as in Norfolk.

My wages, as master, was one hundred dollars per month, and I drew one-fourth of the profits of the whole concern.

On the 14th of November I sailed from New-York and proceeded to Sandy Hook, where I discovered an English frigate close in with the land, in chase of an American schooner, which she compelled to run ashore near Shrewsbury. I sailed into Mosquitto Cove, and took shelter among some thirty American gun-boats, the crews of which went as volunteers to protect the wreck of the schooner from being

plundered by the English frigate, which they accomplished.

After tarrying two days at Mosquitto Cove, we weighed anchor and proceeded to sea, keeping as near the land as we could without being in danger of running aground, until we were some distance south of Cape Henlopen, when a violent gale of south-east wind commenced, and with our utmost exertions we succeeded in running into the bay.

Here I ascertained that my pilot, whom I had taken much pains to obtain, and who at the time I employed him had informed me he was well acquainted with that coast, had deceived me; he now for the first time informed me that he knew nothing of the different shoals and inlets on the Southern coast. I had now no alternative but to run by chance and keep a sharp look out for breakers. My little sloop was literally buried under water. The gale kept increasing until near night, when she struck upon a shoal. She thumped terribly, and almost every sea was breaking entirely over us when a seaman exclaimed, "She is bilged, a plank has come up from her bottom." On examination we found it was the shoe of her keel. We tried the pump and found we could keep her free of water by pretty hard labor. Soon after, she thumped over the shoal into nine feet water, where she did not strike so often, and remained there until dawn. At daylight we cast out the anchors and succeeded in getting her into three or four fathoms water.



We then commenced repairing damages in the best manner we could. Her false keel had been broken and had swung across her main keel, which we could not repair. We then made sail for Chesapeake Bay and arrived that day about sun-set, without any material mishap.

Soon after, a light easterly wind sprung up, and we made sail for Norfolk. After entering the bay the wind slackened. About 11 o'clock in the evening it became a dead calm, with a thick fog: a strong tide set in, which prevented my going out to sea again. Soon after midnight we heard the cry, "Past 2 o'clock, and all's well," which I afterwards ascertained proceeded from His Britanic Majesty's ship Dragon, 74 guns, commanded by Commodore Barry, lying at anchor in the bay.

We continued drifting into the bay until about sunrise, when a light breeze sprung up and dispersed the fog, and we found ourselves drifting directly towards an English 20 gun brig called the Sophia, and the Acton of 16 guns, both lying at anchor within a mile of us. We were soon boarded from the Sophia, and we and our baggage taken on board of her. The brigs then got under weigh and proceeded up the bay, taking my sloop in tow, and anchored at the mouth of the river Severn.

During the next night they fitted out an expedition of four or five boats, and sent them up the river to cut out two or three of our vessels which were lying in the harbor, but they soon returned without

accomplishing their design, having only obtained a quantity of plunder. They told me the inhabitants gave them a warm reception, by firing from behind trees and fences, and caused them to abandon the vessels. They weighed anchor the next morning, and after cruising about the bay, again took their station near Watt's Island. Here they made their rendezvous for some time; the officers occasionally going on shore, some days cruising about, and returning to the usual anchorage at night. They procured an abundance of cattle, sheep and poultry from the Island, and in about nine or ten days captured eight old schooners loaded with flour, from the Rappahannock, and bound to the Eastern markets. They sailed from there and anchored in Lynn Haven Bay, where we were sent on board the commodore's ship Dragon. I found twelve American captains prisoners on board the commodore's ship, who had been captured by the Squadron. The prizes which they had taken were small old vessels, some of which they stripped of their rigging and sails and set on fire; some parted their cables in a gale of wind and drifted to sea, my vessel among them. But my sloop, the New-York, and one or two others were afterwards towed back by the frigate and sent to Bermuda.

The American captains were quartered with the petty officers, such as midshipmen, captain's clerks, &c. and were treated with gin, segars, &c. and passed their time very jovially in telling stories, bragging

of our naval engagements, &c. I must here tell a story related to me by one of the officers of the Dragon.

He said the Americans ought to be damned if they did not make an admiral of one Captain Turner, who commanded a Baltimore schooner. He said that while they were blockading the coast of France they captured him and his schooner; they put a prize-master and crew on board, and the crew of the schooner were put on board the Squadron, except Captain Turner and the cook, who remained on the schooner, which was ordered to sail for England. The next day Turner succeeded in getting the prize-master and crew drunk, killed the prize-master and part of the crew, and confined the remainder. He then returned to France with his vessel, shipped a new crew, and put to sea again. One morning they discovered from the Squadron, a schooner in company with two frigates, being between the schooner and the land. The Dragon steered directly for the schooner, while the frigates steered in different directions, to prevent the schooner from going back again into port. The Dragon by setting all her light sails was fast coming up with her, and commenced firing her bow guns, to which the schooner paid no attention. They soon came within musket-shot and fired a number of volleys which riddled the schooner's sails. The captain of the Dragon then gave orders to cease firing, as he considered it cold-blooded murder. On coming within a few rods of the schooner

they saw but one man on board, and standing at the wheel. When within a short distance he suddenly put down her helm, which brought her broad side across the ship's bow, intending that the ship should run over her. But the ship's helm was immediately put up, which caused her to strike the schooner near the bow and brought her alongside of the ship. They then hailed, "What schooner is that?" To which the man at the helm replied, "The Prize, Captain Turner, the very man you are looking for." On boarding the schooner, they found the crew all below, except the captain, who said he did not wish to expose his crew to their fire. He said the excitement was great on board the ship: that all the officers signed a petition to mitigate Turner's punishment.

While we were lying in Lynn Haven Bay, the Dragon had captured a small vessel, put on board of her a cannonade or short nine-pounder, a quantity of small arms, and called her the "Snap Dragon." They sent her out in pursuit of plunder and slaves, about one hundred and fifty of whom were captured as runaways from their masters. But on one of the expeditions of the Snap Dragon, she was captured by the Americans, having thirty men on board, and the prisoners sent to Baltimore. Soon after an exchange was agreed upon by which the prisoners of the Snap Dragon were exchanged for the Americans on board the ship. When the crew of the Snap Dragon were brought on board the ship we were all discharged, which caused no little rejoicing among us.

We then returned to Baltimore, took leave of each other and made our way to our respective homes.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### **Sloop Biddle.**

Soon after my unfortunate adventure in the New-York, I took command of a schooner called the *Caty Ann*, and made a voyage to Savannah and back to New-York, without capture. Although Sir James Yeo, in the South Hampton frigate, was closely blockading Savannah at the time. I made a second attempt to proceed to the same port. After sailidg a few miles south of Sandy Hook light-house we were chased back by an English frigate, and the schooner narrowly escaped being captured. The whole coast was so closely blockaded that I abandoned going to sea again until after peace was proclaimed.

About the first of May, 1813, I took charge of the brig *Cyrus*, of New-York, and made one voyage to Georgetown, South Carolina, and back, and then made another to Bermuda and Turk's Island.

Ever ready to sacrifice my personal comfort for the prospect of increasing the means of gaining an honest living—being in the prime of life and enjoying good health, and that huge monster, Fear, seldom

throwing his dark shadow across my path—I engaged again to open a trade with the Indians on the Musquito Shore, on the borders of South America, now called New Grenada, or Central America. This country formerly belonged to the government of Spain, which still tried to exercise authority over it, although rebellions had broken out both in the North and South of it; and, the then called government of Columbia, under General Bolivar, aided by a number of Americans and others, with vessels commissioned as privateers, and land forces, made a strong resistance to the Spanish government. They fought many desperate battles with the royalists, under what was then called the Patriot, or Columbian flag. Carthagena, their largest sea-port, was taken and re-taken three several times, and every man in it put to death.

The king of the Musquito Indians claims the sea-coast of that country from the False Cape, lat.  $15^{\circ} 14'$  N. to Port Boro Toro, lat.  $9^{\circ} 29'$  N. The government of Old Spain likewise claimed it, but never had been able to dispossess the Indians. The sea-board of this country is very level, interspersed with lakes, rivers and creeks. From May until November the country is visited with heavy showers of rain. In many places I have from time to time walked in water some inches deep to go from one house to another. The Indian towns are mostly built some distance up the rivers or creeks, to secure them from any attacks from the sea-board. They have no

roads inland, their whole travel being in canoes, by which means they can visit the different tribes, hauling them across narrow necks of land that separate one lake or river from another.

The Spanish government, under an old blockade-decree had declared that any person found trading with these Indians, if captured, should lose his cargo by confiscation, and be sent to the mines for life. The government of Spain likewise claimed three small islands near the Musquito Shore, viz: Old Providence, lying in lat.  $13^{\circ} 27'$  N. long.  $80^{\circ} 39'$  W. This island I found inhabited by about thirty families of free people of different nations and colors, and from five to thirty slaves to every free person in the island. St. Andreas, lying in lat.  $12^{\circ} 33'$  N. long.  $81^{\circ}$  W. It contains about seventy-five families of free people, and about eight hundred slaves; it was lately the residence of a Spanish Governor named Gonzales. This place had a small fort, garrisoned with about thirty soldiers. I shall hereafter give the reader a further description of the island, related to me by Captain Mitchell, commonly called Mitchell the Pirate.\* Great Corn Island lays in lat.  $12^{\circ} 19'$

\* The only account I have ever read of Mitchell is, that he was a partner with Lafitte, the Pirate, when they took possession of Baratara, where they carried their prizes. They kept possession of the place for some considerable time, bidding defiance to the authorities on that coast. Governor Claibourne, of Louisiana, afterwards issued a proclamation, offering these pirates a free pardon on condition that they would join the army then under command of General Jackson, for the defence of New Orleans.

N. long.  $82^{\circ} 11'$  W. about forty miles from the main land. Little Corn Island, lying about ten miles from the great one, is inhabited, and produces large quantities of cocoa nuts and wild fruits.

The staple produce of the above named island is cotton. The soil is fertile and produces plantains, yams, sweet potatoes, and Tropical fruits in abundance. The inhabitants raise plenty of hogs and poultry, which they fatten on cocoa nuts, the oil from which, while fresh, is equal to lard for cooking fish, &c. and after it becomes rancid burns well in lamps.

About the first of January, 1816, I made a contract with the Messrs. Cotheal & Hoff and Mr. A. S. Hallett, merchants of New-York, to take charge of a small sloop called the Biddle, of thirty-two tons burthen. I was to proceed to Musquito Shore, land at the island of Old Providence, (if I saw no suspicious looking vessels in the harbor;) and open a trade with the Indians for the purchase of tortoise shell, which was very valuable at this time; these Indians furnish large quantities of that article. I likewise had orders to exchange my goods for hides, deer-skins, cochineal, gum elastic or India rubber, gum copal, cotton, fustick, sarsaparilla, &c.

They accepted of the Governor's terms, repaired to that place with all their men, and put themselves under the command of the General, who placed them in the hottest part of the battle, where they fought in the most gallant manner. Lafitte and Mitchell both held commissions under the government of the Republic of Columbia at this time.



I took on board an assorted cargo, calculated for a barter trade. As I was totally unacquainted with the trade, this voyage was considered an experimental trip. On my arrival the inhabitants informed me that they had not seen the American flag flying there for the last fourteen years.

I could not procure any correct charts of that coast. I found many shoals that never had made their appearance on any chart, so little had these seas been surveyed. I suppose young mariners have less difficulty in that respect now, as Queen Victoria has become god-mother to the young king of Musquito Shore, and taken him under her parental care, to assist him in robbing his neighbors' territories.

I will here give the reader a short description of the country, the undertaking, and some account of the disasters which befell me in the prosecution of the voyage. Having loaded my little sloop, (about the size of a clam boat,) I soon shipped a crew, which consisted of a North River captain, who had never been out of the sight of land, to act as my mate; and two old broken-down sailors, one acting as seaman and the other as cook. We sailed about the first of February, with a fair wind, and made our passage in twenty-two days to the Island of Old Providence, where we hoisted our flag for a pilot. I soon discovered a fishing canoe, having one white man and three or four negroes on board, who volunteered to pilot us into the harbor. I inquired of the white man, whose name was John Taylor, one of

the largest planters in the island, for a Mr. Hoy, to whom I had a letter of introduction. Mr. Taylor replied that Mr. Hoy was dead, that he was his father-in-law. He took the letter, promised me friendly assistance, and piloted my vessel into the harbor. The inhabitants soon came on board and commenced a brisk trade with me. Previous to leaving New-York, I was advised not to enter the harbor of Old Providence if I saw any vessel looking like a privateer or man-of-war in sight of the place. In the afternoon I kept a good look out with my spy-glass, until near sun-set, when I discovered a schooner beating up under the lee of the island. I immediately applied to my new friend, Taylor, to pilot me out of the harbor, promising him to return again in a few days, which he utterly refused. He told me that the vessel in sight was a privateer belonging to Captain Mitchell, who commanded her—that Captain M. kept his (Taylor's) daughter as a wife, and that Mitchell was a clever fellow and would not molest me. As the channel of the harbor was narrow and difficult to pass through, I decided to remain at anchor rather than run the risk of getting the vessel on shore, considering it was best to keep quiet and trust to fortune. I felt somewhat agitated as the privateer approached the land, it being a dark night.

About 12 o'clock she anchored a short distance from us, when I was hailed from her, asking, "What sloop is that, and from whence come you?" I answered, "Sloop Biddle, from New-York." In a

few moments a boat came alongside with the captain and eight men, all armed. I showed the captain my papers, and assured him my cargo was *bona fide* American property. He answered me, saying, "We shall see more about that to-morrow morning." He then left me and returned to his own vessel. Soon after I heard the report of a large cannon from the privateer, which was mounted on a circle, filled with chain and grape-shot, and pointed towards the shore, where it cut a decent road through the small trees. The next morning Captain Mitchell told me the gun was loaded full to the muzzle, and that when he loaded it he intended to fire into my vessel without hailing her, supposing she was Spanish, to whom he showed no quarter. On a second reflection he thought it best to hail the sloop before he fired. He said, "Had I fired into you, I should have cut your vessel all in pieces." He discharged the gun toward the shore as a signal to send a horse to convey him to Mr. John Taylor's, whom he called his father-in-law, as he kept his daughter Sarah as a wife.

Mitchell appeared to have full control over the island, and no one dare question his authority. He had made this place his rendezvous for some time past, bought all the provisions they could spare, both from masters and slaves, and paid them liberally, having plenty of money on board, and, like most seamen, was lavish in its expenditure. He had lately escaped from Carthage, and brought a few half-starved passengers from that city. In running past

one of their forts, a cannon ball had struck the schooner's fore-mast and cut it half off.

One of the passengers informed me that Carthage was so closely besieged by the royalists at that time, that cowhides were sold at twelve dollars apiece, for food, and that he was obliged to pay three dollars for a pilot-biscuit, to prevent starvation. Some time after, I learned that the city was taken and all the inhabitants put to death.

The next morning after my arrival I was visited by Captain Mitchell, John Taylor, and most of the inhabitants of the island, who were much pleased to see an American vessel in the harbor, saying it was the only one that they had seen there in many years past. I was invited on shore to dine at Mr. Taylor's, in company with Captain Mitchell, where a good dinner was provided for us, consisting of roast pig, poultry, &c. My plate was plentifully supplied by Captain Mitchell. On looking over the table I did not discover any bread. Soon after a plate of roasted plantains was set before me. I took one, not knowing how to use it, this being the first I had ever seen of this kind of food. I soon found it to be the common bread of the country. We were politely waited upon, having a negro boy, from ten to fourteen years old, without one rag of clothing about him, standing behind the chair of each person at table, with a bush in his hand to keep the flies from annoying the company. The following day I was invited to dine on board Captain Mitchell's vessel.

His boat was sent for me at the proper hour, and I was politely received on board and soon after conducted to the table, which was elegantly furnished with silver platters, plates, knives, forks, spoons, pitchers, tumblers, &c. and with the exception of knife-blades, every other article on the table was pure silver. He showed me many valuable diamonds, and large quantities of old gold and silver; and the least valuable article I saw on board his vessel was the schooner's ballast, which consisted of brass cannon.

I opened a good trade with the inhabitants, selling goods at retail, from one to three hundred per cent profit. In ten days I sold over eighteen hundred dollars' worth; about one-half was received in money, and the remainder in cotton. I took part of the cotton on board, and the balance was to be paid on my return to that port.

Captain Mitchell visited me daily, and told me some of his adventures. He said that a few months previous he had captured a small trading schooner, armed her for a privateer, and appointed one Captain Rose to the command of her, who was then on a cruise. A short time before, Rose had been with him in Old Providence. "While laying here," said he, "I made up my mind to sail for New-York, and there sell my vessel and cargo and retire to private life, thinking my means would support me. One morning, while contemplating my future enjoyments when I got well settled in New-York, I thought it would

much disturb my mind to think that old Gonzales should boast that he had frightened Mitchell, who dared not attack him. He had sent me many saucy messages, by trading vessels, saying, I dare not come to St. Andreas, to annoy him, as I had the inhabitants of Providence, who were afraid to resist me. These reflections so affected my mind that I immediately ordered my boat manned and went on board of Rose's vessel. I told Rose that we would never leave these seas until we had made an attack on St. Andreas, and that he must prepare himself to join me on the morrow. The next day we made the necessary preparation and sailed for that island, a distance of about sixty miles, where we arrived early in the evening, ran into the harbor and came to anchor. All hands on board, being only forty-six, including officers and seamen, had volunteered to make an attack on the island. We all landed, about 11 o'clock at night, except one man in each vessel. Being well acquainted with the local situation of the island, I proceeded to the plantation of Mrs. Lever, and captured her negro-driver, whose name was Frank, and told him to conduct me secretly to his young master William, if he did not I would kill him instantly. Frank soon led me to William's house, where we found him in bed. We seized him without making any alarm, and told him that death was his portion if he did not go with us without making any noise and strictly obey my orders. I had often heard of the boastings this young Lever had made of

what he would do if he could catch Mitchell, and thought the present a good opportunity to retaliate upon him. I then told him he must conduct me to the house of Governor Gonzales without making any alarm, call the governor from his bed and tell him that Captain Mitchell was near the island with two privateers; that you imagine the island in great danger, and think it necessary to prepare for immediate defence.

“We marched directly to the house, where we found the governor in bed. I kept my men still, not allowing a loud word to be spoken. Lever obeyed my orders punctually, calling the old man out of bed by telling him his alarming tale. As soon as the old man opened the door I took hold of him and conveyed him on board of my vessel. We landed a six-pound brass cannon during the night, unroofed the governor's house, and mounted the gun on the second floor of the building. I sent a party to the fort, who put to death a few soldiers they found sleeping there. A number having taken lodgings with their families prevented their sharing the same fate.

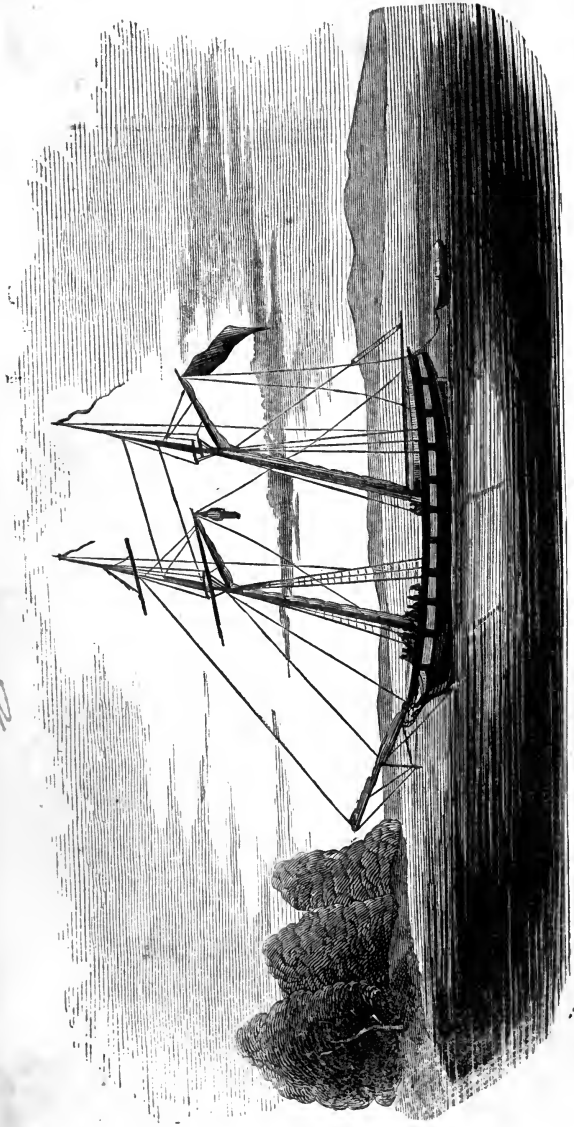
“I took possession of the governor's house for my head quarters, where I issued a proclamation, addressed to the inhabitants, inviting them to surrender their arms, and by complying with the request, all private property should be respected. About ten o'clock the next morning I discovered a collection of about sixty men with two nine-pound carriage guns, on their way to my head quarters. Immediately

beating up for volunteers, sixteen men agreed to follow me. On marching towards the enemy they abandoned their field-pieces and dispersed in great haste. We dismounted the guns and spiked them, burnt the carriages, and returned to our head quarters unmolested. Three days after, the inhabitants accepted of the proposed terms, and all opposition to my command ceased. I took the governor's negroes, money, plate, &c. and repaired on board, where I remained some days, treating the old fellow politely at my table, feeding him on the best the island produced, furnishing him with wine at his dinner, and plenty of Spanish segars. In a few days he appeared cheerful, composed, and conversed with me in a familiar manner. On the tenth day after his capture I gave him a good dinner, took a glass of wine with him, and told him I was going to hang him that afternoon. He laughed, supposing it a joke, and that I had no intention of harming him. He was sitting in an armed-chair near the cabin door, on deck, smoking a segar, when I ordered one of the seamen to reave a yard-rope from the fore-yard, bring the end aft and put it round his neck. He was soon dragged from the chair to the fore-yard-arm."

After Captain Mitchell had related his story, I asked him what he did with his body; he replied, "I let him hang about an hour, and then cut the rope and let the old devil go adrift." I said he should have spared his life, he being an old man who could







Captain Mitchell hanging Governor Gonzales.

never do him much harm. He replied, "I have served him the same as they will serve me when they catch me."

Captain Mitchell told me he was now bound to New-York, which he intended to make his permanent residence, but he must go by the way of New Orleans, as he had fourteen negro slaves he wanted to sell there. I told him the laws of the United States strictly forbid the carrying of slaves into that country; if he was caught in the act his vessel and cargo would be forfeited. He said he was well acquainted with one Sisson, a New Orleans pilot, who would smuggle them on shore for him. I cautioned him against the attempt, by saying, "Captain Mitchell, be careful that those negroes do not sell you before you do them." He has often, since the loss of his vessel and cargo, repeated to me the caution I then gave him. He made a contract with me to return to Providence, after I had been to Musquito Shore and disposed of my cargo, and take Miss Sarah Taylor (whom he called his wife) and her servant to New-York, agreeing to pay me three hundred and thirty dollars for their passages; saying he intended to proceed along the coast of Cuba in search of Spanish vessels, and in all probability would have some hard engagements, and did not want a woman sniffling about him; and that he would eventually meet her in New-York.

Miss Sarah Taylor was educated in Jamaica, and had the appearance of a lady of some accom-

plishments, although she was living as a concubine.

Captain Mitchell was a man of some education, about five feet six inches high, dark hair and eyes, and had the appearance of a gentleman; was very liberal to unfortunate seamen, and one of the greatest tyrants to exercise authority over them that I have ever heard of. He had at that time two sailors lying in the stocks near Taylor's house, with their ancles two feet above the ground, they lying out of doors on their backs, their bodies exposed to the sun for two or three days. He informed me that he had captured a prize some time previous, and the prize-master and crew had run away with the vessel; that he then took an oath to shoot any of the crew if he ever saw them again. A few months after, he visited Corn Island, where one of the crew happened to arrive. Some of the inhabitants cautioned the man to keep out of his sight. He boastingly replied that Mitchell dared not shoot him. Mitchell said he hoped the man would not appear in his presence, as he did not want to kill him. "But," said he, "one day when I was taking a walk on the island he (knowing I had made he threat) presented himself a short distance before me, when I took a musket and shot him dead."

Some of the inhabitants informed me that the negro cook belonging on board his vessel asked him one day what he should cook for his dinner. Mitchell told him to kill a pig which they had on board. The cook did not understand his answer, and knowing his ungovernable temper, dared not ask him

a second time, but built his fire and had his water boiling. At twelve o'clock Mitchell asked him what he was cooking for dinner, to which the cook replied, "I did not understand what you wanted for dinner." Mitchell seized him by the hair of his head with one hand, and with a ladle in the other poured the boiling water on him until he scalded him to death. One of the sailors told him he thought that was hard usage. Mitchell immediately drew a pistol from his belt and shot the sailor dead and then threw him overboard.

Captain Mitchell informed me that some years since he was cast away on the shore of the Pacific Ocean, and found it necessary to cross over the country by land to the Atlantic coast to get home, that he was arrested for not having a passport to travel. He was thrown into prison and for some misdemeanor was put into the stocks, where he had to lie on his back for some months, and while thus confined he had taken an oath that he would never die in peace until he had killed one hundred Spaniards with his own hands. Some three years after this time I accosted him in a humorous manner, by saying, "Mitchell how many have you due now?" He replied, "Seventeen, by G—d, Dunham, I have killed eighty-three with my own hands."

## CHAPTER IV.

After ten days successful trade at Old Providence, I got under weigh and proceeded towards Musquito Shore, and in the day-time ran in near the land, but could not discover any settlements. I kept beating to the northward, keeping as near the shore as safety would admit, with a good look-out for houses or canoes. By my observations I found a strong current setting to the southward. After beating up three days, we discovered a number of Indian houses near the entrance of a bay which appeared like a good harbor. From my reckoning I supposed this place to be Cape Gracios a Dios, (mercy of God.) I carefully sounded my way into the harbor and anchored.

Soon after we anchored, a canoe containing six or eight Indians, having a stripe of hair about three inches broad, extending from one ear to the other across the top of their heads, which were shaved close to the skin, came out to our vessel. They spoke to us in broken English. I asked them if this place was called the Cape. They answered "Yes." We discovered an English Island flag flying on shore near the largest house, and asking them who owned the house where the flag was flying; they answered "Admiral Dalby;" looking at me with some surprise, they exclaimed, "Don't you know Admiral Dalby?"

Supposing I had to appear before some great chief, whose name sounded so loud in my ears, I put on my best go-a-shore suit, to use an old sailor phrase, and treating the Indians with rum, &c. went on shore with them, and was conducted to the house of Admiral Dalby, whom I found dressed in a clean shirt and white pantaloons, a cotton handkerchief tied on his head, and an old English Admiral's red vest, with some old lace trimmings, having long skirts extending nearly to his knees, and without shoes. Seeing his *majestic* appearance, I approached him with all the politeness of a French dancing-master. After the ceremonies were ended, he asked me what country I came from, and what articles I wanted to purchase. I replied that I came from New-York, in North America, and that I belonged to the same continent that he did; that I wanted to purchase tortoise-shell, cow-hides, deer-skins, gum elastic, gum copal, cochineal, &c. We spent some time in ascertaining the Indian names of the gums, &c. before he understood what articles I wanted to purchase. He said, "Indian man and American man all one country belongs to, all the same as brothers, me right king's officer, all white men must help um; me good man, have good head, savy good? this place all me belong to. To-morrow I send plenty men to fetch you skins, gums, and every thing you want.

After all our arrangements were completed, it being the first time I ever had the honor of negotiating with an *admiral*, I invited him to go on board my

vessel and drink tea with me; which invitation he readily accepted. On our arrival on board, my little table was soon placed on deck under an awning. The cook supplied us with the best our little sloop afforded; the *admiral* was seated at the head of the table, and waited on in the politest manner. After he had finished his tea, he drank a few glasses of rum and returned to his home.

When the cook set his table the next morning, he missed his tea spoons. Diligent search was made for them, but they could not be found. We charged the poor old cook with throwing them overboard in shaking out his crumbs of the table-cloth, which he strongly denied. The spoons cost about two or three cents apiece. The next day I called at the admiral's house, where I saw his children playing with my spoons. On inquiring I found the admiral had carried them on shore in his breeches pocket.

I remained at the Cape about one week, where I purchased a small quantity of tortoise-shell, some hides, deer-skins, tiger-skins, gums, &c. My owners had given me orders on my arrival in that country to procure an Indian pilot who was well acquainted with the coast.

My old friend, Admiral Dalby, procured me a pilot to conduct me to Pearl Key Lagoon, where most of the inhabitants spoke good English. I had a letter of introduction to an inhabitant of that place, whose name was Edward Patterson, a native of Curracoa, who had lived with the Musquitoes many years, and



intermarried with them. The pilot and his son-in-law came on board. I was compelled to hire the latter that he might assist his father-in-law in returning with his canoe. The price agreed on was ten yards of Osnabergs to each; no difference in the price, whether the voyage was performed in one week, or I detained him three months: it was all the same.

We weighed anchor and proceeded to the southward, intending to stop at every settlement between the Cape and Pearl Key Lagoon. The next day we anchored at Sandy Bay. Soon after, we were visited by Governor Clemente, Admiral Hammer, General McLean, and many petty officers and citizens. After treating with a few gallons of rum, by way of introduction, I opened a brisk trade with them, bartering my goods for the same kind of articles I had bought at the Cape. The governor brought on board with him one of his nine living wives. After remaining here three days, we got under weigh and steered southward, keeping near the land, under the direction of the pilot. In the evening I began to doubt his skill, and often hove the lead to satisfy myself, the pilot being stationed forward to keep a good look-out. About ten o'clock I heard the sound of out, out, out. I looked under the lee of the boom and discovered we were near the breakers. We attempted to tack ship, but found it impossible. In a few moments we were driven upon the reef, unshipping our rudder and thumping so hard that I expected she would break in pieces. About an hour after, she beat over

the shoal into nine feet water, where we came to anchor. The next day I sounded a passage out between the shoals. In heaving the vessel through the passage we broke our largest anchor, and finding it impossible to save her, hoisted the jib and ran her on shore. When the wind abated we landed our sails, dry goods and hardware. We built a comfortable tent, which protected our goods from the rains which visit that country almost every day from May until November. We found ourselves near the mouth of a river called Waa-waa, some fifteen miles from the residence of Governor Clemente. After remaining here a few days I sent the pilot to the governor's residence, claiming his protection and requesting him to furnish me with men and canoes to transport my goods to Pearl Key Lagoon, and I would pay them a liberal compensation for their services. The messenger returned with an answer, that the governor had gone on an excursion through his dominions, and was not expected to return in less than two or three weeks. We passed our time in shooting deer, conies, parrots, boobies, gulls, &c. and catching fish, which we found in abundance.

After we had remained here four weeks, the governor arrived, accompanied by forty or fifty Indians. I provided a good dinner for the governor, his lady and officers, who were invited to my table. Rum, gin, and Catalonia wine, were served out in abundance. The governor promised me protection and assistance ; but his business required his return

home immediately, but added that he would send me relief the next day. Before we had finished dinner the mob of Indians commenced stealing our tumblers from the table, likewise knives, forks, some empty kegs, and a fine pig, which we had fattened, as well as most of the loose articles about our premises. I had made the governor many presents for his promised protection, and I remonstrated with him against this wanton outrage, without obtaining any redress.

About sunset the Indians all left my camp, except four canoes of country Indians, who lived four days paddle up some of the rivers: and according to the pilot's interpretation, they did not associate with the governor's gang, who treated them with contempt. After the governor and his tribe had left us, these Indians came to my tent, whom I treated with hospitality, and they encamped near us that night. The next morning my mate advised me to hire these Indians to take me to Pearl Key Lagoon in their canoes, taking my money, dry goods, and all my valuable articles with me, and he and the two sailors would remain by the wreck and take care of the heavy goods until I could procure some vessel or large craft to transport them to that place. Fearing an attack from the governor's party, I employed the pilot to negotiate a bargain with these Indians, as they could not speak English. He soon made an agreement by which I was to give two officers, captains of towns, ten yards of check shirting cloth

each, and the soldiers, as he called them, five yards each, and five yards for the hire of a large canoe.

The bargain being closed we loaded the four canoes, together with the pilot's, with dry goods, cutlery, &c. In the large canoe I put my chest, charts, quadrant, clothing, nine hundred dollars in specie, and a ten gallon keg of rum, knowing it would stimulate them to perform the voyage with despatch, by giving them a drink on arriving at certain places we could see ahead. The cook had boiled me a piece of salt beef to carry with me, and put up two or three pounds of sea-bread. I took a jug of rum in addition to the ten gallon keg, on board of the canoe in which I embarked, and put a tea-cup in my pocket to serve as a tumbler. As soon as the canoes were loaded I measured ten yards to each of the officers, according to our contract, and then measured off five yards and gave it to one of the soldiers, who threw it on the ground, when the Indians commenced unloading the canoes. I called on the pilot for an explanation, and was informed that the soldiers said they had to work as hard as the officers, and would not proceed with me unless I gave them ten yards each. I was unable to avoid the extortion, and gave them the same quantity I had given the officers. In complaining to the pilot of the treatment I had received from the Indians, and the crime they had committed in stealing from me, he replied, "Tief man can't go and live wit God, Devil must catch um." After I had given the check to each of the twelve Indians

who were to convey me to Pearl Key Lagoon, one of them seized his and escaped to the woods, which was the last I saw of him.

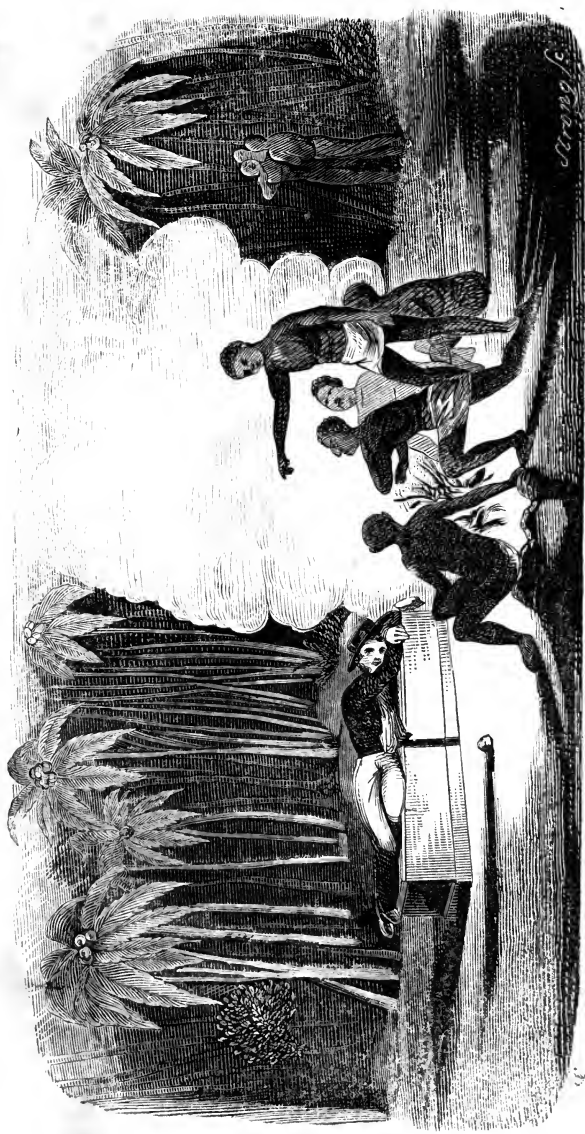
All things being ready, we made sail, myself taking charge of the large canoe, with orders for them all to keep close company, by shortening sail when necessary, so that they could assist one another should any accident happen. I now began to reflect on my forlorn situation, having five canoes under my control, twelve Indians, and only one that could speak English, the naked ocean on one side, the wilderness on the other, and a passage of one hundred and twenty miles to make before I could find a civilized habitation. We proceeded about ten miles on our way, when we ran our canoes on shore and drew them up on the beach, which was performed in great haste to prevent their filling with water and wetting the goods, to avoid which, I covered all the cargoes with cowhides.

Having secured our canoes, the Indians took cutlasses and dug a spring of fresh water, which after bailing out two or three times appeared clear, and we drank it with a real good will after we had mixed it with rum. I had made an agreement with them, by interpretation of the pilot, that I would treat them every time I drank myself, and at no other time, which was considered a fair bargain. They then took my meat and bread, and ate it all at one meal; after which they made a large fire on the ground to keep away tigers, panthers, &c.

I landed two chests, one containing my money and clothing, the other my most valuable goods; and wrapping myself in an old bed quilt, which protected me from the mosquitoes, took lodging on my chests, the Indians taking their station near the fire. The next morning we had nothing to eat. About nine o'clock the Indians went into the woods, *progging*, as they termed it, and after being gone some time returned with a few small oysters and some wild honey, which was all the food we got that day. The next morning we got under weigh and proceeded a few miles, when the wind rising created a heavy sea, and we were obliged to run our fleet on shore and remain until the following day.

In the afternoon the Indians unloaded two of the small canoes, (the wind having ceased blowing,) paddled out some distance and caught a large quantity of fish. At night they boiled three or four pots full, setting up until twelve o'clock and devouring all the fish they had caught. I thought they consumed five or six pounds each. The next morning we got under weigh and proceeded on our voyage until the afternoon, when the wind increasing, it was found necessary to lighten my canoe. I made a signal for the pilot to come alongside, he immediately obeyed, calling one of the captains of a town to join: when, after a short consultation, it was agreed to take some boxes of check shirting and the ten gallon keg of rum out of my canoe and put them on board of theirs. Strict orders were again given





Indians making motions to kill Captain Dunham.



to keep close together, that assistance might be rendered to each other if necessary, the sea running high at the time. The captain's and pilot's canoes soon out-sailed the rest of the fleet. I made signals for them to shorten sail, which they paid no attention to, and at sun-set they were so far ahead that we could not discern them.

We then landed with the three canoes, made our fire and brought my two chests ashore, as on the night previous. Not having had any food that day I went a short distance into the woods, where I found some old cocoa-nuts, of which I made a poor supper. Not having any one to converse with, I laid down on my chests near the fire, my eight Indians near me. They soon commenced a long conversation, and being somewhat anxious to learn the subject of it, I lay listening very attentively. Having a fire-light I could see all their movements. I heard one of them repeat the word "*Buckra*," at the same time drawing his hand across his throat. I then imagined they were concocting some plan to kill me. In the morning they went into the woods, caught a land-tortoise, and laying him on a large fire with his back down, kept him there until he was dead, and then cutting a hole in his side, took out his inwards and roasted him in the shell, from which we made our breakfast.

I had discovered that these Indians had but little strength of body, in loading and unloading canoes; in handling heavy chests and boxes, it always took three Indians to carry one end when I could carry

the other. Wishing to try their strength, by signs I introduced wrestling, jumping, &c. I found I could throw three of them on the ground at one time without much trouble. I then took my pistols from my chest, fired at targets, and performed many other exercises in order to show them my strength was much greater than theirs, that they might be cautious how they attacked me.

In the afternoon we got under weigh and proceeded a few miles, when we encamped for the night. The next morning the Indians went into the swamp after some food, and returned in a short time with a young alligator three or four feet in length, which they had caught: having tied up his mouth with a bark rope, they dragged him along on the ground by it. They also brought some alligator's eggs, which we boiled. They placed the middle of the alligator on the top of the fire, one holding the rope which secured his mouth, another his tail, (he being yet alive,) and burned him to death; after which they cut him to pieces and boiled his flesh in the pot, from which we made our breakfast. I ate some of the eggs, which I found very tough. Our jug of rum had been exhausted two or three days, and the Indians had lost all their ambition. I tried to make them understand, by signs, that when we arrived at Great River we should find our comrades who had left us in the two canoes, and get rum and provisions for the remainder of our voyage. Soon after, they showed me a point of land some distance





Indians Cooking an Alligator for breakfast.

ahead, and repeated the words, "Great River." I took a paddle in my hand and assisted them, at the same time making signs, by lifting the jug to my mouth, giving them to understand that they should have plenty of rum when we arrived there. When we were within two miles of the mouth of the river the Indians suddenly ran the canoes on shore, hauled them up on the land, unloaded all my goods and ran toward the woods, leaving me alone on the beach. I felt much surprised at being left in this sudden manner, half starved with hunger, and my strength exhausted for want of sleep. After piling up all my goods in the best manner I could, I re-loaded my pistols and prepared to defend myself. Hunger now prompted me to look for something to eat. I saw a large green turtle, some four feet in length, laying upon his back a few rods from my goods. I then walked in a different direction from the turtle, in pursuit of something to allay my hunger. Suddenly I discovered a large, strange Indian approaching toward me, having two small ropes in his hand, with eyes spliced in the ends, which he was slipping backward and forward as he approached near me. I slowly retreated some distance, casting my eyes over my shoulder, looking for some weapon to defend myself, when I discovered a stick of wood about the size of a man's wrist, which I quickly secured. He, advancing, asked if I was captain of the American vessel that was cast away on the coast a few weeks since, and if I was hungry.

I told him yes: he still approached me during this conversation; upon which I raised my club and told him if he came any nearer to me I would kill him. He said if I would go with him to Admiral Drummer's house, which was but a short distance, I could get plenty to eat. I informed him that the Indians I had hired to carry my goods to Pearl Key Lagoon, had thrown them on shore here, left me, and that I dare not leave my goods unprotected on the beach. He said he would tell the Admiral of my situation, and informed me that two days ago two canoes, having some of my goods on board, arrived at the mouth of the river, that one of them had upset in passing the bar and lost one keg of rum and one box of dry goods, which had sunk, and that they had been fishing for them but could not find them. He then took his leave, and going to the turtle put the ends of his rope on his flippers, placed the middle across his breast and dragged him off.

Admiral Drummer hearing of my arrival here, sent an Indian slave with a gold headed cane, which he considered as a badge of his office, inviting me to his house to take some breakfast. I returned my reasons for not accepting his invitation, by saying "I dare not leave my goods unprotected." Soon after the admiral brought me some warm cocoa, smoked meat and roasted plantains to eat. My appetite being good I made a hearty dinner. After some time my Indians returned from the woods with some coarse food they had gathered in the swamps. I told

the admiral I had paid these Indians in advance to transport my goods to Pearl Key Lagoon, that they had broken their contract, and that they appeared determined to leave me here. After conversing with them some time, he told me they said they were half starved, had not any provisions to proceed with, and would not go any farther. He also said they were mountain Indians, living in the interior of the country, and were not under his control, but ordered them to put the goods into their canoes and carry me into the mouth of the river, where I would find the two boats which had left me some days before.

In the afternoon I was visited by the admiral, his two wives, and a number of his tribe. I made him and his wives many presents, and he promised to meet me the next day at the mouth of the river, when he would furnish me with men and canoes to carry me to the Lagoon. He left me soon after to return to his home. We proceeded with our three canoes into the mouth of the river, where I found the other two, one of them belonging to the pilot, who told me that, in crossing the bar at the mouth of the river, the captain's canoe had turned over and lost one box of check cloth, the ten gallon keg of rum, and they had both sunk, that they had fished for them a long time, but could not find them; also, that the captain had lost his dinner-pot by upsetting his canoe, and I must pay him for it, because he was at work for me. Another Indian had wrapped himself

in his canoe-sail, and had laid so near the fire he had burnt a hole in it, and I must pay for it because he was in my employ.

Soon after my arrival in the mouth of the river the pilot told me he would go to the admiral's house and procure me some provisions; he left, followed by the whole gang, except one sick Indian who remained with me, with whom I could not converse except by signs. Knowing that a keg of rum would not sink in the water, I thought it best to search the shore and see what discoveries I could make. After walking about one-fourth of a mile I discovered a cow-hide secreted in the edge of the woods, which drew my attention to it. By removing the hide I discovered the box of dry goods and the dinner-pot for which he had demanded payment. I walked back to our landing place, took one of the canoes and carried the box, pot, &c. to my camp, where I opened the box and found some of the check a little wet, but not from the upsetting of the canoe. I searched the beach for some time, but could not find any traces of the rum-keg. Having no companion left with me except my sick Indian, and no food to eat, I was obliged to pick up old cocoa-nuts or any other articles I could swallow to satisfy my craving appetite.

On the evening of the third day after my arrival here my Indians returned much intoxicated, without the pilot. They picked up their baggage and prepared for their departure; then laid themselves down



near the fire, and soon fell asleep. I piled up my goods as compactly as I could, loaded my pistols and laid myself down on the top of them, supposing they would attempt to rob me, and escape with their plunder. I did not shut my eyes until about four o'clock and then fell asleep, which continued about half-an-hour, when I awoke and found they were taking their departure. I took a hasty look at my goods and found they had only taken from me one empty jug and a few small articles of little value.

A few hours after, the pilot, accompanied by Admiral Drummer, his two wives, and thirty or forty Indians arrived, bringing me some provisions, which I ate greedily. After making the admiral and his wives many presents, I asked his price to carry me and my goods to Pearl Key Lagoon. He told me I must pay him the same price I had paid the Indians who had left me here—ten yards of check cloth to each man, and ten additional yards for the hire of a large canoe belonging to himself. The bargain being closed, the admiral and his party all left me, except those I had employed to carry me to the Lagoon.

After the pilot had returned from the admiral's I asked him the cause of their tarrying so long, knowing my destitute situation. He said they had been to a drink-about of pine-liquor—a custom I did not then understand. During my residence at the Lagoon I have been an invited guest to drink-about. Pine-apples are raised in abundance in this country, which the inhabitants of a number of settlements

from time to time collect in large quantities, and assemble at some central place, where they convert them into a kind of pulp and then press out the juice, put it into some old cask and let it remain a few days, when it becomes the most palatable liquor I ever drank, and produces intoxication when taken in large quantities.

Some months after, I learned the deception these Indians had practised upon me. The pilot and his comrades, who had ran away from me with the keg of rum and box of dry goods, arrived at Great River two days before me. They poured some water on the box of dry goods, and then carried the keg of rum to the admiral's house. After our arrival at Great River they left me on the beach, half starved, as stated above, and returned to the admiral's, where they remained drunk about three days.

The contract being finished, we loaded the canoes and I paid the men in advance, according to the custom of the country. I urged them to launch the canoes and proceed on our voyage immediately, which they refused to do, saying that night would overtake us before we could arrive at the Lagoon. They said they would sail the next morning at daylight, and then laid themselves down near the fire for the night. I wrapped myself up in the old bed-quilt and took lodging on my chests as usual, the mosquitoes so thick about us that we could not see any thing at a distance; they annoyed the Indians so much that they lost all patience. At eleven o'clock

they launched their canoes and we proceeded on our voyage. Before we took our departure I had given them orders to keep the canoes near together for mutual safety. After we had gone a short distance, I discovered by the stars that the captain of my canoe had lost his course, and was running from the land into the ocean. I remonstrated with him by making signs. About two o'clock I made out to convince him of his error, when he steered towards the land, which brought us into the trough of the sea, and I was compelled to bail water without intermission until day-light, when I found we were within three miles of the land, but could not discover any canoes in sight of us. We steered our boat in near the land where the water was not so rough, and kept in close to the shore. When we came to the mouth of Pearl Key Lagoon we saw smoke a short distance from the mouth of the harbor, and going to the place from which it proceeded found our comrades cooking some fish, they had caught, for breakfast. We joined with them and took a scanty meal. Soon after, we all got under weigh and proceeded about three miles, when we arrived at the village of Pearl Key Lagoon, to my great joy, after a passage of ten days. I was so thoroughly exhausted that I could not walk from the canoe to the house without assistance.

## CHAPTER V.

Pearl Key Lagoon lies in latitude  $12^{\circ} 10'$  N., longitude  $82^{\circ} 54'$  W. The village is situated about four miles from the entrance of the Lagoon, or *Lake*, into the sea. The village contains thirteen houses; the inhabitants generally speak English, and are more civilized and hospitable than the neighboring tribes. This place is the centre of trade for the whole coast, and is often visited by English traders.

I was hospitably received by Edward Patterson, a native of Curracoa, who had resided here many years. He had three wives living with him, all enjoying peace and good will towards each other. Patterson gave me a hearty welcome to his house, and provided me a room in it to retail my goods. He furnished his table with the best food the country produced, cleanly cooked in English style. Two days after my arrival here my mate and the two seamen arrived from the wreck of the sloop. They informed me that a large number of Indians had encamped near the wreck and commenced plundering the vessel, and they considered it unsafe to remain there any longer. They repaired the sloop's boat, put their clothing and some light goods on board, and after a few days' hard rowing reached this place, with health and strength much exhausted. Two or three days after a small English schooner arrived

here, and I gave the captain two hundred dollars to carry me to the wreck and bring back all the goods we could save from it. We sailed the next day, and arrived there two days after. We found the shore white with cotton, the Indians having cut open the bales and carried away the sacks, leaving the cotton loose on the beach, which the winds had scattered all along the shore for a great distance. They had emptied two pipes of Catalonia wine on the ground and carried away the casks; also emptied some cases of Holland gin and filled the bottles with rum, cut many holes in the vessel to get out the iron, and committed many other depredations. On inquiry I found that most of the goods had been carried to Governor Clemente's house, about thirty miles up the Waa-waa river. We employed some Indians to carry us in their canoes to the governor's residence, there being no roads for travelling by land in the country. When we arrived at his excellency's dwelling we found a collection of forty or fifty Indians assembled there, raving with intoxication; a hogshead of rum placed in the middle of the house, with the bung taken out and the Indians filling their calabashes by pouring it out of the bung-hole, wasting one-half in pouring it out. The governor's invitation to spend the night with him was readily accepted. He promised me he would restore all my goods that could be found about his premises. The next day I found one pipe of gin and one hogshead of rum unopened, which he consented to restore to me. Here

a difficulty arose : the distance from his house to the landing place at the river was about one and a half miles, and no way of conveyance except rolling the casks. I requested the governor to furnish me men, and I would pay them liberally for their services in conveying the goods to the landing place. He said he could not compel them to assist me. My mate and two men I had brought with me succeeded in rolling the casks to the shore after a tedious job of one and a half days. I found sixteen barrels of salt belonging to me about the premises, which we undertook to roll to the landing, but the governor pursued us with his axe and broke the staves of the casks, when we abandoned them. I then picked up all the remaining goods I could find belonging to me, sent them on board the canoes, and putting my mate and seamen on board as sentries for the night, took lodgings at the governor's house. In the morning my attention was drawn towards the governor's nine wives, who were seated round a fire outside of the house, eating their breakfast in perfect harmony. From appearance their ages were from sixteen to sixty years. I afterwards learned that eight of the Indians had died from the effects of the liquor which they had stolen from the wreck.

The governor and his gang had destroyed and robbed me of about eighteen hundred dollars' worth of property, for which I could not obtain any redress. We embarked in our canoes and proceeded to the schooner, where we took the goods on board, and the

next day landed them at the Lagoon. My property being all collected together, I fitted up my store and received calls from all parts of the country, having that load-stone *Rum* to attract them.

Among the visiters who came to console me in my unfortunate situation, was a Sookerman, named Hewlett, who brought me a present of two pine-apples, for which I offered him twelve and a half cents in payment, he refused it, saying, "I was a poor, cast-away thing, and all Indians must help me." I placed a bottle of gin upon the table and invited him and his comrade to drink, which they readily accepted, remaining with me until near night, when they had emptied the bottle; then taking an empty bottle from his pocket, he had the modesty to ask me to fill it for him to carry home. I was selling gin at this time for fifty cents per bottle. Pine-apples are considered of little value in this country, being worth from one to two cents apiece.

A Sookerman practices as a physician in sickness, but always abandons his patient before the approach of death; he tells fortunes, can discover thieves, and when the hurricane months are near approaching, he resorts to some hill with his cutlass in his hand, which he waves in the air to prevent the gales from destroying their crops of vegetables. He collects an annual tax from all the inhabitants of his district, for his services in cutting the breeze as they call it. If they refuse to pay his tax the laws of the country allow him to seize upon any property

he can find, not excepting a man's dinner-pot. If a gale of wind happens to sweep over the country and destroy their crops, he screens himself by saying, "Some rascals have neglected the payment of their tithes." He cannot see a woman in child-bed, or the woman or child under nine months after the birth of it. He is prohibited from seeing any dead corpse, as he imagines the sight of either of these would cause his immediate death. The Sookerman makes all his journies in canoes, accompanied by some of his friends. When they approach any village, he lays down in the bottom of his canoe, and a sail is covered over him to protect his eyes, while some of his comrades visit the houses of the villagers to ascertain whether there are any of those dread sights in their houses. When his wife shows signs of pregnancy she retires to a house built in the woods, where she must remain nine months after her accouchment, before she can return to her husband.

My landlord, Patterson, informed me that he knew a Sookerman who landed at a village in a canoe, without sending a messenger before him to discover the object of his danger; it being stormy weather he landed in great haste and ran to the nearest house for a shelter, and opening the door quickly, the first object he saw was a woman holding a child in her arms. The shock was so great that he fell down on the threshold of the door and died the third day after.

Two miles from the village where I had located



myself was another settlement called Bigman Bank, a village of some renown, being the residence of General Bigman and Admiral Walkin. Soon after I had my store arranged to receive company I was visited by a number of young ladies from Bigman's Bank who were considered the belles of the village. The Indians residing in villages on the sea-coast imagine themselves far superior to the inland tribes. "They form the same opinion that a fopish city dandy does of a country farmer, supposing him to be destitute of common sense because he does not put all his earnings on his back and cheat the tailor and shoemaker out of more.

After the young ladies were all seated in the house, my friend Patterson introduced me to them, and requested me to fill some glasses with gin and pass them round, saying, "They had never drank any gin before, and did not know the strength of it, that we should soon see sport." After remaining some time and drinking freely, they attempted to depart, when one of them, named Betsey Young, a girl possessing a pleasant and beautiful countenance found herself unable to walk, and her comrades took her on their backs and departed apparently much mortified as I was myself. After they returned to their homes Betsey's mother gave her a severe reprimand for her intoxication. The next morning she bent the top of a small tree to the ground, tied a handkerchief to it and putting one end round her neck let the tree straighten up, which hung her in the air. Soon after

her mother discovering her unfortunate situation cut her down and restored her to life. A few months after she became one of the king's wives.

I was visited by a respectable Frenchman, named Ellis, residing thirty miles up a river called Waa-waa-han, which empties into the Lagoon a few miles from this place. The Musquito king had given him a tract of land seven miles in length, bounded on the river, a well cultivated plantation, producing coffee, sugar-cane, corn, yams, sweet potatoes, all kinds of tropical fruits, and bread-stuffs in abundance. He owned twenty or thirty slaves, and cultivated a good garden. He informed me that he had fought for my country in the Revolution, under Count de Grass. His nearest neighbor, named Gough, resided twelve miles from him, who had a grant of land extending twelve miles along the river, and owned a few slaves, but paid little attention to cultivation. I found Mr. Ellis a very honest man, and a true friend to me. He kept a mulatto woman as his wife, whose name was Fanny. He sent many orders to me to bring out such articles as he wanted. He told me that one evening he was making out an order for goods and asked his wife if she wanted any thing added to the order. She answered by saying, "Tell Captain Dunham to fetch me out one man-goose and one woman-goose." Mr. Ellis often sent me garden vegetables, cucumbers, water-mellons, tropical fruits, &c.

## CHAPTER VI.

Among my new neighbors I found eight runaway negro slaves who had deserted from the Island of St. Andreas, in canoes, a distance of about two degrees, and took refuge here. To make the reader understand the tragic scenes that follow, I shall describe them by giving the names of the tribes they belonged to in their native country. Two of them being called Jim, I shall be obliged to attach to the name of each that of the tribe to which he belonged, to distinguish the parties.

The English traders from Jamaica, who have monopolized the trade of this country, frequently visit this place, stopping at St. Andreas and Corn Island on their passage. They are often commissioned to apprehend runaway slaves, return them to their masters, and receive their rewards. These negroes were well apprised of this custom, and took great precaution to arm and defend themselves if they were attacked. On the arrival of any English vessel in the harbor, they retreated to the woods and remained until the vessel left the port before they made their appearance among us again, when they returned to the house which they occupied when I first landed in the place, situated about fifty rods from my store. When they went upon any excursion

they were each armed with a loaded musket and plenty of ammunition, determined never to be taken prisoners alive. In addition to their armament, they purchased from me five cutlasses, which they ground very sharp and carried with them daily. Scotland and Jim belonged to the Ebo tribe in Africa, their native country. Moody and the other Jim to the Mandingo tribe in the same country; another negro, named Prince, was a native of Jamaica. Scotland had a daughter with him, Moody and Mandingo Jim, both had their wives with them. There always appeared a national antipathy existing between the Ebo and Mandingo negroes, which caused many disputes between them. Prince always tried to remain neutral between the parties, often acting as umpire in the settlement of their difficulties. On the arrival of any vessel, or any dangerous report, they compromised all their private quarrels and united for the common defence.

The negroes soon discovered that I had no means to annoy them, and that the English traders were very jealous of me as a trespasser on their exclusive right to trade here, I being the first American who had attempted to open a trade with the Indians within the last fourteen years. These negroes soon commenced trading with me, having fifty or sixty dollars in money, and earnestly solicited my friendly aid, by informing them of any plot I should discover from the English traders, or the Mosquito king's officers to apprehend them, promising on their part

to sell me all the tortoise-shell they could catch, and purchase all their goods from me. I readily ratified the treaty for my own safety. To use an old adage, "Those who live in glass houses must never throw stones."

My goods were poorly protected against robbers, my store being covered on the outside with thin slips of wood, resembling lath wove together like a basket and admitting light through the spaces sufficient to read or write without windows. A man could kick a hole through it in two minutes.

Soon after I purchased a mahogany canoe, made a sail to fit her, and took a number of excursions to the neighboring villages, purchasing shell, gum, &c. It frequently happened that I did not see a white man in two or three weeks. The negroes often got alarmed by hearing false reports about their apprehension, and finding that I sometimes did not reach home until after dark, they came to my store and requested me to wear a white chip hat when I went on any excursion, or appeared out after dark, that they might know me, as they had agreed to shoot any strange white man who should approach them in the night. I complied with their request for my own safety. I have frequently called at their house in the night to procure a light, always calling them by name before I approached their door, and always found them laying on their arms, ready to repel any attack.

Some weeks after, my landlord purchased from

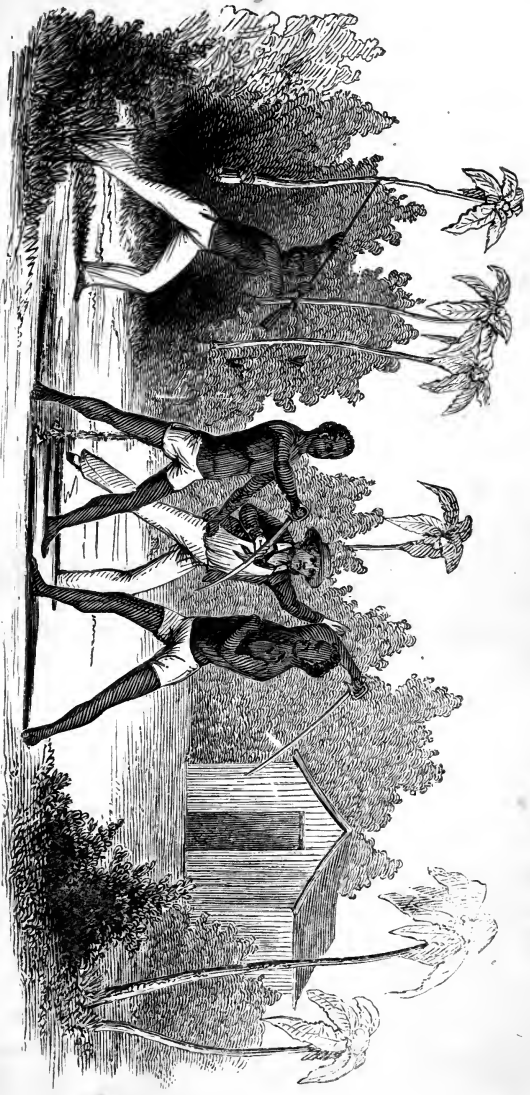
me a quantity of goods, and I advanced him about six hundred dollars in cash, which he agreed to pay me in tortoise-shell, at two dollars per pound, it being worth at that time seven dollars in New-York. He embarked in a large canoe on a trading voyage, along the southern coast of that country, a distance of about two degrees. Most of the able-bodied men of this and the neighboring villages fitted themselves out for a three months' voyage to the southward, to catch turtle. After they had all embarked I found there was no male inhabitant left except myself, my five negroes, two or three old infirm Indians, and a whole village of women and children. The negroes gave me the title of governor, and agreed to submit to such laws as I should prescribe for them. One of the laws I passed was to sell them only one bottle of rum per day, which they agreed to, and behaved themselves well for two or three weeks, caught some shell, and sold it to me. Ebo Jim I found to be a good marksman with a gun, and I furnished him often with powder and shot, with which he killed a great many wild parrots for me to eat, from which I had a number of good meals.

After a few weeks the negroes imagining there was a plot laid to entrap them, agreed to retire to a house they had found in the woods, where they thought themselves secure, and live in peace together. Scotland, Moody and the two Jims, took their leave of me and departed. Prince, the neutral negro, remained in the village. He was a coarse car-

penter, and made some tables and sundry little articles for the Indians, and had many friends among them. Scotland and his party visited me two or three times after they had gone to their new habitation, and were supplied with their one bottle of rum per day, according to agreement, when they would depart peaceably to their new home. The fourth time they visited me they asked me for their bottle of rum, as usual, which was furnished them. They then left for a short time and returned with a request that I would fill the bottle again for them, which I refused to do, by telling them it was a breach of our agreement; but on their promising me faithfully if I would let them have another bottle they would not broach it until they got home, I filled it; they left, and as I supposed, had gone home. About one hour after, a number of women and children appeared at my door, where I had laid myself down in my hammock, reading, and making a most hideous noise, called on me to come out, as Scotland was killing Moody. I ran as fast as I could until I came near to the combatants, when I saw Scotland thrust his cutlass into the thick part of Moody's thigh, near the bone, the point running at least one foot through. Moody being vanquished, Mandingo Jim, his comrade, then rushed forward with cutlass in hand and struck at Scotland's head, who dodged the blow, at the same time returning a blow with his cutlass which struck Jim near the wrist, severing his hand from his arm, leaving it hanging by a small string of

skin and flesh. Ebo Jim then ran into the battle with his gun cocked to shoot down his conquered adversaries, when I interfered, and by threats and persuasion prevented any further effusion of blood. The battle being ended, I proposed to cut off the wounded hand, but my opinion was overruled by the company, who decided, to use their own language, that "The hand could be mended up again." My landlord's oldest wife, whose name was Sally, and who was considered a great doctress among the inhabitants of this region of country, procured some splinters of wood, dressed the wound with wild honey and bound it up, Sally acting as head surgeon among the company. I furnished them with candles, which they made great use of as salve to dress the wounds. On the third morning after, Sally came to my store and told me that Jim's hand was all spoiled, that she had ground up her butcher knife to cut it off. She repaired to the room and requested Jim's wife to open the wound that she might dress it, which she complied with. Sally instantly drew her knife, which was concealed behind her, and cut the hand off, to the great surprise of all the spectators. She continued the application of honey and tallow for three or four weeks, when Jim so far recovered as to be able to shoot parrots for me again. After the battle, Scotland and Ebo Jim retired to their habitation in the woods, and in the course of three or four weeks Moody and Mandingo Jim removed to Bigman's Bank, about two miles from this place.





Triangular fight between three Coloured Men.



A few weeks after, Moody and his partner Jim came to my store on some errand. My provisions getting short, I agreed to accompany them home to Bigman's Bank and procure a fresh supply of such articles as I stood in need of. I got on board of their canoe, which had but two seats, and placed myself by the side of Moody, who commenced a long negro story which absorbed our attention. On the way I discovered a pelican sitting in a tree near by, and called on Jim to shoot it; he drew up his gun and cocked it: at that instant the pelican flew from the tree before he had time to fire: the old negro laid his gun down on the seat along side of us, and proceeded on with his long story, carelessly holding his hand over the muzzle. By some accidental movement, unobserved by me, the gun was discharged, and having a lead slug in it, cut a large piece of flesh from the thick part of his hand, and took off three of his fingers, leaving them hanging by small pieces of skin. We made the best way we could to the village, where I procured a pair of scissors and severed the fingers from the hand.

Some time after, another report was circulated that some of the king's officers had received orders to arrest these negroes, which gave them great alarm. Ebo Jim implored me to write to Mr. Ellis, my old friend, begging his protection until he could procure a passage back to his former owner, which Mr. Ellis readily granted, and making me a visit soon after, he took Jim home with him and after-

wards sent him back to his former mistress. I was much pleased to see Mr. Ellis, he being the first white man I had seen within the last three weeks.

Moody, Mandingo Jim and Scotland, had a meeting soon after, and agreed to forgive and forget all their former difficulties and return to their old retreat for safety, and there unite for the defence of each other. All their former contests being settled, I advised them to retire and live peaceably together, and not annoy me or the Indians any more with their private quarrels, which they faithfully promised to adhere to.

I now employed myself cheerfully in reading and other amusements for a few days, when suddenly an Indian called at my door and told me that Scotland wanted me to come down to the landing place, that he was lying in his canoe badly wounded. I repaired to the place, where I found his sail spread over his canoe, and he lying on the bottom. I perceived that the blood had covered the whole bottom of the canoe, apparently one inch or more deep. On examination of his body I found he had received a large charge of shot in his right breast, which had cut out about one pound of flesh; and another in his thigh, which had severed the bones, and cut the flesh to pieces in the most shocking manner. I asked him how this misfortune happened to him. He answered me by saying, "Captain, Jim and Moody do me too bad. This morning Jim and me go a hunting together, we come home about eleven o'clock, I feel tired and lay

down on my crawl and go to sleep; first I know, I hear a gun go pow, I look at the door and see Jim stand there, I say, 'Jim, see what these Indians do me;' Jim say, Moody give it to him, Moody fire his gun and break my thigh, and then both run away and left me. By and by one Indian come, and I give my gun to paddle me here to see you. Now I want you to get Sally and the other woman to mend me up again."

I called on my hospitable Sally, who hastily declared she would not try to mend Scotland up, or have him left in the village, and I must send him back to his house in the bush: if she should mend him up again he would kill Moody and Jim, and that she would have no farther trouble with these negroes. There being no white person to advise with, I called Prince, the neutral negro, and told him he must take Scotland back to his house, help him on his crawl or bed, set a calabash of water within reach, and leave him. Prince hesitated some about obeying my orders, but by persuasion and some reward, he embarked in the canoe and paddled him back to his house, helped him into it, placed him on his crawl, and at his request built a fire, set water within his reach, loaded his gun, and placed ammunition near him, for he was determined to defend himself as long as he had breath.

After they had departed, I sat down on the beach and reflected on the forlorn situation of this unfortunate desperado. He well knew he must die from his

wounds, or be murdered by Moody and Jim, or destroyed by tigers, his hut having no doors to protect him from wild beasts. When Prince returned I asked him if he had any conversation with Scotland on the passage. He replied, "Yes, I told Scotland that Moody and Jim would kill him this night. He replied, then they will say, there is a *man* dead."

At night I retreated to my lodgings in my store, where I slept for the protection of my property. At this time I had learned that the English traders on the coast had held a meeting and entered into an agreement, pledging themselves never to carry me, nor take any letters to Jamaica or elsewhere, to help me to get away from this coast. Having no white friends to console me, and being more than two thousand miles from my family and friends, I retired to bed with solitary feelings. Not having much inclination for sleep, I remained awake until about twelve o'clock, when I heard the report of a gun, which I imagined had ended the tragedy.

At daylight I arose and called on an old negro who had resided here with his family many years, the Indians called him *darmer*, equivalent to grandfather in the English language, who conducted me to Scotland's hut. I found the old negro laying dead on his crawl, or bed, a musket ball having passed through his body. Having met Moody and Jim, before our arrival at Scotland's house, I compelled them to go back with me. I accused them with having committed the murder, and endeavored to impress

upon their minds the enormity of the crime. They denied the firing of the last fatal shot, by saying, Scotland had tied the trigger of his gun to the side of his house, placed the muzzle against his side, and by pulling the gun discharged the contents, becoming his own executioner. I selected a place to bury the remains of the old negro, but having no shovels to dig with, we were obliged to use wooden paddles, my only help being Moody and Jim, and they both cripples, we made but slow progress. Soon after Prince arrived, when I sent him to an Indian house some distance from the place, to borrow a hoe, to assist in digging the grave. The woman of the house refused to lend it, saying, "Her daughter was sick, and if she lent the hoe to dig a grave the doctor or *sookerman*, who attended her, would forsake the house if he knew the hoe had been used for that purpose." We finally succeeded in digging two or three feet deep, when I sent home and got a saw and cut Scotland's canoe in two pieces, then placing the corpse between them, put him, together with all his clothes in the grave, according to the custom of the country. Previous to interring the corpse, I offered to give away his clothes, but no person would accept of them, because the owner was dead. The funeral ceremonies being ended, I returned home, hoping to enjoy some repose after the long annoyance from these negroes.

Fresh reports were soon circulated that the king had commissioned one of his officers, called Sambo

Tom to arrest Moody and Jim. They hearing of this report, determined to leave this part of the country, and pass through a border settlement inhabited by a tribe of Indians called the Woolwas, adjoining the Spanish settlements, and seek protection from the Spaniards. Sambo Tom pursued, but not daring to arrest them himself, he employed the Woolwas to do so. The negroes having arrived among the Woolwas, hired some of them to transport them in their canoes to the Spanish settlements; but being well armed, and having plenty of ammunition, the Indians were afraid to attack them, and therefore professed great friendship, agreeing to convey them where they wished to go. Two canoes joined in this expedition, and while passing a fall in the river the Indians upset the one containing the negroes, which wet their guns and ammunition, when the Indians in the other canoe threw their lances and killed them in the water. Their wives were given up to their former owners at St. Andreas.

Little did I think when I landed in this country among a mixed race of Indians, that I should find some *blood* relations, so called by the natives, among them. An Indian woman, calling her name Sally Bryant, the wife of Scipio, one of the king's quartermasters, called on me and told me she was a blood-relation of mine, and claimed some present as an acknowledgment of it on my part. I asked her what evidence she had of our relationship. She replied, "That her father was an American." The argument



was so conclusive that I did not think it necessary to contradict it, but gave her some small presents, which were well repaid. Sally often volunteered to assist me in selling my goods, and brought me many customers by saying to the Indians, "My countryman's goods are better and cheaper than them Englishman's, and he no rogue, like them English traders."

Soon after, a Curracoa man arrived from Bluefields, one of the wealthiest men of that place, who brought a message from his wife, known by the name of Mrs. Peggy, requesting me to furnish her with some goods to sell on commission, and she would deal honestly by me, having heard of my misfortune in losing my vessel, &c. that she wanted to see me very much, and pitied me more because I was a relative of hers, her father being an American. I forwarded Mrs. Peggy two or three hundred dollars' worth of goods to sell on commission, the greatest part of which she sold, made good returns, and I found her more honest than white relations generally are in their trade with each other.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### Visit to Corn Island.

I sold the Biddle's sails, which I had saved from the wreck, for eighty pounds of tortoise-shell, paya-

ble at Corn Island, which lies in the wide ocean, forty miles from the main land. I soon received a message, saying the shell was ready for delivery, but I must come and receive it. Having been advised of the danger of leaving it there, and that delays were dangerous in dealing with those I had bargained with, and fearing I should lose my debt if I neglected it, I determined upon making the trip in my canoe, the only conveyance I had for getting there. The easterly trade-winds constantly prevail here, except the westerly land breezes, which blow during the night, and extend out a few miles from the shore. My canoe was fitted in Indian style, having a number of small holes bored in her sides near the top, and small cords attached to them, to which we tied our dinner-pot, gun, or any other articles we wished to carry with us, which I found a safe plan for preserving the necessaries we carry on board. If the canoe happens to turn over, such accidents having frequently happened to me, the whole crew swim along side, turn her up, and by rolling her quickly soon discharge most of the water. This being done, one man gets into the canoe and bails out the remainder with his hat or paddle, while the goods remain hanging by the ropes. After this is accomplished all hands get on board and go on.

I hired three Indians, took some provisions, a jug of rum and a dinner-pot on board, and proceeded on the voyage. After losing the land winds we had to paddle our canoe directly against the wind and a

rough sea. We paddled about fifteen miles, when we landed on a small desolate island or sand bank, having no vegetation on it except half-a-dozen small trees about the size of a man's leg. It being nearly dark, we hauled our canoe up the beach, cooked and ate some fish, and then laid ourselves down on the ground to sleep. Soon after, it commenced raining, when the Indians got up and stripped themselves naked, turned the canoe bottom upwards and put their clothes under it. I followed their example, and we all sat down naked on the ground, leaning against some small trees, and remained in that situation until about daylight, the rain pouring down in torrents during the night. As the sun arose the weather became pleasant, and we proceeded on our voyage, arriving at Corn Island that evening, after a hard days' paddle.

Great Corn Island lies in latitude  $12^{\circ} 10'$  N., longitude  $82^{\circ} 11'$  W. and is about six miles in circumference. The soil is fertile, producing good cotton, abundance of provisions, and all kinds of tropical fruits; breeds good horses, cattle, hogs, poultry, &c. and has abundance of fish. The Island contains about twenty-five dwelling houses, and from one to two hundred slaves. Little Corn Island lays about ten miles north of the Great one, is uninhabited, but produces an abundance of cocoa-nuts.

I remained at Corn Island two days, where I was treated with the greatest hospitality, being furnished with plenty of provisions, fruits, &c. and having col-

lected my shell, I embarked early in the morning, with a fair wind, for Pearl Key Lagoon. The wind soon died away and left us with a dead calm, and we were obliged to paddle under a burning sun during the day, which blistered my cheeks and ankles, not having any stockings on my feet. We arrived at our home about eleven o'clock that night.

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Visit to Bluefields.

Bluefields lies about twenty-five miles south of Pearl Key Lagoon on the main land, and has a good harbor for small vessels, the water on the bar at the mouth being about nine feet deep.

The English government took possession of it many years ago, but afterwards exchanged their possessions here with the Spanish government for the Bay of Honduras. Colonel Hudson, an English planter from the Island of Jamaica, settled here with a number of negro slaves. By the exchange of the country, he found it difficult to remove his slaves, who had intermarried with the Indians, and he was obliged to sell them their freedom and take their security for the payment of the debt, which was to be paid in yearly instalments. From what I could learn from these negroes, he never realized much

from them. The inhabitants of Bluefields are mostly called Samboes, being a mixture of negro, Indian, and white blood.

After remaining a few months at the Lagoon, and receiving many invitations, I concluded to make a visit to Bluefields, form some new acquaintance, and call on my *countrywoman*, Mrs. Peggy, who claimed to be a relation of mine because her father was said to be an American, and ascertain what progress she made in disposing of the goods I had sent to her to sell on commission.

I fitted up my canoe, hired three Indians, put our dinner-pot, gun, fishing spears and some provisions on board, and launched out into the broad ocean again. After we had proceeded about fifteen miles the wind increased, which caused the sea to run so high that we were obliged to run our canoe on shore, and hauling her up we built a fire, a precaution necessary in travelling in this country to avoid being attacked by wild beasts, and after cooking a scanty meal took lodging on the ground. We were much annoyed during the night by musquittoes and small gnats, or sand-flies, which allowed us but little sleep. The next morning, the wind having moderated, we got under weigh and proceeded to Bluefields, where we arrived about sunset.

Here we learned that a negro man had lately been employed in cutting up a large green turtle on the shore near that place, and while stooping down to accomplish his undertaking, a tiger sallied out

of a thicket of bushes, sprang upon his back and struck one of his claws into the back of his neck, inflicting a mortal wound which caused his death the third day after.

I was joyfully received by Mrs. Peggy, my countrywoman, and all her family: also received invitations to visit most of the families of the town. A good supper was provided for me, and I was treated with the best food and fruits that the country afforded. The usual lodgings in this country is hammocks, suspended across the house, in which a person accustomed to them can sleep very comfortably. Mrs. Peggy wishing to treat me with extraordinary kindness, I being a kinsman of hers, furnished me with what she called a crawl, fitted up in a spare bedroom, for my lodging.

A crawl is made by cutting four small crotched sticks of wood, three or four feet in length, which are driven into the ground, (the house having no floor,) and two sticks some three feet in length, placed across the ends, then a number of round sticks, much resembling hoop-poles roughly trimmed with the bark on them, are laid closely together, resting on the cross-poles and covered over with a piece of Indian cloth, which forms the sacking of the bedstead. I retired to my lodging at an early hour, as I had not enjoyed much sleep the preceding night, and laying myself down on the crawl thought to take some repose, but I soon found the knots in the poles were harder than my flesh. "So coy a

dame was sleep to me, with all the weary courtship of my care-tried thoughts, I could not win her to my bed," and I was glad to *crawl* off the crawl and take up my lodgings on the ground under it.

The next day Mrs. Peggy wishing to treat me with the best food the country afforded, procured a large fat monkey, had it neatly dressed, and roasted in good style for dinner. As it was roasting before the fire it looked so much like a human being that I felt my appetite crawl off, and told my good countrywoman that I had made an engagement to meet an Indian at a village about two miles from that place, at 12 o'clock, to purchase a quantity of shell, and wished to be punctual in my promise. This excuse for absence obtained her reluctant consent to let me go, and I lost my dinner. I left Bluefields the next day and returned to Pearl Key Lagoon.

I must here relate a humorous conversation I heard at Bluefields between two of the most respectable young ladies of that place, named Mary and Manger. A vessel having arrived there from Curacao, the captain and two others came on shore, and setting down along side of these young ladies, commenced a vulgar conversation with Manger. Mary having more modesty than her companion, immediately called Manger away from them, and said, "Manger, you fool gal, why you talk them Curracoa Buckras, mind by and by, mouth fly off."

The father of the present Musquitto king must have been fond of women, as he had no less than

fourteen wives. He was a great tyrant, and was murdered by his subjects for his tyranny over them. The English government ordered his two eldest sons to be carried to Jamaica and put under the care of the Duke of Manchester, then governor of that island, where they remained about six years and obtained a fair English education. The present king, who calls his name George Frederick, was furnished with a large outfit from the duke, consisting of a suit of clothes worth eighteen hundred dollars, repairs of his father's crown fifteen hundred dollars, and four thousand dollars' worth of goods and presents to distribute among his subjects. A sloop of war was fitted out to carry him to the Bay of Honduras, where he was crowned, and from thence conveyed to his own dominions.

Soon after my return from Bluefields I was visited by the new king, it being his first visit to the Lagoon. After my introduction I told him the English traders on the coast were determined to prevent my opening a trade with his subjects, and solicited his protection. He readily agreed to give me a permit, which he himself signed, and is as follows :

“PEARL KEY LAGOON, *July 20th, 1815.*

“Permission is hereby given to Captain Jacob Dunham, a citizen of the United States of America, to touch and trade in all parts of my dominions in any vessel from North America.

“GEORGE FREDERICK,

“King of the Musquitto Nation.”



I made the king a few presents, and the inhabitants gave us a ball, where we amused ourselves by dancing on a ground floor. The king left us a few days after.

I soon became familiar with the Indians, by joining in their amusements and obtaining a knowledge of their laws, customs, &c. I received an invitation to go to what they call "a drink-about of pine-liquor." I quickly dressed myself in Indian fashion, having my face ornamented with red paint, forming curls and other figures, and my hat ornamented with beautiful plumage plucked from the birds of the forest. I proceeded about two miles in company with most of the inhabitants of our place to the village of Bigman's Bank, where we were joined by the principal inhabitants of the neighboring villages within five or six miles of that place, who had previously brought their pine-apples, peeled them, grated them up fine and squeezed out the juice into a sixty gallon cask, which was full, and had been in a state of fermentation for some days past, but had now become pure, and contained spirit sufficient to intoxicate all those who drank much of it. Before the drinking commenced the men gave up their knives and other weapons to the squaws. The men remained there two or three days, but I returned home the first evening, fully satisfied. I continued my trade with the Indians, bartering my goods for tortoise-shell, cow-hides, deer-skins, tiger-skins, gum copal, India rubber, &c.

Having much leisure time, I devoted a great part of it to learning their language, customs, laws, manner of taking turtle, fish, birds and different animals; mode of agriculture; births, marriages and burials, of which I shall endeavor to give the reader some information.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

### Mode of Taking Turtle.

There are three kinds of turtle inhabiting these seas: the first and most valuable are the hawk-bill, they are caught for the beauty of their shell, which contains thirteen pieces, covering the thick callipach of the turtle, which is from two to four feet long. The outer shell is taken from the carcase by setting it up before a warm fire, when it peels off. The second is called loggerhead turtle, having a shell much resembling the hawk-bill, but not worth anything for manufacturing. The third is the green turtle, whose flesh is very delicious, and so well known that I consider any description unnecessary. The Indians take them by what they call striking, having a pole about the size of a fishing rod, with a small spear, two or three inches long, well barbed at the point, to which one end of a small cord, about sixty feet long, is made fast and wound round a piece of cork-wood, resembling a weavers spool. He

then stands up in his canoe, and by taking aim hits his mark and secures his prey.

Another mode of taking turtle is by making set nets, about thirty feet square, from large twine, they then carve imitation turtle out of soft, light wood, which are smoked over the fire to give them a turtle color, and then attached to the upper side of the net, where they float on the surface of the water as buoys, while the bottom is anchored with stones. The turtle resort to the nets to play with the wooden decoys, and during their sport generally get one of their flippers entangled, and by struggling to extricate themselves get into the net and are easily taken.

The next operation of catching them is performed by three or four Indians going to the resort of the turtles, where they build a temporary hut to live in, each takes possession of his ground, say one quarter or half a mile; on which he walks backwards and forwards like a sentry on guard during the night, watching the movements of his game; and when the turtles crawl up the beach to deposit their eggs, during the laying season, he turns them over on their backs, where they remain until he wants to take possession. When ready, he removes them at pleasure.

The turtle generally crawls up about ten rods from the sea-shore on the soft beach-sand, making a large track with its flippers, and digging a hole in the sand about two feet deep, lays forty eggs, and returns to the sea again the same night. About fif-

teen nights after, the identical turtle returns to the same nest and lays forty more eggs, then retreats into the sea again and returns there no more during that season.

The manatee, or sea-cow, is from ten to fourteen feet long, and has a head much resembling our common cow without horns. They often get asleep on the surface of the water, when the Indians very carefully paddle their canoes to them, and by throwing their small spears into them, capture them in the same manner they do the turtle. The beef when cut up is twelve or fourteen inches thick, having a strip of fat and lean intermixed about every inch, being the handsomest beef I ever beheld or tasted, and having no kind of fish taste or smell.

The coast here abounds with a variety of good fish; the larger ones are mostly taken by spearing.

The Indians have often brought me beef of the mountain-cow, which I found of a very good flavor. I never saw but one young one of that species, and cannot give a very good description of them. The young one I saw, much resembled a young fawn. They are killed by shooting.

Parrots, when cooked, taste much like our wild pigeons, and are taken in abundance by shooting. A few tame ones are kept about the houses, which fly into the shade-trees near the premises, and serve as stool-pigeons to call down the wild flocks that are daily passing over the villages.

The armadilla also inhabits this country, and

is considered very palatable food. The guana, resembles the common lizard in shape and color, and is from two to four feet in length, in this country its flesh is considered delicious meat.

The cattle are much larger than those of the United States. They seldom milk the cows, which run in herds, and are not domesticated. Each inhabitant marks his calves when young; and when he wants to kill a beef he shoots one of his own mark. They domesticate but few horses, having scarcely any roads, the country being cut up with lakes, rivers, and creeks, without bridges. The principal travel is performed in canoes. The horses are well formed, but a kind of tick eats the gristle out of their ears, which causes them to fall down on their head, giving them the appearance of lopped eared hogs.

They have abundance of hogs and poultry, which are cheaply fed on cocoa-nuts that grow wild along the sea-coast, and are gathered in large quantities. The first work of the morning, performed by the Indian women, is breaking cocoa-nuts for the hogs, and cracking some for the dogs, then cutting up fine for the poultry. They grate up a large quantity with tin graters, put it in pots and extract the oil, which makes good lard for frying fish; and when it turns rancid becomes very fair lamp oil. Forty cocoa-nuts will produce one gallon of it.

The forests abound with wild hogs of two different species, called Warry and Pecara, having a small

tit or navel on their backs. When they are shot the Indians immediately cut out the tit to prevent its scenting the meat. I have ate the flesh of it often, and found it equal to other meat of the pork kind.

Plantain is the principal bread food of the country, and easily cultivated. It also produces yams, cassaunder, sweet potatoes or eddies, and many other vegetables; but the natives are too indolent to cultivate them. I lived seven months among them without tasting a mouthful of bread, or even craving it.

I will now give a small extract of Musquitto laws, viz: If a man commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, and it comes to the knowledge of her husband, he takes his gun and goes to the forest where he finds a herd of cattle belonging to the neighborhood; he shoots a good fat bullock and calls on the neighbors to assist him to dress it and convey it home, where he makes a great feast, inviting the man who committed the offence, and all the neighbors to partake with him, when the offender, who is bound by law, pays for the bullock and all is amicably settled.

If a man prevails on another man's wife to leave her husband and live with him, the law compels him to pay a fine of four backs of tortoise-shell, worth six dollars each, amounting to twenty-four dollars, and a receipt in full is verbally acknowledged, without any hard feelings between the parties.

I once witnessed a settlement between two men in a cause of this kind, both parties appeared well

satisfied, and parted on the most friendly terms.

They have a singular law for the collection of debts. If I trust an Indian goods, he belonging to another town or settlement, and he neglects to pay me, and I find another Indian belonging to the same town, having tortoise-shell or other produce in his canoe, I can take it away from him for the debt, and he must look to the man who was indebted to me, for remuneration.

Marriage contracts are made by parents while the children are infants. Two families living in one neighborhood, one of them having a son and the other a daughter, enter into a contract that they shall be considered man and wife. When they are of a proper age to be joined together, all the inhabitants of the place assemble together, build them a house, help them to a hammock to sleep in, and a dinner-pot for cooking, and they commence as house keepers. After living together for some years as man and wife, the husband receives a present of a female child from *its* parents, which he carries home, and calls it his *young wife*, the first wife taking the same care of it she would of her own children until it becomes of proper age, when the husband builds a new house for the first wife to live in, and takes the young wife for a house-keeper. I have often been invited into Indian houses and introduced to the family in this manner: "This is my old wife," pointing to an elderly woman, and "This is my young wife," pointing to a girl from six to ten years old. The old wife

would smooth her hair and appear to feel a great deal of pride in being presented to me.

On the day a woman is delivered of a child she goes to the sea-side, wades into the water knee depth, washes herself and infant, and the next day slings the child on her back, gets into a canoe and paddles two or three miles to visit her friends.

I here take my leave of Musquitto laws and customs for the present.

As the plan of cutting a canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, by the way of the River St. Johns, which leads from the Atlantic into the Lakes Nicaragua and Leon, has so much engaged the attention of the public latterly, my thoughts have been carried back to a conversation I had with an old Musquitto Indian about thirty-five years since.

He said, "The Indians frequently paddled their canoes up the St. John's River, through Nicaragua Lake into Lake Leon, where they found a small river, and proceeded to the head of it, which brought them so near the head of another river which led into the Pacific, that they hauled their canoes over by land from the head of one river to the other, and then passed through into the Pacific Ocean."



## CHAPTER X.

The bite of many of the snakes of this country is so poisonous as to cause death in a few hours. During my residence at the Lagoon I was visited by an Indian admiral, named Drummer, who resided at Sandy Bay, some forty miles north of the Lagoon; he related the following story, which happened a few weeks before. "He sent an Indian slave to his plantain walk, distant two or three miles, to cut some bread-stuffs; not returning that night, he the next morning sent his son-in-law to look after the slave. He not returning, the following morning a number of the inhabitants proceeded to the plantain walk, where they found the dead bodies of the two men, and the snake which had caused their death lying near them."

Some hurricanes occasionally visit this coast, which destroy their crops of bread-stuffs, and cause temporary famine in certain districts.

While cruising along the coast some months after the occurrence of one of these tornadoes, I landed within a few miles of the residence of Admiral Hammer, in company with a man named Benjamin Downs, who was well acquainted with the admiral. We proceeded to his house and asked for something to eat, when he told us his bread-stuffs

had all been destroyed by a gale of wind, and addressed Downs as follows: "Ben Downs, don't you think the Almighty little bit too bad this time?" "Why, and what do you mean?" asked Downs. The admiral replied, "He send too much strong breeze and broke all the plantain walk."

The country is infested with numerous insects, &c. such as mosquittoes, sand-flies, fire-ants, chigoes, centipedes, scorpions, cock-roaches, and an immense number of alligators. The ground in many places is overrun with large ants, called the travelling army, which destroy whole fields of vegetation. It is also infested by insects called dog-fleas, which are a great annoyance at night; and the sea-coast abounds with sharks of a very large size.

To give the reader a short description of the country and inhabitants I shall quote from a late writer. "The Musquittoes are a small nation of Indians, never conquered by the Spaniards, the country being so situated as to render any attempts against them impracticable; for they are surrounded on all sides by land, by morasses or impassable mountains, and by sea with shoals and rocks; besides, they have such an implacable hatred to the Spaniards, for inhumanity and cruelty in destroying many millions of their neighbors, that they would never have any correspondence with them; for whenever they sent any missionaries or other agents amongst them, they *hid them*, that is, put them to death. The king has little more than the title, un-

less the nation is at war; having no revenues, and few prerogatives; being obliged in time of peace to fish and fowl for the support of himself and family. He hath indeed some distinction shown him, and now and then presents made him by the governor of Jamaica, and the English traders, who frequently touch and trade there."

I occupied my time in selling goods and purchasing shell, skins, gums, &c. and during my leisure hours partook of the sports of the Indians, that I might pass away the time as agreeably as my situation would admit of, not knowing how I could get away from the country, as the English traders [the only people who visited the Musquittoes] had agreed never to carry me to Jamaica, or take any letters that would assist me to get to my family, fearing I should become a rival in the trade, and be the means of introducing others into it.

About the first of November a Captain Humphreys, one of the Jamaica traders, arrived in the harbor, and came on shore and took supper with me. The Indian ladies got up a ball on the occasion. After dancing was over, Captain H. and myself took a walk together. During which he said to me, "Dunham, your case is a hard one, the old English traders on this coast, myself among them, have agreed never to carry you to Jamaica, or to assist you to get away from here, or take any letters from you to Jamaica or elsewhere, notwithstanding we consider you a very clever fellow; but if we assist

you to get home, you will lead down twenty Yankee traders and destroy our business with the Indians." Captain H. appeared to possess the feelings that one seaman should have for another, and continued, "Dunham, if you can get ready to go with me in two days I will carry you to Jamaica; but I will not carry your shell, or any other articles you have bought of the Indians." I expressed my sincere thanks for his kind offer, but told him I did not wish to be taken there for nothing; that I had money, and was willing to give him one hundred dollars for my passage. I informed him that I had kept one half barrel of pork and a case of gin hid away for some months, intending to purchase a large canoe with them to carry me to the Bay of Honduras, if no other conveyance offered. He refused to accept any compensation whatever for my passage.

The next day I packed up my shell, amounting to five hundred and seventy-two pounds, and the remnants of my goods, and sent them thirty miles up the river Waa-waa-han to be left with my worthy old French friend, Mr. Ellis. I then called on my landlord for his bill for the rent of my store, and board for two or three months. He laughed at my being so simple as to suppose he would charge anything for it, and peremptorily refused; but as he was indebted to me for goods, I deducted forty dollars from his account, which he reluctantly accepted. The vessel being now ready for sea, the inhabitants of the village all escorted me to the beach, bringing

me many presents of fruits, and shaking me by the hand, with downcast eyes bade me a hearty farewell.

Captain H. had to proceed to the coast of St. Blas to settle with his traders, having left goods with three or four Indians, at different settlements, to sell for him. This circuitous route made the distance to Jamaica five or six hundred miles further, stopping at a number of places on the Musquitto Shore, viz: St. John's River, Boco Toro and Crekimala, where we took on board a quantity of sarsaparilla and sundry other articles, and then proceeded to St. Blas. On our arrival there we were visited by a large number of Indians in canoes, who commenced trading with us. One of them acting as clerk took charge of the goods and dealt them out to the others by fathoming them off with his arms, this being their custom of measuring cloth. The goods being mostly staple articles, the prices there seldom varied. Shell had a fixed price of one dollar per pound. The captain paid little attention to the trade. A small pump was left in a hogshead of rum, from which the clerk filled the bottle and passed it round as often as it was called for, and every few hours he would call the captain and give him a handful of money, saying, "Here is so much," which he would put in his pocket, neither of them counting it, nor would the captain ask anything about the trade. Often the captain and myself took a canoe and went off fishing, leaving fifty or sixty Indians on board dealing with the clerk, who had the sole control of the trade.

When we had finished trading at one place the Indians piloted us to another harbor on the coast, where we proceeded in the same manner. We sailed along the coast more than one hundred miles, touching and trading at the different towns. Two of the natives took passage with us for Jamaica, where we arrived about the first of December. Here I tasted bread for the first time in eight months, having lived on Indian bread-stuffs during that time, and seldom thinking of any other, being well satisfied with that food. On our arrival at Montego Bay the captain took me home to his house, and treated me very politely.

Soon after my arrival in Jamaica I found a brig bound to Baltimore, and took passage in her; I arrived there after a voyage of twenty-five days, and sailed for New-York, where I had an interview with my owners, and obtained a furlough from them for a few days, that I might visit my family; after which I returned to New-York and proceeded back to the Musquitto Shore.

## CHAPTER XI.

**Sloop Governor Tompkins.**

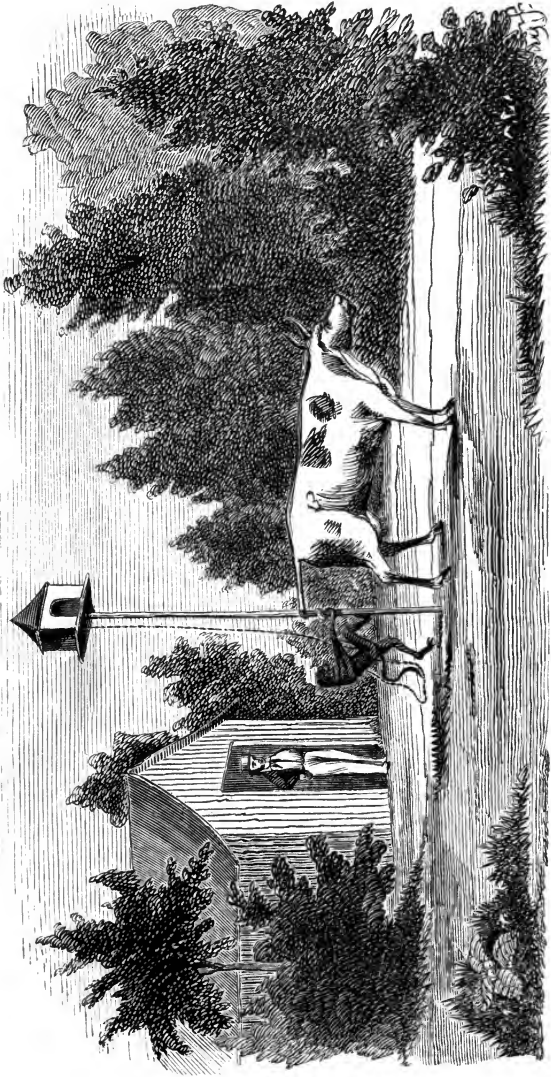
In February, 1817, I took charge of the Sloop Governor Tompkins, of thirty-four tons, belonging to the same owners that the Biddle did; being promoted two tons in the size of the vessel. I took on board an assorted cargo, bound for Old Providence, Corn Island, and Musquitto Shore. I took with me a young man named Samuel B. Warner, to serve as clerk of our store at Pearl Key Lagoon, where I intended to resume the trade I had left. My crew consisted of a mate, two seamen, and a cook. In the Gulf-stream we encountered a violent gale of wind, shipped a heavy sea, which swept our deck and washed the cook overboard, and I never saw him again. I made a passage of seventeen days to Old Providence, where I met with a heavy sale of goods; from thence I went to Corn Island, and to Pearl Key Lagoon. There I hired part of an Indian house, landed some goods, and Mr. Warner opened a store. From thence I sailed for Cape Gracias a Dios, and visited the king, who entertained me with a ball and other amusements. I then proceeded back to the Lagoon, touching and trading at Sandy Bay, where I was visited by a large number of Indians, who brought on board tortoise-shell, tiger-skins, deer-

skins, India rubber, gum copal, &c. which I bought in exchange for goods. The chiefs and their subjects got very drunk on the occasion, and as it was difficult to suppress the quarrels that arose among them, I was obliged to get my vessel under weigh to rid myself of them. I returned to the Lagoon, where Mr. Warner had opened a very good trade with the Indians, and appeared well pleased with the country.

I hired three Indians to man my canoe, and took a trip up the river Waa-waa-han, to visit my old friend Mr. Ellis, with whom I had left the tortoise-shell and other articles previous to my embarking with Captain Humphreys for Jamaica. On my passage up the river I called on Mr. Gough, an Englishman, whom I have spoken of in a former chapter; I remained but a few hours with him, having but little leisure to view his plantation, which had the appearance of a good soil, but lacked cultivation. When I arrived at the house of Mr. Ellis I was received with a hearty welcome, and treated with the best the country afforded. After taking some refreshments we took a walk over his grounds, which were well cultivated, having a beautiful orange walk, with two rows of trees set out in straight lines for nearly half a mile, forming a most delightfully shaded road. I purchased two or three tons of coffee from him, which he had raised on his place, and kept on hand for want of purchasers, the Jamaica traders always refusing to buy it. He told







Jocko amusing himself with a Cow.

me he had plenty of cattle on his premises, which could be made very useful in clearing the ground, by breaking them in to work with ploughs. I told him to make out a memorandum, and I would bring him out ploughs, chains, ox-yokes and such other articles as he wanted. He gave me a list of what he needed, which I furnished him on the next voyage, when he broke in his cattle, cleared up new lands, and used his ploughs with very good success for many years afterwards. Mr. Ellis agreed to send my shell, goods, and coffee, down to the Lagoon in canoes, which promise he punctually performed. I remained with him during that night. In the morning, soon after I arose, I heard the bellowing of a cow near the house, and running out of the door a laughable scene attracted my attention. Mr. Ellis had domesticated a large ring-tailed monkey, and raised a long pole near the house, on the top of which was put a box for the monkey to sleep in; having fixed a small chain around his neck, with the end fast to the pole, jocko was furnished sufficient length of chain to go up and down at his pleasure. Mr. Ellis kept two or three docile milch cows about his premises, and one of them having ventured near the monkey's pole, he ran down and seized the end of her tail, taking a couple of turns round the pole and holding fast to the end of her switcher; the poor cow struggled and bellowed to get her liberty, but jocko held on until his master appeared with a cane, when he reluctantly gave up his sport.

I took leave of my old friend and proceeded down the river. The weather being clear and warm, the woods and banks swarmed with macaws, parrots, bill-birds, and others of variegated plumage. An immense number of monkeys, chattering and jumping from one tree to another with great rapidity, formed a most pleasing and lively scene; added to which was the fragrance of countless flowers.

I arrived at the Lagoon that evening. The next day I took my coffee, shell, &c. on board, arranged my business with Warner, took leave of my Indian friends, and sailed for home.

Nothing very material happened on the way except contrary winds, which prolonged our passage. We arrived in New-York after an absence of one hundred and one days from the time we left that city, having made a profitable little voyage, which always procures a captain a good reception from all concerned in it. I then returned to Catskill, where I found my family and friends all well. Finding the Tompkins too small and uncomfortable, I requested the owners to purchase a larger craft. After remaining six days with my family, I received a letter from them, saying they had exchanged the Tompkins for a more commodious vessel, and requesting me to come to New-York as soon as circumstances would permit. Two days after the receipt of the letter I arrived there.

## CHAPTER XII.

**Schooner Price.—First Voyage.**

About the last of May, 1817, my former owners of the Biddle and Tompkins purchased the Schooner Price, built at Baltimore, sixty-eight tons burden. On my last two voyages I found all the harbors along the Spanish Main so destructive to a wood-bottomed vessel, that in a few months it would be entirely destroyed. The fresh water emptying into the sea at these places make the water brackish, which increases the quantity of worms. The Price being iron fastened, obliged us to cover her bottom with zinc instead of copper, which was accomplished in a few days. We then put an assorted cargo on board suited to that market.

On the second day of June I sailed from New-York, bound to Old Providence, St. Andrews, Corn Island, and Musquitto Shore. Nothing worthy of notice took place on the passage. We arrived at Old Providence in seventeen days, where I commenced a brisk trade. The inhabitants urgently requested me to give them a ball. I had on board a drummer and a cook who played the flute; they had a fiddler and triangle player on shore. I complied with their request, they agreeing to make all the necessary arrangements, as my time was occu-

pied in selling goods, (such as calicoes, jackonets, muslins, shoes, ribbons, jewelry, cologne water, pomatum, beads, liquors, &c.) having an invoice of one hundred and sixty different articles to be sold at retail. During the day the managers of the ball came on board, and I furnished them with coffee, sugar, crackers, cheese, &c. Soon after sunset I went on shore, where I found a motley group of English, Spanish, and Curracoa natives of all colors. I was introduced to a young white lady as a partner, who had been educated in Jamaica, and understood the rules of country dances. According to the custom of the place, the person giving a ball is expected to lead the figure during the whole night. I conformed to the fashion of course. On examining the room, I soon found it had no floor, but being an old sailor, thought I could beat my way, which I accomplished in as gallant a manner as did Lord Nelson when he fought through the combined fleet.

I had a trunk full of sheep skin morocco ladies' shoes on board, which cost at auction thirty-one cents per pair, I sold most of them here at two dollars per pair; many of them were danced out in one night. I sold many other articles at about the same per centage.

By the custom of the Island, every person invited to a ball must give one in return. One of the ladies who attended my ball gave one two nights after. Her outlay for goods bought from me was over sixty dollars.

Two or three days after the second ball I sailed for St. Andrews, where we arrived the same evening. Immediately on our anchoring a large number of the inhabitants of the Island came on board, ours being the first American vessel they had seen there in fourteen years. I commenced a heavy trade with them. This Island contains three times the population of Old Providence. As these Islanders had heard that I gave a ball at Providence, it would not do to refuse them one. It being agreed upon, I told them to appoint their own managers, and then send on board and get such articles as they required to treat their company with, not wishing to be annoyed until they were ready; and as I was a stranger, I did not want to have anything to do with giving the invitations. At the appointed hour I went on shore, a horse and servant were waiting to convey me to the ball-room, where I found a polished English lady, who was to act as my partner, and lead the figure during the night, which I was compelled to submit to until the ball ended. There was a floor in the ball-room here, which made our dancing less laborious. We kept it up briskly until 12 o'clock, and then partook of some refreshments. We then recommenced dancing, and kept perseveringly at it until sunrise next morning. But my trouble had just commenced. More than one half of the free inhabitants were colored, whom I afterward found to be my best customers, none of whom had been invited to the ball except an old man, by the name of Bent,

the wealthiest man on the Island, owning about ninety slaves, whom the whites dare not overlook. I satisfied the colored people that it was no fault of mine that they had not received an invitation to my ball, at the same time treating them with the greatest politeness, inviting them on board to partake of refreshments. They, in order to be revenged on their white neighbors, gave a ball two or three nights afterward, passing a resolution that no white man except Captain Dunham should be invited.

At the appointed time a horse and waiter were sent to convey me to the dance, which I knew it was my interest to attend. On arriving at the place I found everything in good order, and was received with the most fascinating flourishes of high life, and introduced to a partner three-fourths white, dressed in silk. I was called upon again to lead the figure for the night. At 12 o'clock partook of refreshments, and retired at four next morning, highly delighted with my prowess in dancing.

By this introduction I secured all the trade of the colored population, and retained it until I left, which was several years after the dance.

We next sailed for Corn Island, having parted with all the inhabitants, both white and black, on the most friendly terms. We arrived in two days, and commenced trade, as usual; we procured hogs, poultry, and fruits in abundance. Our trade was unexpectedly interrupted by a gale of wind which parted my largest cable. I lost the anchor, was driven



over a reef of rocks, broke the rudder, and found myself at sea in a gale, which lasted about three days; after which we rigged a spar to act as a substitute for a rudder, by which means we regained the harbor. There we repaired the damage, and sailed for Pearl Key Lagoon, where I found Mr. Warner in good health and spirits, and my Indian friends overjoyed to see me. I landed many goods here, that I might get at my assortment and recruit our store, and sold some articles to the inhabitants.

We then sailed for Cape Gracios a Dios. On our arrival, the king, who had built himself a new house, came on board, with some of his admirals and other great men, whom I treated with liquor until they were all badly intoxicated. I bartered some goods in exchange for shell, skins, gums, &c. and proceeded down along the coast to Bluefields, touching and trading at the different harbors, and then returned to the Lagoon, where I landed the remainder of my goods at our store, and then sailed for New-York. Nothing material happening on the passage, I shall omit a description of it. On arriving in the city I was well received by my owners and friends, having made a prosperous voyage. After discharging my cargo, I visited my family in Catskill, where I spent ten days, and then returned to New-York to prepare for another voyage.

## CHAPTER XIII.

**Schooner Price.—Second Voyage.**

Finding our trade increasing, my owners and myself thought it would be much advanced by sending out a small vessel to be stationed on the coast, and employed in running along the shore selling goods, and collecting return cargoes for the Price, viz: tortoise-shell, hides, skins, gums, sarsaparilla, &c. The owners of the Price then purchased a small sloop, called the *Traverse*, of near nineteen tons burden, having a mast fifty feet long. We sheathed her bottom with zinc, and rigged her for sea. My old mate, Captain N. Soper, volunteered to take command of her; a man from Troy, named Thomas Teft, shipped as mate, and a man from Staten Island as seaman. I had an Indian boy who was bound to me as an apprentice, who volunteered as cook. The Price was armed with a six-pound cannon, well mounted, and the *Traverse* with a swivel. We soon got our cargoes on board, and insured both vessels. The intention was to keep company as long as the weather would permit. Both were placed under my control. The weather being very cold, and our little vessels deeply loaded, a heavy sea in the harbor had coated them with ice.

On the nineteenth day of February, 1818, we got

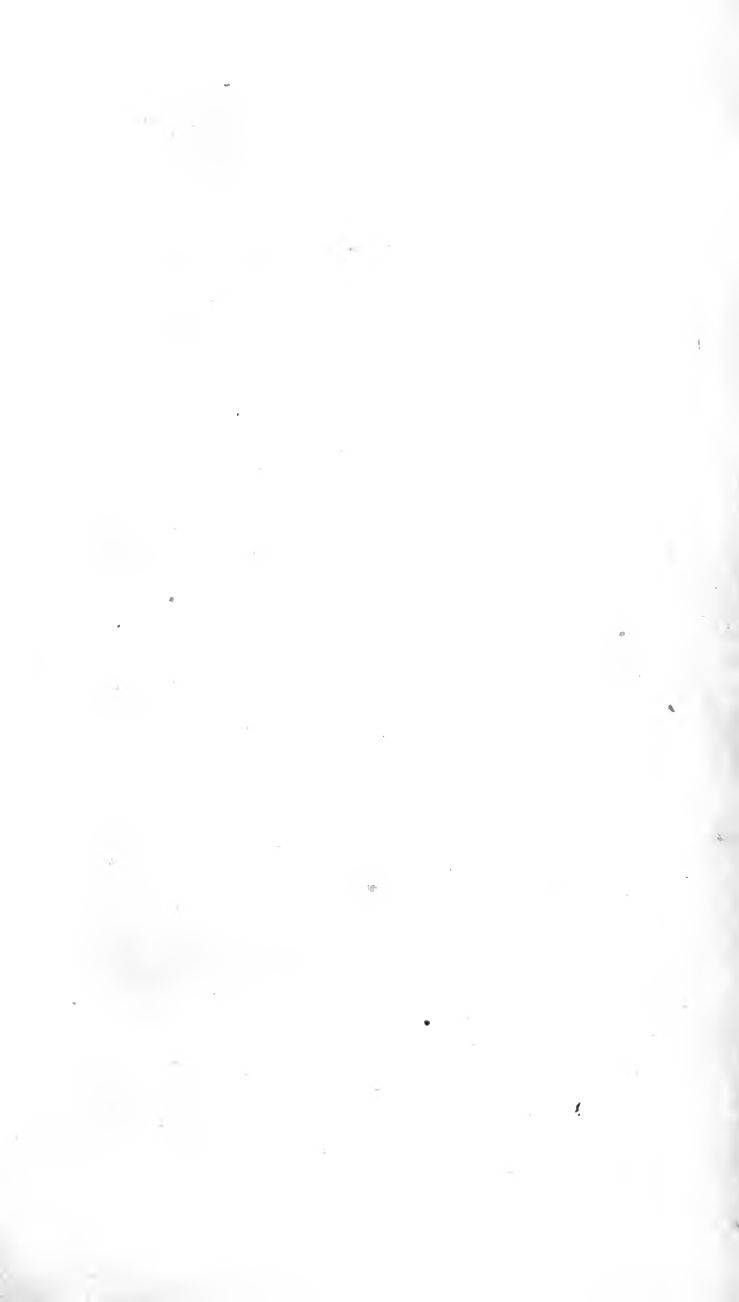
under weigh, the wharves being lined with spectators to see a vessel of eighteen tons commencing a voyage of over two thousand miles. They gave us three hearty cheers, which we answered by discharging our cannon. A fair wind carried us to sea, where we kept company for three days, when a violent gale separated us. I cruised the whole of next day in search of the *Traverse*, without finding her. Thinking it useless, I resumed my course and proceeded to the Island of Old Providence, where we arrived after a passage of seventeen days, and opened my trade as usual. The *Traverse* arrived four days after, having sprung her mast near the deck.

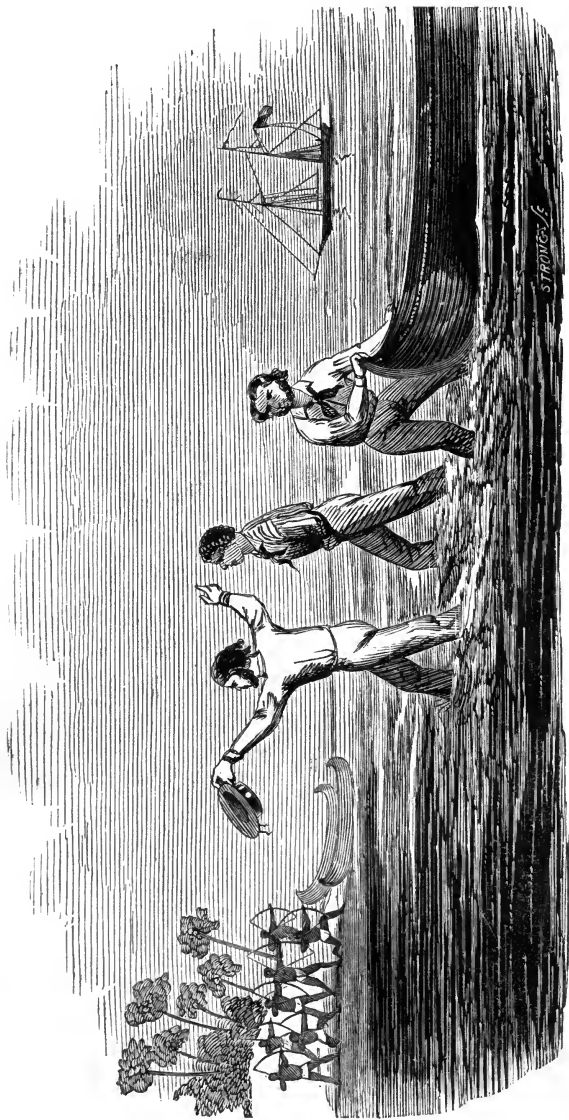
The next day we hauled the *Traverse* along side of the *Price*, raised her masts with the schooner's purchases, sawed off the broken part, about five feet, took her sails on shore and shortened them to fit the mast, put them in good order for sea, exchanged part of her goods and gave her a suitable cargo to retail along the coast. Two or three days after I gave the captain orders to proceed to the Main and stop to trade at sundry ports, named in his instructions, and from thence proceed to St. Blas, where he would meet me in the *Price*. I took Henry T. Smith with me to Lagoon, to act as clerk in our store, in place of Mr. Warner, who wished to return to New-York. I remained here two or three days, and then sailed for the Lagoon. On my arrival Mr. Warner was in good health, and much pleased to find himself released by Mr. Smith's taking his place as clerk in

the store. We landed the most of our heavy goods, made every necessary arrangement for business, and giving the proper directions, I proceeded to Bluefields, sold a few goods, cancelled some old debts, and procured a pilot for the coast of St. Blas, for which we soon after sailed.

I obtained information at Corn Island, at the Lagoon, and at Bluefields, of the English traders having heard that I intended to extend my trade to that coast. They had employed an agent whom they had supplied with the necessary articles of trade, and told the inhabitants that if they traded with that Yankee captain they would withdraw from them; and also told them that the Yankee captain might sell them some articles a little cheaper at first, but that he was a worthless fellow, and could not continue the trade long, when they would be left destitute, as no Englishman would supply them. The English traders urged the Indians to put myself and crew to death, and burn our vessel. My friends who gave me the information, strongly remonstrated against my going to St. Blas, saying that my life would be sacrificed in so doing. In a conversation afterwards with one of the English traders, I spoke of the cold-blooded murder they wished the St. Blas Indians to be guilty of, which he denied, but admitted that they told the Indians to destroy our goods.

However the minds of the Indians might have been operated upon at the time of hearing their murderous proposals, they made no attempt to harm me.





Captain Dunham landing at St. Blas.

On our arrival on the coast of St. Blas, not knowing the channel, we came to anchor near an island, where we discovered a number of canoes, and thirty or forty Indians on the shore. Being short of water, I concluded to take a small water-keg into my canoe and land among the Indians for the purpose of procuring some, and also to get a pilot, if possible, to take the vessel into the harbor. Before leaving the vessel I told the mate that the Indians had such an inveterate hatred against the Spaniards, that if any of their vessels were cast away on this coast they would massacre every person on board; that I thought they had never seen the American flag, and bade him keep a good look-out with the spy-glass, and not hoist our colors until he saw me safe among the Indians, fearing they might suppose it to be Spanish, or some enemy's flag. My mulatto pilot and sailor, and myself, then proceeded toward the island where we had seen the Indians. When within about one hundred rods of the shore there were about thirty bows and arrows pointed towards us. On looking back to the vessel I saw the colors hoisted and streaming with the wind. It being too late to retreat, and perceiving that the water was only about two feet deep, I jumped overboard, and told my men to follow; having no other clothes on save our shirts and pantaloons, the water was not particularly annoying. I took my hat in my hand and extended my arms full length, showing thereby that there were no weapons about me. As I approached the shore they all laid

down their bows and arrows and met us with a hearty welcome. The Indian arrows are made of strong reed, four or five feet long, pointed with nails or spikes about fourteen or fifteen inches in length, which they sharpen with files or cold chissels. With these they kill wild beasts, fowls and fish. When shot into the water the reed is so buoyant that the light end swims about one foot above the surface.

Previous to my departure from the Price, my Mate took a scissors, a knife, and some other articles out of the goods belonging to the cargo, and left them lying carelessly about the vessel. I requested him to put them back into the packages, together with any articles he might use; but he told me very abruptly that *he* purchased them in New-York. Some angry words passed between us. As he was an intemperate, bad dispositioned man, I had reason to suppose that he hoisted the colors for the purpose of revenging himself on me; thinking, doubtless, that the Indians would murder me, though he excused himself by saying he thought I had landed before he hoisted them.



## CHAPTER XIV.

St. Blas has no king, but is a kind of Patriarchal government, being ruled by the old men and the sookerman of the Island, whose laws are obeyed in the strictest manner. The sookerman acts as physician, and also foretells future events. Theft or adultery is seldom known in that country. The civilized world talk of liberty, but these savages alone truly enjoy it. They pay no tithes or taxes, require no locks to protect themselves from thieves, have neither taverns nor boarding houses, every traveller being made welcome at whatever house he may happen to stop. There he will receive such entertainment and fare as is provided for the family. Their hospitality is the same, whether he remains a day, a month, or longer. I never heard of but one woman of that tribe who had issue by a white man. The father of the child was a captain of a Jamaica trading vessel. When the Indians discovered her situation, she was separated from the tribe, placed in a house built for her in the woods, entirely deprived of all kind of intercourse with them; being considered as an outcast. When the child was three or four years of age it was put on board of a Jamaica vessel and banished from the country.

In describing my next voyage I shall narrate many

of the customs and manners of this region. The Indians brought their canoes alongside of our vessel and piloted us safely into the harbor, called Little Cordee, where we found good anchorage; we were immediately visited by some thirty or forty canoes. One of the Indians asked the privilege of trading for me. I told him he might if he got permission from the old men and sookermen, as we had not yet their leave so to do. He paddled to the shore, and returned in a short time with three old men and a sookerman, from whom we received the licence which we desired

I gave them plenty to eat and drink; they in return invited me on shore, where I was well entertained. My Indian trader then commenced the business for me by fathoming off cloth, many articles of staple goods, such as shirting, check, powder and shot, &c. all of which had been sold at one uniform price for many years. The Indians also had always received one dollar per pound for tortoise-shell. When any goods differed from such as the English traders had sold them, my Indian agent would ascertain the price from me and proceed in his usual way in bartering and selling. It was entirely unnecessary for me to trouble myself about his bargains. He would come to me with his hands full of silver change, saying, here captain, is so much money, and without further remark would again turn to his business of salesman.

After remaining three or four days, my clerk ask-

ed me if he might be my trader during the season of taking turtle, which lasted four or five months. His price was ten pounds Jamaica currency, about thirty dollars. This being pretty reasonable, I answered him in the affirmative, telling him to select such goods as he wished for his trade, I at the same time taking an account of them, although I dared not let him know that I had done so. I furnished him with the means of preserving his goods from the rain, supplied him with steelyards, and every article necessary for the trade on that coast. The goods amounted to about six hundred dollars. He then volunteered to pilot us along the coast free of expense, except his board and liquor.

We at length got under weigh, having about twenty canoes in tow, proceeded a few miles and came too at night under the lea of an island. In the morning we started again, and arrived at the River Caledonia; here we obtained permission to trade, the inhabitants giving us a hearty welcome. After remaining here two or three days we sailed for the River Mona, opening our trade immediately on our arrival, having obtained such license from the proper authorities, remained but a few days, and sailed for the River De Ablo, or River Devil. Here I engaged an Indian named Billy, who had sailed with Captain Humphrey, an English trader, some two years before. Billy was much pleased to see me, and immediately commenced trading in my service, upon the same terms as those on which I had engaged the

former Indian, Campbell ; he selected his goods and took about the same quantity as Campbell had, and was fitted out much in the same manner, having everything necessary to carry on the trade during the season. After remaining here three or four days, we sailed back to the River Cordee, where I had ordered Captain Soper to meet me with his sloop.

I remained at Cordee about two weeks, waiting for the appearance of the vessel. On her arrival we took out all the cargo she had collected along the coast, and put it on board the Price, and took what was left on board the Price and put it on board the Traverse, and, according to my letter of instruction, gave Captain Soper command of the Price, with directions to proceed to New-York ; he took Mr. Warner with him. On taking charge of the Traverse myself, I retained Mr. Tefts, my Indian apprentice boy, also an Indian lad who was one of the Musquitto king's brothers with me, and one of the St. Blas Indians, who acted as seaman. The schooner soon sailed for New-York, and we for Corn Island, where we arrived in four days. After touching at Corn Island, we sailed from thence to Cape Gracias a Dios, where we were visited by the king, who invited us to his house, which I accepted of. Remaining here some days, my little sloop was overloaded with Indians, eating and drinking, the king being constantly intoxicated. He gave me directions not to trust any Indian on his account without a written order from him. He came on board one day and

asked me for the amount of his account, which was near one hundred dollars. He examined it silently, then ordered his men into his canoe and abruptly left the vessel. I felt somewhat surprised at his leaving in this manner without an explanation.

In the afternoon some Indians came on board who had been in the habit of bringing the king's verbal orders for goods, and said the king had sent them to get a ten gallon keg of rum for him; not wishing to offend him, I asked the Indians where he, the king, was, they replied, "We must paddle up the river a little bit, and then ride horse a little bit." Determined to know if there was any fraud in the verbal order, I started with the Indians to see the king.

We paddled up the river about four or five miles, when we landed. A horse was brought for each man; our leader mounted, taking his ten gallon keg up before him; each was supplied with a bunch of plantain leaves for a saddle. The night being dark, and the rain falling in torrents, we groped our way through thick woods, my horse acting as my guide. I kept my hand extended before my face to protect my eyes from the limbs of the trees for some distance, when we arrived at a small creek; we dismounted and crossed over in a canoe, the Indians swimming their horses across. Being mounted again we rode about three miles further through a level prairie land. The foot-path being covered with water about four inches deep, and the rain falling inces-

santly. At length we arrived at the king's house, his majesty not having a dry thread of clothes about him. On entering I found an Indian by the name of Thompson, an old acquaintance, acting as door-keeper, who conducted me into the house and presented me with a hammock; and being very much fatigued, begged him not to tell the king that I had arrived. He promised he would not. Soon after I got in my hammock, the king, who lay in an adjoining room, called for a drink of water, which was brought. The servant at the same time telling him that the American captain had arrived (that being the name by which I was known on the Indian coast.) He immediately arose, told his servants, called quarter-masters, to bring the women for a dance. To please him I had to put on an Indian dress, have my face painted, and my head ornamented with feathers. The king took the lead in the performances, which lasted until morning; he ordered a bullock to be killed for breakfast, which made a very good repast, after which I retired, much fatigued, to a hammock, where a sound sleep soon refreshed me. The king retired to rest, slept until dark, when, springing up suddenly, he ordered his quarter-masters to bring the horses. I remonstrated with him, saying, "For pity sake, king, do not take me through that wilderness this night." Rubbing his eyes, he declared, "It is not night, but morning." After some time, being convinced of his mistake, he ordered the quarter-masters to collect the women again for

another dance, which was kept up until 11 o'clock that night, when I begged permission to retire.

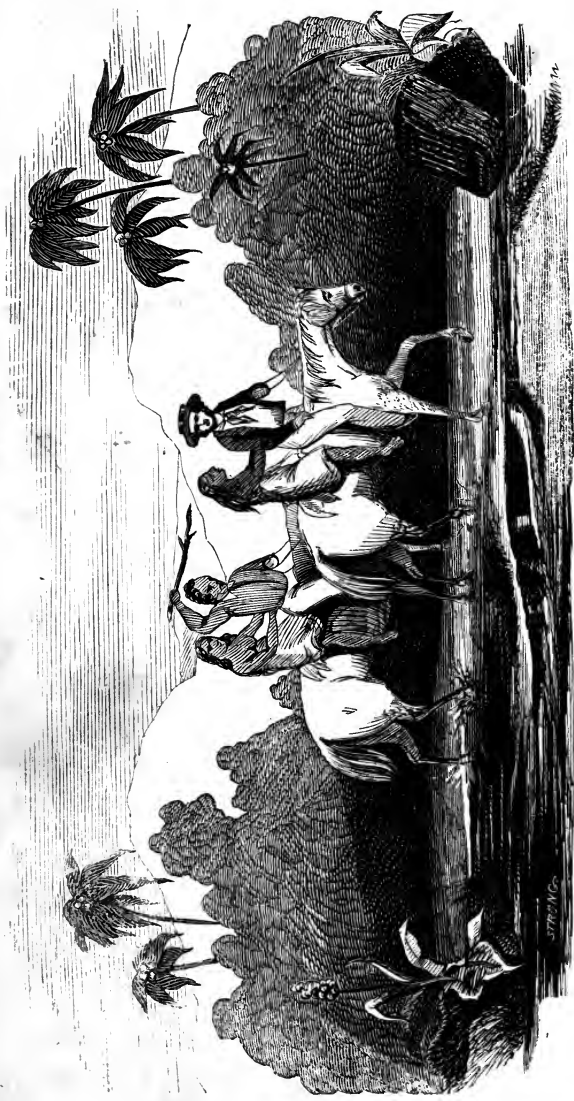
Next morning the king apologized to me by saying, since he had detained me so long, I should be remunerated with some tortoise-shell, for "I know," said he, "you would willingly stop any where, two or three days, if you could get a few pounds of tortoise-shell." Our horses were soon brought, rigged as usual, with a bunch of plantain leaves for a saddle, and a bridle made of bark. The king mounted, one of his queens being placed behind him on the same horse; the gristle of his horse's ears being removed, caused them to lap down on his head much like a long-eared hog. I mounted the other. The mud and water was at least four inches deep on the road, being the rainy season. We proceeded about a quarter of a mile, when the king dismounted, and getting up behind me, called to his waiters to get him a large stick, which he applied to my poor old horse's flank without mercy; off we went in a smart gallop, the mud and water flying in every direction. Having proceeded about a mile we came to a small lane leading from the main road, which we were traveling, along which were three small houses to be seen. The king halted, saying to me, "Go up here and I will get you some shell." I rode with the king to the front of the house, where a young Indian girl, apparently eighteen years of age, stood near the door. The king addressing me, asked if I did not think her handsome. My answer, of course, was in the affir-

mative. The king then commanded his quarter-masters to catch her and throw her on behind me. The girl having an old dress on, ran into the house and returned with a clean one, the quarter-masters then lifted her on behind me astride the horse. The king kept in the rear to drive my horse into a canter, the mud and water flying into our eyes at such a rate that I could hardly keep the road. When we came to the creek the horses swam across, while the king, the two women, and myself crossed in a canoe; the king trying to upset us, which I prevented almost by main force, as the creek swarmed with alligators. Having passed it, we travelled through woods for two or three miles, when we embarked in a canoe for the Cape. Gladly did I return to my vessel. The king, not unmindful of his promise to make me some remuneration for my detention, sold me some thirty or forty pounds of shell, which he owed to an English trader.

There was at the time two English trading vessels lying in the harbor. I had one passenger on board, belonging to Corn Island. One day the English captains, my passengers, and myself, being overtaken by a rain storm on shore, took shelter under an old woman's roof, where she was engaged in frying fish for her dinner. Her house was built like many houses in that country, simply of a thatched roof, supported by crotches, having no sides. As we were assembled here, the notion got into our heads to try the old lady's temper and placing ourselves at the







Mosquito King and Captain Dunham taking an airing.

four corners of her domicile, clapped our shoulders under the roof and bore it off, leaving the poor old woman frying her fish in the rain, which soon put out her fire, while we received a volley of curses for our sport. We, however, returned it to its proper place, breaking the poor old creature's crockery in so doing, which was all she possessed. We invited her on board our vessels the next day, telling her we would make good her loss; nor were we unmindful of our promise when she made her appearance. We supplied her with plates, cups, saucers, knives, forks, &c. so that her house was better furnished with these articles than any in the town. We also threw in a bottle of rum, to make the affair perfectly satisfactory to her.

After remaining at the Cape a few days, where I purchased some shell, a considerable quantity of India rubber, gum copal, deer and tiger-skins, and deer-horns, paying for them in goods, we proceeded to Sandy Bay, where, after bartering four or five days for such articles as we got at the Cape, we next sailed for Great River, continuing our bartering for the same articles, and then started for Corn Island, intending to take in provision there, it being decidedly the best place for that purpose in the country. From thence we sailed for the Lagoon, where having landed such goods as were needed to keep a good assortment in our store, we proceeded along the coast, touching at Bluefields, Martina, Buckatora, and some other small ports, and then returned to

Corn Island. Here I met the schooner Price, which had arrived two days previous, direct from New-York, with a new supply of goods. Captain Soper informed me that he had lost one man overboard on his passage home. I found on board the Price a man named Moies, who had some interest in the cargo. I gave the command of the sloop to Mr. Tefts, and took charge of the schooner again. I supplied Captain Tefts with a new assortment of goods, and ordered him to proceed along the Musquitto coast and procure all the return cargo he could, and from thence to St. Blas, where he could meet me in the Price. I proceeded with the Price direct to St. Blas, where I repainted her. Here Mr. Morse was taken sick and died, and we buried him on an uninhabited island, and then sailed for the harbor of Cordee, where I found my Indian trader, Campbell, who came on board and brought the returns for the goods I had left with him to sell. He brought on board a quantity of shell, a few bags of cocoa, a purse of money, and the remnants of the goods, and told me he had three or four canoe loads of fustic, laying on the beach, which he had purchased for me. He laid the shell, cocoa, return goods, and the purse of money down on the deck, telling me that was all he had. I asked him if he had taken out his wages. He said he had, and we considered all accounts between us settled, without making any figures. We remained here two or three days, and purchased a few thousand cocoa-nuts, and then sailed for the River

De Ablo, where I met my other trader, Billy, who came on board with his returns, which being the same as Campbell's, I settled his account in the same manner, with one exception. I asked him if he had taken out his wages, he answered, "Not all." when I handed back the purse of money to him, and he took out fourteen dollars, and then returned it, saying, "Now we are even," which was as good as a receipt.

Campbell was on board acting as pilot, and he and Billy told me they must go and see my country, which request I readily granted. I purchased more cocoa-nuts, and took them on board when the *Traverse* arrived. I put all the goods I had left of her cargo on board the schooner *Price*, and prepared to sail the next morning. That evening we were visited by all the old men and sookermen in that vicinity, together with forty or fifty young men; the bottle of rum was passed round among them often during the night by Campbell or Billy, the old men relating stories and giving their charge to my traders, who were going to New-York with me. The St. Blas Indians have a peculiar custom about talking: when an old man is speaking, all the company are silent, not one lisp is heard from any other person, except at the end of every sentence, when each listener says, "Ah!" When one old man has ended his story another commences without any interruption. I laid down to sleep at eleven o'clock and slept till five in the morning, when I awoke and found them talking.

Some time after, I called one of the Indians aft who spoke English, and asked him why this talk had continued all night: he answered me by saying, "The old men had told Campbell and Billy that they would be the first of their tribe whoever visited my country; that they must keep sober and honest, and conduct themselves like gentlemen."

Having all things ready for sea, I took leave of the old patriarchs by a hearty shake of the hand, and proceeded on my voyage.

Nothing material occurred until we got into the latitude of  $24^{\circ}$ , when our main-mast was carried away and we rigged a temporary jury-mast: having a long fore-sail, we were enabled to keep the schooner on her way; and being a sharp Baltimore clipper, she made pretty good headway under her fore-sail. Three days after, while laying too in a gale of wind, we lost one of our seamen, named William Latch, overboard. After a passage of thirty-five days we arrived in New-York. My Indians knew not what cold meant, and having some flannel on board, I made them some shirts on the passage, and gave them some old cast-off woollen clothing to protect them from the wintry weather of our coast. When we approached the cold latitudes we had a warm south-east wind, which brought us into the harbor of New-York without experiencing much of the severity of the weather. The first night after our arrival I went to my boarding house, where I tarried until early next morning, when I went to visit the schooner. As I approached the

wharf where she lay, I saw Campbell looking at his fingers, turning his hands over and viewing them very closely. I accosted him in his accustomed manner of speaking, saying, "Campbell, what de matter?" he replied, "My God! captain, somet'ing bite me and I can't see 'im." His own country being infested with musquittoes, sand-flies, fire-ants, and sundry insects, which he could see, this invisible sting of cold he could not account for. I took them to a clothing store and rigged them with winter dunage. I then took them to a boarding house, and in the evening the mate escorted them to the play-house, thinking he could astonish them. The next morning I asked Campbell how he liked the play, he replied, "Too much fight; one old man go dead." In spite of all my efforts to the contrary, they would follow me at a distance. One day being near the City Hall, my two Indians following, as usual, I thought I would stop and let them overtake me, and have a view of the building, knowing that Campbell had never seen even a frame house, previous to his arrival in New-York. As they came up with me the keeper came out, and invited us up into the picture gallery, where we saw full-length portraits of all the governors of the State, and many other distinguished men, which the Indians viewed without any manifestation of surprise. We soon after went down Broadway, and as we approached St. Paul's Church, Campbell observing the covered figure of the Saint, set in the wall of the building, stopped, and

looking at it some time, said, "Captain what dat old man tand dare for?" We passed on a little further, when I met my old acquaintance, Doctor Samuel L. Mitchell, who had visited me on my return from every voyage since I had been in this trade, in consequence of my furnishing him with roots, plants, and Indian curiosities. He was pleased at seeing the Indians, and asked what country they came from, their customs, manners, &c. I gave him a brief explanation, and he then insisted upon my going home with him, saying, "Mrs. Mitchell must see them," to which I consented. We repaired to his house, where I made a short visit, and he agreed to let me retire, provided I would come to the college at two o'clock that day, as he was to lecture there at that hour. On my return from the doctor's I passed through Maiden Lane, where many of the windows were decorated with toys. My Indians stopped to view them, and I could not get them any further until I entered the stores and purchased some whistling birds, swimming geese, &c. which they looked upon as the greatest curiosities in the whole city. At two o'clock I repaired to the college with my Indians. The doctor felt of their heads, looked down their throats, &c. and said they belonged to the same species as those who inhabit the Sandwich Islands and a part of Asia. The students gave them a donation of eight dollars, and we returned to our respective boarding houses.

A few days after, General Jackson visited New-York, which caused considerable noise and bustle.



My Indians called on me to conduct them to the place of his landing, which was Whitehall, saying, "Me want to see dat big big American ginerel." I conducted them to the place of landing, and the first object which attracted their attention was the military officers forming the procession, with long feathers on their hats, and they begged me very hard to go purchase some of those feathers for them. These Indians had every temptation to get intoxicated, having plenty of money given them by the owners of the *Price* and myself, and a donation of eight dollars from the students of the college: in addition to which the cartmen daily put up six-penny pieces for them to shoot at with their bows and arrows, which they generally got. We made them acquainted with a number of pleasant liquors which they had never before tasted, such as wine, cordial, beer, &c. but nothing could induce them to get drunk, having received a strict charge from the old men of their own country before they left home to keep sober until they returned.

After going through the necessary forms at the Custom House, the vessel was unloaded, and I obtained a furlough of two weeks to visit my family at Catskill, whom I found in good health. At the appointed time I returned to New-York and made the necessary preparations for another voyage.

## CHAPTER XV.

**Schooner Price.—Third Voyage.**

Having purchased a suitable cargo for the trade, and got it on board, we were prevailed upon to take as passengers, a man and his wife, with two small children and a black servant, whom we tried hard to get rid of, by charging them an exorbitant price; but the man insisted on going, having been formerly a resident of Old Providence, and one of my old customers in that island. My cabin was not larger than a farmer's hen-roost, having only four berths, and those so narrow that one could hardly turn over in them. At night we covered the floor of the little cabin completely; the man and his wife, two children, the black servant, my two Indians, cabin boy, the mate and myself, all lodged in one nest. We sailed from New-York about the third of March, 1819, bound to Old Providence, St. Andreas, Corn Island, Musquitto Shore, and St. Blas. When we arrived in latitude  $32^{\circ}$  we were overtaken by a violent gale of wind, which obliged us to heave the vessel too. As the gale abated (the sea running very high) we shipped a sea which swept our deck, taking the cook and caboose, which was well served down to ring-bolts, drove into the deck, but they were drawn out by the violence of the waves. Our boat, oars,

and other articles on deck were all swept overboard. By means of some spare running gear the cook was hauled on board. The next day the sea moderated, when we opened the hatches and got out a new caboose. On my departure from Corn Island I had taken an order from an English trader to bring out two patent American cabooses for him, which I then had on board. We rigged our new caboose and proceeded on our voyage, meeting with no further disasters worthy of notice. On our arrival at Old Providence I found a small fleet of vessels there, called patriots, (another name for pirates,) who had taken possession of the island, and had hoisted the Columbian flag. On my entering the harbor they laid an embargo on my vessel for a few days. The expedition was commanded by a man who called himself Aurey, assisted by another, styled Admiral Bogar, and the third went by the title of Commodore Parker. Their squadron consisted of two small gun brigs, and two or three privateer schooners. Their land force amounted to two or three hundred men: they had what they called an English camp, a French camp, and an American camp. They had hanged one American, and severely flogged another for some crime, giving him one hundred lashes under the gallows. They pretended to hold some commission under General Bolivar. I demanded a return of my vessel, which they reluctantly granted me, and I sailed for the Island of St. Andreas, where I found another squadron of vessels from England, consisting of a twenty-gun brig,

commanded by Captain Hudson, with three transport ships, having about five hundred officers and soldiers on board, bound to Porto Bello, all under the command of Sir Gregor McGregor. On my arrival I was visited by an old English officer, named Rafter, who was apparently a gentleman, he acted as commander in the absence of Sir Gregor McGregor, who had not arrived at that time; he wanted to purchase a pipe of gin from me for the use of the troops, and give me a bill on London in payment. The next day Sir Gregor arrived from St. Domingo, in company with an old Spanish gentleman, named Lopes, from whom he had borrowed about twelve thousand dollars, and promised to make him governor of the first city he should capture.

The next day Commodore Hudson came on board the *Price*, and offered me one hundred dollars per day and a handsome present for myself, to join the fleet and go on an expedition with them for a few days. I told him that my vessel was insured, and that it would be a total breach of my orders to comply with his request. In the afternoon they laid an embargo on the *Price*. The following day was appointed for a great celebration, which was to take place at the house of Mrs. Lever, a respectable widow lady. I visited the place where they landed the troops from the vessels, raised a flag staff and hoisted the New Grenadian flag. Silk cushions were brought into the house and placed on the table where General McGregor, Governor Lopes, and other officers,

took the oath of allegiance to the government of New Grenada; most of the officers being under half pay from the English, looked sad when they renounced their allegiance to their own country. Three days after, they sailed for Porto Bello, taking Colonel Woodbine as pilot, and proceeding within a few miles of that place, they landed in a thicket of woods; then taking a foot-path, they entered the city undiscovered by the inhabitants, and took possession of the place without the loss of a man. Most of the inhabitants fled from their houses and left them to the conquerors. Old Lopes was appointed governor, and the officers taking possession of the vacant dwelling houses which the Spaniards had left, sat themselves down like private gentlemen. Soon after the soldiers revolted and refused to do duty, alledging that the general had promised them twenty dollars bounty for the first city they should capture. Before the insurrection could be put down, the general raised eight dollars per man and distributed it among them, and then issued a proclamation to the inhabitants, inviting them to return to their habitations and take the oath of allegiance to the new government, when private property would be respected. Most of the people complied with his request, by taking the oath required of them. In the meantime information was secretly sent over to the Pacific by these Spaniards, where they raised an army of eight hundred men, who marched across the Isthmus, and lay encamped in the woods three

or four miles back of the city ; while those who had taken the oath of allegiance were keeping up a regular communication with them. The soldiers who had possession of the city having procured an abundance of liquor, all got intoxicated, and the officers retired to their beds without placing any sentries on duty. The Spaniards in the city sent spies to the royalists, informing them that the patriot soldiers were all drunk, and totally off their guard. During the night the royalists marched into the city and took possession of the forts, which were very strong, (one in particular is said to mount three hundred and sixty-five guns,) without meeting with any resistance, or the loss of a single man. They killed about thirty of the patriots and made the remainder prisoners, only twelve escaping. I here give you a sketch of the complete success of the Spaniards, as recited by the General's right hand man. Licutenant Cookley, aid-de-camp to General McGregor, about three weeks after the loss of the army, said, "That on the night of the re-capture of the city by the royalists, he was quartered in the second story of the government house in Porto Bello, General McGregor occupying one room, and Governor Lopes another, and being himself very unwell, he was obliged to get out of his bed and walk the room. Between three and four o'clock he heard some persons coming up stairs. Feeling alarmed, he seized his sword and pistols and ran to the door of the room, where he met three men well armed ; he shot one, and killed another with his

sword, the third one retreated with a slight wound; in the meantime he cried out, 'General McGregor, you are betrayed.' The general sprang from his bed, and taking his mattress, dropped it from the window on the ground; then letting himself down to it, ran for the shore, and jumping into the sea attempted to swim to the commodore's vessel; but being unskilled in swimming, he was picked up by a boat and carried on board, having no clothing on except his shirt. Another division of Spaniards ascended the stairs of the government house, and proceeding to the room of Governor Lopes, killed him in his bed."

Those taken prisoners were marched across the Isthmus to the South Sea, where they were compelled to work in chains on the fortifications. Some months after I learned that these prisoners, in trying to effect their escape, were most of them butchered by the Spaniards

After my release from the embargo at St. Andreas I sailed for the coast of St. Blas, where I arrived without any further molestation, at the harbor of De Ablo. My vessel was soon surrounded with canoes, filled with old men and young ones. No ambassador returning from a foreign mission to his own country was ever received with a more hearty welcome than my Indians were by their own countrymen. Liquor was soon passed around, and a long conversation commenced, which lasted, with little intermission, until the next morning; and my traders seemed to be absolved from the injunction laid upon them by

the old men, not to get drunk during their voyage, as I discovered that Campbell was so drunk before twelve o'clock, that he could not rise from his seat without help. While relating his adventures he gave his hearers a long description of the white rain he had seen in New-York, (meaning snow,) and sundry other wonderful events and curiosities.

The Andes mountains on this coast extend near the sea-shore, and are inhabited by baboons and other large monkeys, who keep up a hideous noise during the night, which was a great annoyance to our slumbers, as the echo passes from mountain to mountain. The next day after our arrival here we experienced a violent thunder storm, the noise of the thunder echoed in a most tremendous manner from different hills, which appeared like a cannonading along the whole coast. I sat amazed at the sound, when an old Indian who was intoxicated, broke silence, by saying, "That thunder is great rascal, he make too much quarrel here."

My traders now applied for another outfit of goods for the coming season, which I readily supplied them with, they taking about the same quantity as on the previous voyage.

The men of St. Blas are of small stature, generally about five feet two or three inches high; wearing their hair long on the back of the head, cued down on their backs with a cotton ribbon of their own manufacture, the hair cut straight across the forehead, high cheek bones, and of a light copper com-



plexion. They dress in check or flannel shirts, with linen trowsers. The young men are not allowed to wear their shirt flaps inside of the waist-bands of their trowsers until they are about forty years old, when they assume the character of old men. The women are small and delicately formed, having very small feet and hands, and are remarkably modest in their behaviour. Their dress consists of a piece of blue cloth, about four feet long, wrapped around their bodies under the arms, and extending to their knees, a string or two of coral beads tied around their legs, below the knee, and another around above the ankle. The women all wear a piece of pure gold wire of large size, in the form of a triangle, stuck through the inside of the nose. The old men wear a number of strands of coral beads around their necks, and hanging down on their bosoms. The sookerman wears two or three pounds of large coral beads hanging closely about the neck, and the old men wear their shirt flaps inside of their waist-bands as a mark of their dignity. From the best information I can obtain, St. Blas is the oldest Republic on the Continent of America, and should be a model government for Mexico and the South American Republics, which are constantly driving their rulers out of the country and changing Republics into Empires.

The soil of St. Blas produces an abundance of bread-stuffs, such as yams, sweet potatoes, cassander, eddies, plantains, &c. Also cocoa-nuts, lemons, oranges, sugar cané and cocoa. They here breed a

great number of hogs, poultry, &c. The country abounds with large quantities of wild hogs, mountain cows, armadillas, deer, conies, and innumerable wild fowl. The whole coast swarms with turtle, craw-fish, manatee's, and a great variety of shell-fish. There are some four hundred islands, lying from two to four miles from the main land-shore, which forms an inland sea, making the whole coast a good harbor. Every one of these islands produces limes, or lemons, bird, cayenne, gourd and squash peppers. When a table is set in this country a green pepper and lemon are placed by the side of your plate, which serves for pepper and vinegar to season your meat or vegetables. After clearing up half an acre of ground, ten days labor of one man in each year would produce bread-stuffs sufficient for a family of fifteen persons. Plantains set out on good soil will yield a crop, every nine months, for twenty years. Yams and sweet potatoes require planting and digging yearly.

Having given the reader a short description of St. Blas, which may appear somewhat imperfect, I hope it will be recollected, should there be any imperfections, that I have no history of that country to refer to; most of my information having been obtained from the natives, who speak broken English. On taking leave of St. Blas I proceeded to St. Andreas, at which place I arrived after a passage of two days. Here I met General McGregor, who appeared much dejected, having among other losses left all his clothing behind, which fell into the hands

of the enemy. Lieutenant Coakley came on board my vessel and related to me all the particulars of the expedition which I have narrated. Of the land forces, only twelve returned out of five hundred who left here some three weeks before. After remaining here three or four days, we sailed for Cape Gracios a Dios. On my arrival there I commenced trading, as usual. The next morning, it being the Fourth of July, and being in a strange port, I thought I would not make any preparations for celebrating the day. I told the mate, however, that he might release the crew from work and give them some extra rations of grog, &c. Before I had finished giving my orders to the mate, the king came on board with a large canoe, loaded with Indians, and saluting me with a loud voice, said, "Blast your eyes, why don't you fire a salute, hoist your colors and celebrate your country's holyday." I answered him, by saying, "I have nothing good to eat." He replied, "You shall soon have something;" when getting into the canoe with the Indians, they paddled him on shore, and killing a beef, soon returned with two quarters. We then hoisted our colors and fired a salute; and a number of the king's officers coming on board, we partook of a good dinner; and not forgetting plenty of liquor, we made ourselves delightfully merry. At night the king and company retired very peaceably.

The king had frequently solicited me to take him home with me, but never got himself ready to embark, and he now renewed the conversation on the

subject. I told him that my family did not reside in the city of New-York, but lived two degrees north of it, at a small village called Catskill, near a mountain of that name. He replied, that would suit much better, as he wanted to see the country and my home. He then said, "There is one condition in the bargain; if I go home with you, you may call me major, or colonel, or some other officer; but if you call me king I will be the death of you, for I am not going home with you to be made a damned puppet-show of."

Having finished my trade here, I sailed down along the coast, touching and trading at the different harbors, as usual, until I arrived at the Lagoon, where I landed the goods from the vessel at the store, and taking in all the exchange goods collected there, sailed for Corn Island, where we took in some more return cargo. While at Corn Island Captain Mitchell gave me an order to bring him a new boat, thirty feet long, to row with six oars, &c.

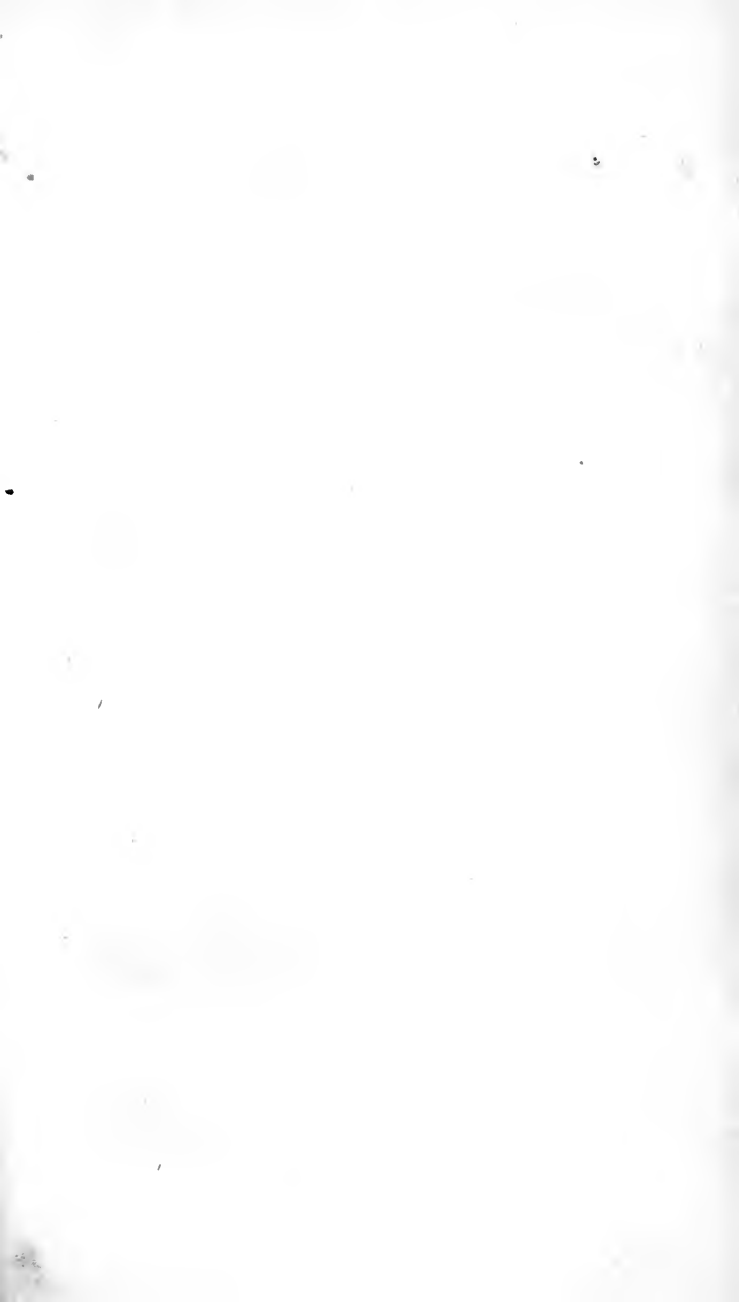
We now sailed for New-York, where we arrived without meeting with any occurrence worth recording. After discharging our cargo I again visited my family at Catskill, whom I found in good health. I remained with them about eight days, and then returned to New-York. In the course of a few days we had procured another cargo, which taking on board, together with the new boat for Captain Mitchell, we were again ready for sea.

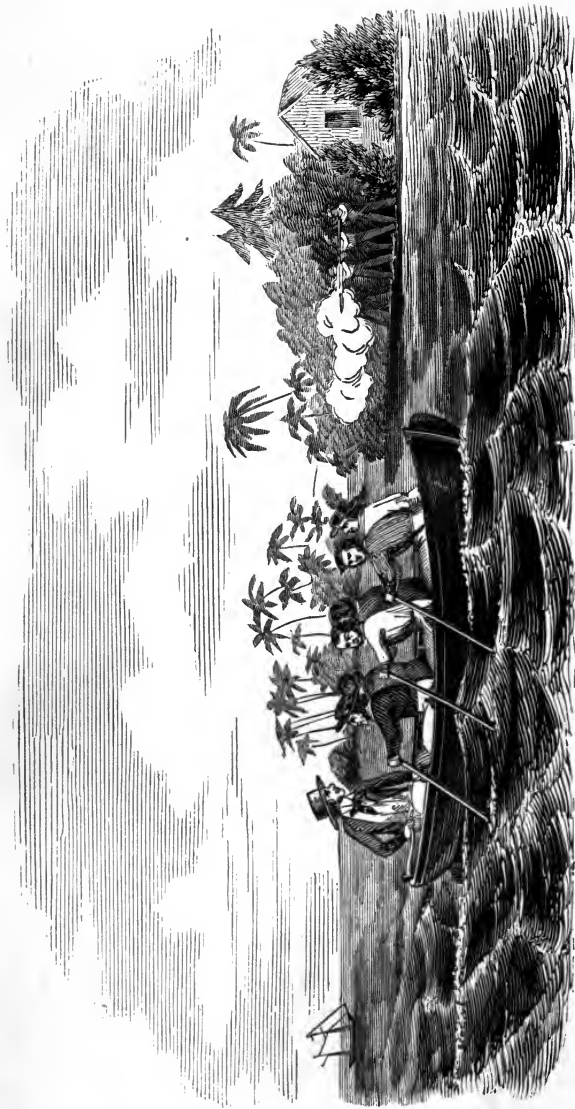
## CHAPTER XVI.

**Schooner Price.—Fourth Voyage.**

The Price being now ready for sea, about the first of August we got under weigh and proceeded on our voyage towards Old Providence, St. Andreas, Corn Island and the Main. We made our passage to Old Providence in seventeen days, where we remained about three days bartering off goods in our usual manner. We then sailed for St. Andreas. On the passage we, in a squall, carried away the head of the schooner's main-mast, above the eyes of the shrouds. On our arrival at that port I repaired the mast-head by cutting off five or six feet, and forming a new one. This altered the appearance of the vessel very much, when viewed from a distance. We remained some time at St. Andreas, selling goods, collecting debts, taking in all the cotton and other freight we could procure. Here I took on board a captain and crew belonging to Jamaica, whose schooner had been upset in a squall and lost near this island. I agreed to carry them to the Main, where they expected to get on board of some of their own country vessels. We got under weigh and sailed for Corn Island with a light breeze. When we arrived within seven or eight miles of Great Corn Island the wind died away to a dead calm, and we

lay drifting at the mercy of the sea. I was in great haste to get on shore at the island, as I had ordered Captain Teft, who commanded the sloop *Traverse*, to meet me there in the *Price* on the tenth of September, which time had expired some days before. Fearing he would be discouraged by waiting, and sail for some other port, which would cause a great delay in our meeting, and there being no signs of a wind that would carry the *Price* into the harbor that night, I was advised to hoist out the new boat which we carried out for Captain Mitchell; having a double boat's crew with the Englishmen, we could man her with six oars and soon row in. The boat was accordingly hoisted out and manned, and we proceeded toward the shore. It being a star-light evening, and the harbor having some rocks and stones on the bottom, I seated myself on the taffrail of the boat, which raised my head some two feet above the heads of the crew, and enabled me to see any dangerous rocks, and steer clear of them, it being what seamen call a bright bottom. I had on my head a large brimmed white Panama hat, of course a good mark to shoot at. A few days previous to my leaving Corn Island, on my last voyage, it was currently reported there that the United States man-of-war Schooner *Fire Brand* was cruising in these seas. We approached the harbor about nine o'clock in the evening. As we came near the shore we were hailed by one of the gang who were there, saying, "What boat is that?" My schooner always carried canoes instead of boats,





Captain Dunham landing at Corn Island.



which we found much better to land in the surf, and for that reason I had abandoned the use of the latter in this trade, for the last three years, and all the inhabitants of that island knew it. My boat being long, and much resembling what is called on board of a man-of-war the captain's gig, I answered, "United States Schooner Fire Brand." They said, "pull in then." At that instant fourteen men fired into us, the shot whistling past my head so close that it appeared to deafen me for a moment. As soon as they hailed us, I told the men in the boat to stop rowing, so that the questions and answers could be distinctly heard. As soon as they had fired, a favorite old sailor in the boat, who pulled the after oar, with his back toward the shore, being between me and those who fired at us, spoke to me in a very mild tone, saying, "Captain, I am wounded." I then told the crew to pull away, they all gave way upon their oars except this man, who laid still in the bottom of the boat; this irritated me so much, thinking that my favorite old tar should be the first to skulk from danger, not supposing from the mildness of his expression that he was much wounded, I jumped from the tiller of the boat in great haste, caught him by the collar and gave him a shake, saying, "Pull away, you skulking fellow." You may imagine my astonishment when I found that he was a lifeless corpse. In the meantime I heard the company on shore ramming down their cartridges into their guns, preparing for another fire. All the time keeping a bright

look-out alongside of the boat, for fear of running her on the rocks, I discovered that we had got into two or three feet water, and were not more than one hundred and fifty feet from those who were preparing to fire a second time. I ordered my men to stop rowing and follow me, which they immediately did. I jumped overboard into the water, my crew following me. We then made our way to our assailants, when I found my own clerk, and Captain Tefts, of the little sloop *Traverse*, who were here waiting for my arrival, Captain Mitchell, for whom I brought the boat, and Benjamin Downs, father of a colored apprentice boy I had then on board. In short, they were all old acquaintances of mine. I was highly excited on the occasion. They made a long apology by saying, that the royalists in Porto Bello had fitted out two armed schooners to scour the coast, and that they had captured two English vessels found trading with the Indians: that they mistook the *Price* for one of them, her appearance being so much altered by the loss of the head of her main-mast, that they supposed I had been captured by one of these vessels and was a prisoner in the boat, and compelled to answer their questions, as they all knew my voice, and that if they suffered a crew to land they would all be butchered, as they had given aid and shelter to the patriots for a long time. I landed the body of my unfortunate man and placed it under the care of some of my friends, procured a pilot, went on board the *Price*, and brought her into the harbor the

next morning. I then buried the poor sailor in as decent a manner as the country would admit of, collecting most of the inhabitants of the island to join the funeral procession. There being no clergymen in the island, I read the burial service at the grave, this being my usual custom at sea on committing dead bodies to the ocean.

I fitted out the *Traverse* for another cruise by giving Captain Teft a new supply of goods, when he proceeded on a trading voyage to the Main. I took Mr. Smith, the clerk of the store on board, and sailed for the Lagoon, when we took on board all the goods we had there, and proceeded to a small harbor, called Salt Creek, supposed to be a better place for our trade. I also took a few Indians to assist in building the store, which I landed there, with myself and crew, and erected a comfortable building in less than four days, modeled after the houses of that country, landed a supply of goods, and left Mr. Smith to dispose of them, sold the *Sloop Traverse*, and took Captain Teft and his crew on board. Having learned that the royal governor of Porto Bello had fitted out one or two man-of-war schooners, which had captured two English traders on the coast of St. Blas, where it was necessary for me to proceed, I hired three men in addition to Captain Tefts and his little crew, to proceed with me to that place. My schooner being armed with a six-pound cannon, with about thirty fowling guns, plenty of cutlasses, and some boarding pikes, we proceeded to the coast of

St. Blas, where we were advised by the Indians to put the schooner into a small river, about two hundred feet wide, and wait a few days before we proceeded to the River De Ablo, our port of destination. We warped the schooner into the mouth of the river, in shoal water, where we supposed the enemy's vessels could not come near enough to injure us, and prepared ourselves for an encounter with their boats if they sent them to attack us, by making cartridges of musket-balls and buck-shot, put up in bags of six pounds each, in addition to round balls and cannister-shot. I likewise supplied about thirty Indians with ammunition, who promised to come to my assistance if the enemy disturbed me. I divided my men into two watches, and kept a good look-out four days and nights. About the fifth night we heard the sound of a horn a number of times; about 12 o'clock all hands were called to quarters. We soon discovered, however, that the sound proceeded from a canoe, which when we had let it approach within hail, we found to contain the crew of an English trader, who had been captured by a royal privateer and carried into Porto Bello, where they had escaped from their prison, stolen a canoe, and then paddled to this place, a distance of about sixty miles, without food. Soon after, we learned from the Indians that the cruisers had left the coast. We then proceeded to the River De Ablo, where I found my traders waiting my arrival. They brought their returns, goods, &c. on board, and a settlement was made in

a satisfactory manner on both sides in less than one hour. I purchased a few thousand cocoa-nuts and some fustic, which I took on board, and sailed for Cape Gracios a Dios, touching at Corn Island.

On my arrival at the Cape I took on board all the return cargo I could procure, and proceeded to the Lagoon, stopping at the different harbors, as usual. When at the Lagoon I made known my intention of leaving the trade, when a number of sookermen assembled to bestow their farewell benediction upon me, saying that I had traded a long time with them, and that they were much pleased with me, and did not blame me for leaving them, as they supposed I wanted to stop at home and mind my wife and pickaninies (meaning children) for a time, but should never die until I returned to that country, and would never die there, but return to my own country, after I had visited them, and die at my own home. After taking an affectionate leave of them all, we took our departure toward home.

After buffeting the storms and tempests of the ocean for nearly four years, carrying on an average, a crew of six persons, including the mate and myself, and having lost six, viz: one by desertion, one by death on board, one shot, and three by drowning, I thought it best to seek some more comfortable trade in which to gain a support for myself and family, and one less exposed to hardships, and such constant risk of health and life. I was always compelled, while on this trading business, to sleep on deck,

my cabin being small and dark, having no windows. If I laid down in the cabin I was soon covered with cock-roaches, musquittoes, and fire-ants, besides being exposed to centipedes, scorpions, &c. which terrified me so much that I dare not take lodging there while we were in the tropical climes, although I needed shelter from the excessive rains which visit that country from May until November. Having a good awning, which was always spread when the vessel was anchored, we generally ate, drank and slept on deck until we arrived in the cold latitudes, when those insects became torpid, and cold weather compelled me to seek shelter in the cabin. On parting with the Indians I felt distressed, and could not avoid showing my gratitude toward them for their native kindness, and the many evidences of friendly intent which they had shown for me. I had often called at their hovels when out on excursions, being fatigued and hungry, needing food and rest, when the poor Indian, having but one plate and one old knife and fork in his house, would place them on his little table, or some substitute for one, and cook the best meal he could procure, making me take a seat by the table, and with a hearty good will urging me to eat, while he, sharpening the end of a stick that he might take the meat out of the pot with it, would sit down on the ground-floor and eat his dinner, refusing to come to the table with me, because he had but one set of dishes. Having but one hammock to sleep in himself, he invariably left that for

me, while he would take his lodging on a cow-skin placed on the ground-floor.

The whole furniture of each Indian family would not cost ten dollars.

We stopped at Corn Island, collected all the return we could obtain, and sailed for New-York, where we arrived about the first of January, 1820, without any particular incident worth notice, discharged the cargo, settled with my owners, and returned to Catskill, where I found my family in the enjoyment of their usual health. I now determined to remain at home during the winter, and enjoy some repose from the toils of the sea, having spent but five or six weeks with my family during the last five years.

I now entered into an agreement, in company with Mr. Apollos Cooke, merchant, of Catskill, to open a trade from that place to the West Indies. During the winter we purchased a cargo of lumber for that market, intending to charter or purchase a vessel to carry it there as soon as the navigation of the Hudson River opened.

## CHAPTER XVII.

**Schooner Enterprise.**

Early in the month of March, 1820, I proceeded to New-York, for the purpose of chartering or purchasing a vessel to carry our timber to the West India market, and spent a few days in the city on that business. While sitting at the breakfast table one morning, I was asked by a ship-master, an old acquaintance, if I did not want to take a voyage to Bermuda. I replied no; that I came to New-York to charter a vessel to go to Catskill, and take in a cargo of lumber there. He said he thought I might make some sale or contract for it in that place. Here our conversation ended, and I thought no more about it. After breakfast he asked me to take a walk with him. When we had journeyed some little distance, we met a man with whom he passed the usual compliment of good morning, and said, "This is Captain Dunham, of whom I spoke to you." He asked me what wages I would require to take charge of a schooner to go to Bermuda. I told him fifty dollars per month. He said he had agreed with a captain to go the voyage for forty dollars per month, but he was unfortunately taken sick and could not go. I bid him good morning, and had proceeded a few rods when he called on me to stop, saying he would split



the difference with me. I told him I would go. He then took me into a store, saying, "There is your mate and crew, and I wish you to take them to a Notary Public's office in Pine-street, and have the shipping papers made out, and I will come there with the money and pay the expenses;" which he soon performed. After this was accomplished we went to the Custom House and obtained a clearance, and then parted and went to dinner. He requested me to call immediately after dinner at a lumber-yard he mentioned, where I would find him on board the schooner, as he had engaged a passage for New-Haven at four o'clock that afternoon, where he resided. He handed me a letter addressed to the captain of the Schooner Enterprise, containing direction for the voyage; and telling me he hoped I would do for him as I would for myself, took leave of me. I found the schooner to be one of the large full-built Eastern vessels, having the deck loaded to the height of eight feet. I hurried and got some clothing and a small out-fit, and having left some old clothes and bedding, charts, quadrants, &c. in New-York, on my last voyage; I had them put on board that afternoon, procured a pilot and went to sea at eight o'clock the next morning. We made our passage to Bermuda in seven days, where we discharged our cargo, and taking on board a ballast of fustic, returned from Bermuda to New-York in seven and a half days; making the whole time gone only twenty-nine days, being one of the most pleasant voyages I ever made. My ac-

quaintance with the owner was so short, that, after my return, when he came on board and gave me his hand, I looked for some time before I could recollect him. When I left Catskill I took with me only two or three changes of shirts, &c. promising my family to return in a few days. In the journey I so unexpectedly took there was nothing interesting, and I merely insert it to keep up the chain of my voyages.

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### **Schooner Felicity.**

About the first of June, 1820, I chartered the Schooner Felicity in New-York, and proceeded to Catskill, and took in a cargo for St. Domingo; returned to New-York, and after shipping a crew, sailed on the twenty-second of June for Port au Prince, in the Island of St. Domingo, where we arrived after a passage of eighteen days, without the occurrence of anything which would interest the reader. I found Port au Prince to be a large but dirty city, no care being taken to clean the streets, the yellow fever often raging here, particularly among the shipping. The government is called a Republic, with a president elected for life, receiving a salary of forty thousand dollars for his services, and thirty thousand for

his table expenses. The president being a military chieftain, exercises great power over his subjects, who have only the shadow of a Senate and Assembly, as they are subservient to his will. The soil of the Island is very fertile, producing sugar-cane, coffee, cocoa, and three crops of corn in one year; also, beans, cabbages, water-mellons, and most kinds of garden vegetables: plantains, yams, and every variety of tropical fruits in abundance. The Island at this time was divided into three departments; the northern part was held by a black royal Emperor, who styled himself Christoff, and exercised as much power over his subjects as does the Emperor of Russia over his. The southern part was owned by the Spaniards, as a Republic; the western by the Republicans called Haytians, who were then at war with the Royalists under the command of the black emperor. The war between those two parties had been carried on for many years, and ended in the total overthrow of the Royalists; the emperor blowing his brains out with his pistol.

The president of this Republic lays heavy export duties on the produce of the Island. The stamp duties on paper are said to amount to over two millions per annum. All merchants and mechanics pay a heavy tax for licenses to carry on their business. Whites are excluded from carrying on their trades in their own names, or from purchasing real estate in this Republic. A white can take a black partner, male or female, and do business in his or her name.

Most of the white men settled here prefer the latter. This government has a mint, and coin their own money, which contains ten per cent of silver mixed with other metal. They coin no pieces larger than twenty-five cents, none smaller than six and a quarter. This coin is considered a lawful tender, and the laws strictly prohibit the carrying of any foreign gold or silver out of the country, on penalty of forfeiting it. This compels any person selling a cargo there to lay the returns out in some of the produce of the Island, which is consequently the cause of heavy losses to the shippers. The inhabitants are a mixed race of black and white, varying in color from the blackness of charcoal to almost the whiteness of a snow-ball, and hundreds of them have to take hard oaths to satisfy the authorities that they have some black blood running through their veins, which entitles them to the rights of citizenship in the Island. I have seen many red-whiskered fair complexioned men pass themselves off for men of color. Their national religion is Roman Catholic, no other being tolerated, but strictly prohibited. The president keeps up a standing army of forty thousand men, well uniformed, disciplined and equiped. As I shall have to refer to their laws, customs and manners in my next voyage, I shall leave the subject for the present.

Not being able to sell my timber at Port au Prince without a sacrifice, my consignee applied to the government agent to purchase it, of which he acquainted the president, who gave me a letter addressed to

the public administrator of Jerimie, and requesting me to proceed with my vessel and cargo to that port, which I immediately complied with, after getting a letter of address from an Italian Jew I found in Port au Prince, but who resided in Jerimie, addressed to Messrs. Laforet & Brier, to whom I consigned my vessel and cargo. On my arrival at that place my consignees sold to the administrator all the timber he wanted, and the remainder at an under price to individuals. My provisions sold at a saving. Jerimie contains about two hundred houses, most of them being in a dilapidated condition, in consequence of the constant alarm in which the inhabitants have been kept by a troop of banditti, headed by an insurgent colonel, who had deserted from the army, and had so terrified the people that the women and children took shelter in the forts during the night, while the men were kept under arms, being obliged to suspend all agricultural pursuits, and leave their villages to decay. A few months since, the chief of the banditti had been killed, his troops surrendered their arms and received a pardon from the president. The inhabitants were now making great preparations to repair their buildings and call back their former trade.

While in this port, the padre, or priest died; he was carried to the church in a chair, being tied fast to it, in a sitting posture, a book placed in his hands. The corpse remained in this situation until about four o'clock in the afternoon, when a marble slab

was taken out of the floor, an excavation made in the ground, the body deposited in the hole with the clothes on, and then covered with a thick coat of lime.

A friend of mine, named Ghio, arrived here from Port au Prince in company with one Captain Mills, from New-York, and while he and the captain were walking the streets of Jerimie, Ghio for the first heard of the death of the padre, when bursting into a flood of tears, he exclaimed, "Captain Mills the poor padre is dead, and I suppose I shall have to fill his place again," weeping at the same time. After a moments pause, he said, "Captain Mills, it is a damned good birth, I can make ten dollars a day by it." Ghio acted as a substitute in the place of the deceased padre until his place was supplied by another.

I remained at Jerimie three or four weeks, employed in selling out my cargo and obtaining a return freight of coffee, &c. I procured many orders for house frames and other articles, and was strongly urged to bring out some carpenters and a blacksmith, whom the inhabitants promised to aid and assist in their business. Having disposed of all my cargo and taken on board my return freight, I proceeded to sea, bound to New-York, where I arrived in safety after a passage of eighteen days, sold my return cargo, and sailed for Catskill, where I arrived about the first of November. I then repaired the schooner and prepared for another voyage.

## CHAPTER XIX.

**Schooner Felicity.—Second Voyage.**

At Catskill I procured another cargo, filled up all my orders, and taking on board four carpenters as passengers, bound to Jerimie, sailed for New-York, where we remained three or four days employed in shipping a crew, purchasing stores, &c. We sailed from New-York about the eighth of December, and arrived at Jerimie about the first of January, 1821. On my arrival I called on my old friends, Leforet & Brier, where I was politely received, particularly by Mr. Brier, who escorted me to his house to take breakfast. After inquiring about the passage of my vessel, news in New-York, &c. he said he had news to tell me. I told him I should be pleased to hear it. He said, "Captain Dunham, we have got a new padre here since you left for home; he is the smartest padre we ever had; he can beat any man in Jerimie playing at billiards, boxing, fencing, or jumping; he has killed two men in duels, and I assure you, sir, he is the smartest padre in all the West Indies."

Among the orders given me, was one for thirty thousand loose cedar shingles, which, when landed on the beach, I learned were intended to re-cover the church. All the ladies in the town soon assembled at the place where the shingles were landed;

rich and poor, some dressed in silk, and others with fine muslin gowns, having hoops in their hands, which they stuck full of shingles, and laying them on their backs carried them to the church, when they were taken by the carpenters, who put them on the roof, not allowing one of them to be carted; thus showing great zeal to protect from contamination every thing connected with their church.

The negroes on this Island are far more numerous than the mulattoes, mustees, and other colors. The old mulattoes being the heirs of their former masters, were many of them sent to France and educated; and the president being a mulatto, gives them as many offices as he dare; but is obliged to confer some on the blacks to prevent an insurrection; still I found there was considerable hatred between them. One day while walking the streets I heard a quarrel between a mulatto and a negro. The mulatto commenced, "What are you doing, nigger?" the negro replied, "Who are you, mulatto? you no got any country; white man got country and negro got country, mulatto no got any country, he's a damned *mule*."

My carpenters landed and were seeking some employment, when they were informed that they could not make any contracts in their own names, being white men, and not having any license, and the laws of the country not allowing a white man to obtain one. To obviate this a petition was drawn up and signed by most of the inhabitants, and sent to the president, for a special permit for the eldest



carpenter to carry on his trade. Some weeks after the president sent him a license, the rest of the carpenters working under him. I was very fortunate in the disposal of my cargo, most of it selling at a good profit, and by paying a large premium I procured about twenty hundred Spanish dollars, which were smuggled on board and brought to New-York.

Coffee being high in that port, I was obliged, in purchasing it, to dispose of the St. Domingo coin I received in payment for my cargo. Being ready for sea, I took leave of my friends and sailed for New-York, where we arrived about the first of May, 1821. The schooner having proved leaky on the passage, I refused to make another voyage in her. Soon after my arrival in New-York I received a letter from my old friend, Mr. Apollos Cooke, of Catskill, advising me to purchase, on our joint account, a schooner called the Combine, which was now laying in New-York, and could be procured very cheap. On viewing the Combine I found her timbers sound, but her decks and upper works badly worn, so I called on the agent, and after some time spent in chaffering, purchased her and left for Catskill, where I arrived about the 26th of May.

## CHAPTER XX.

## Schooner Combine.

“ A wolf will not a wolf ensnare,  
“ And tigers their own species spare,  
“ Man more ferocious, bends his bow,  
“ And at his fellow aims the blow.”

After the arrival of the Combine at Catskill, we had her well examined by a carpenter, who found her timbers sound. We then agreed to repair her by laying a new deck, putting in new ceiling, and giving her a thorough overhauling, so as to fit her for a sea voyage, which was done at an expense of nine hundred dollars. Large quantities of freight was offered for shipment, which I advised to take some part of, informing my partner in the vessel, Mr. A. Cooke, that I had but little over two thousand dollars, which would fall short of paying for one-half of the vessel and cargo; but he preferred our owning the whole cargo jointly, saying, “I will advance you any money you may want until you make the voyage.” We then purchased a suitable cargo and filled up many orders I had brought from Jerimie. After we had gathered all our bills together, I found my money exhausted and myself indebted five hundred and seventy-two dollars to my partner. The vessel

being repaired and loaded, we took on board four passengers, bound to Jerimie, and sailed for New-York. On my arrival at New-York I made it my first business to apply to the Marine Insurance Office for insurance, expecting I should have to pay an extra premium, my vessel being seventeen years old. After applying at all the offices in the city, and producing a certificate from old respectable carpenters, and some of our best citizens, that they considered her timbers as good as any North River vessel of two years old, my application was rejected, and I had no alternative but to proceed to sea as my own insurer, having my little all at stake, except a small homestead. I shipped a crew and made the necessary preparation, put to sea about the 10th of August, and shaped my course for Jerimie, where we arrived the sixth of September.

On my arrival at that port I sold my cargo, as usual, with the assistance of my former consignees, Messrs. Laforet & Brier. Jerimie being a dangerous port in heavy gales of wind, I was advised to send my vessel to Corail, a distance of twenty miles, to remain a few weeks, it being a safe harbor, while I remained in Jerimie to collect debts and procure a return cargo. After remaining here some fourteen or fifteen days, I was attacked with a violent fever, which confined me to the bed until the vessel was ready for sea, when I was taken on board, hoping the air would restore me to health. After being at sea some thirty-six hours, my mate found the fever

increasing on me so fast that he gave up all hopes of my recovery, and asked my permission to return to Jerimie, to which I consented. The vessel was put about and steered for that port, we neared the entrance of the harbor early the next morning, when I thought the fever began to abate, and requested the mate to put to sea again and proceed toward home. My health improving slowly, I was helped on deck every morning, where I remained during the day, lying under a small awning to screen me from the scorching sun, and helped into the cabin at night to protect me from the heavy dews. My health continued to improve daily. On the eleventh day of October we discovered land ahead, which proved to be the south side of the Island of Cuba. Finding it impossible to beat up against the current, we concluded to run round the west end of the island. Nothing material occurred until the thirteenth of October, in the morning, when I discovered land, which I identified as Cape Antonio; my health by this time was so much improved that I was able to get on deck without assistance. I told the mate to go below and get some repose, he having had but little rest during my sickness, and that I was well acquainted with the passage round the Cape.

About nine o'clock, while doubling the Cape, we discovered three small schooners, one small sloop, and a large open boat lying at anchor about two miles from the land. In about the space of fifteen minutes the whole fleet got under weigh and bore

down for us. One of the largest schooners ran down within musket-shot of us, fired a gun, and we hove too, while the rest of the fleet surrounded us. The largest schooner immediately sent a boat alongside of us, containing eight or nine men, who boarded us with muskets and drawn cutlasses in their hands, each of them having a long knife and a dagger slung by his side. Immediately after getting on deck, one of them cried out, "Foward," two or three times in broken English, pointing at the same time toward the fore-castle. The mate, sailors, and two passengers who were on board, ran forward and jumped into the fore-castle. I being very weak, dragged along slowly, when the man who gave the order commenced beating me severely with the broad side of his cutlass. I remonstrated with him, saying I was sick and could not walk any faster; he answered me, "*No intende.*" I then discovered he was a Portuguese, and not understanding that language, I excused myself as well as I could in the French language, hoping he understood me; but I found it did not relieve my back, as he continued to beat me all the way to the fore-scuttle, and there giving me a heavy blow on the head as I descended, closed it, where we remained about half an hour; they in the meantime appeared to be searching the vessel. After letting us up from the fore-castle they ordered the sailors to work the vessel in near the land and anchor her, which was soon accomplished. While beating the vessel toward the shore, they told me if I would

give up my money they would let me go with my vessel. This I readily complied with, hoping to save the vessel and cargo. I then gave them all the money I had, consisting of four hundred and eighty dollars in gold and silver. After they had received it they broke open our trunks, seized all our clothes, taking the finest shirts and vests, and putting them on one over another.

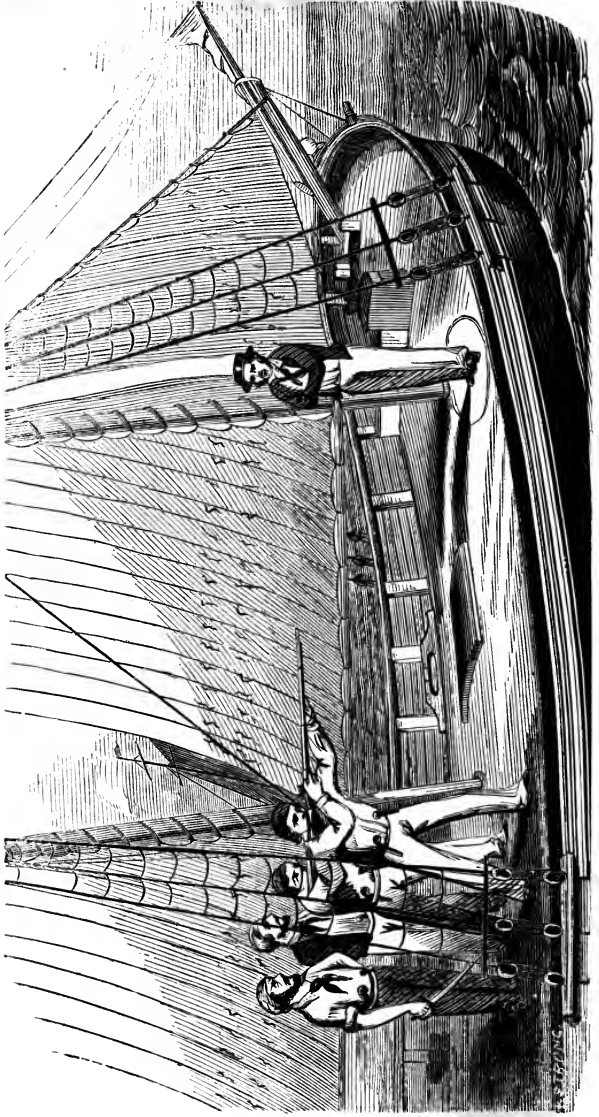
As soon as they had anchored my vessel they hauled their largest schooner alongside, while the rest of the fleet were laying within a few rods of us, and then all hoisted the bloody flag, a signal for death. I was ordered into the cabin, where one of the pirates, having found a bottle of cordial, took it up in one hand, and drawing his cutlass with the other, struck off the neck and handed it to me, flourishing his cutlass over my head, and making signs for me to taste it, which I found it difficult to do on account of the broken particles of glass. After I had tasted it he went to a case of liquor standing in the cabin, took out the bottles and compelled me to taste of them. After this ceremony was over one of the pirates drew a long knife from its sheath, and taking hold of the hair on the top of my head, drew the knife two or three times across my throat near the skin, saying, "Me want to kill you." Another pirate soon approached me with a dagger, with which he pricked me lightly in the body, two or three times, saying, "Me kill you by and by." I was then dismissed from the cabin and driven into the fore-castle

with the sailors and passengers. My cook was put on board the schooner lying alongside of us. Some of the pirates went aloft on board my vessel and cut loose her square-sail, top-sail, and top-gallant-sail, and afterwards took our fore-sail, boat, oars, loose rigging, one compass, one quadrant, all our beds and bedding, tea-kettle, all our crockery, knives and forks, buckets, &c. leaving us destitute of every kind of cooking utensil except the caboose. We remained some time in the fore-castle, when suddenly the fore-scuttle was opened and the mate called on deck, and the scuttle again closed, leaving us in the dark in a state of uncertainty. We soon heard them beating the mate; after that noise had ceased, we heard the word, "Fire," given with a loud voice, then after a moment's pause another voice was heard, saying, "Heave him overboard." I had a desperate sailor, called Bill, who flew to his chest for his razor to cut his own throat, saying he would be damned before he would be murdered by them rascals. The pirates had previously robbed the sailors' chests of all the articles they contained, and among them Bill's razor. After a little while the scuttle was again opened, when they called for a sailor. There were four in the fore-castle, who looked earnestly at each other, when Brown, a favourite old sailor, arose and addressed me, saying, "Captain, I suppose I might as well die first as last," then taking me by the hand gave it a hearty shake, saying, "Good bye." I told Brown to plead with them in the French language,

as I thought I had seen some Frenchmen among them, and knew that he spoke French fluently. When he had got upon deck I heard him speak a few words in that language, but soon after we heard them beating him severely. As soon as they had finished beating him we again heard the word fire, and soon after, heave him overboard. Shortly after, the scuttle was again opened and the captain was loudly called. I crawled up the scuttle, being very feeble; they then told me if I did not tell them where the money was they would serve me as they had the mate and sailor, shoot and then throw me overboard. I still persisted that there was no money on board, and entreated them to search the vessel. An old Spaniard was pointed out to me who they said was the commodore. I asked him what he wanted of me, looking him earnestly in the face. He replied, he wanted my money. I told him I had no money, but if I had I would give it to him; that the property belonged to him, but he had no right to take my life, as I had a family depending on me for support. Previous to this, the man who had flogged me before had made a chalk ring on the deck, saying, "Stand there," beating me with the flat side of a heavy cutlass until the blood ran through my shirt. During my conversation with the commodore, finding all my entreaties unsuccessful, and my strength much exhausted, I took a firm stand in the ring marked out for me, hoping to receive a ball through the heart, fearing if I was wounded I should be tortured to death







The Pirates' plan of exercising the nerves of Captives.

to make sport for the demons. Two of the pirates with loaded muskets took their stand and fired them toward me, when I cast my eyes down toward my feet looking for blood, thinking that I might have been wounded without feeling the pain. During this time the man who had beat me before commenced beating me again, pointing aft toward the cabin door, where I proceeded, followed by him, beating me all the time: he forced me into the cabin, at the same time giving me a severe blow over the head with his cutlass. When I entered I found both the mate and sailor there whom I supposed had been murdered and thrown overboard. The next person called out of the fore-castle was Mr. Peck, a passenger, who was immediately asked where the money was; he told them he knew of no more money on board. One man stood before him with a musket and another with a cutlass, they knocked him down and beat him for some time, took him by the hair and said they would kill him. He was then ordered to set upon the bit of the windlass to be shot and thrown overboard, as the captain and others had been. He took his station by the windlass, when a musket was fired at him; he was then driven into the cabin. They then called up the remainder of the men from the fore-castle, one after the other, and beat and drove them into the cabin also, except a Mr. Chollet, a young man, passenger, who escaped beating. We were kept in the cabin some time, and after repeated threats that they would kill us, were all driven into the fore-

castle again. They took out all our cargo, consisting of coffee, cocoa, tortoise-shell, eight kedge anchors, all our provisions, except part of a barrel of beef and about thirty pounds of bread. After they had taken all the cargo, spare rigging, &c. of any value, they shifted all the ballast in the hold of the vessel in search of money, and calling us on deck, we were told to be off. After getting under weigh we proceeded but slowly, having no other sails left but the two jibs and the main-sail. We looked back with a great deal of anxiety, and saw the pirates seated on the deck of the largest schooner, drinking liquor and making themselves merry, while we feared that they might change their minds, pursue us and take our lives. Night beginning to approach, I thought best to go down into the cabin and see what we had left to eat or drink. As soon as I had reached the cabin, it being dark, I stumbled against something on the floor, which I found to be our cook, whom we supposed we had left behind, having seen the pirates put him on board the schooner which was lying alongside of us, but knew nothing of his return. I spoke to him, but received no answer, I hustled him about the cabin, but could not make him speak. I at last got a light and looked about for some provisions, cooking utensils, &c. and found about thirty pounds of bread, a little broken coffee, and most of a barrel of beef, but no cooking utensils except the caboose, with one or two pots set in it. The next morning I called all hands into the cabin, showed all the bread we had left, and

told them it was necessary to go on allowance of one biscuit a day per man, which was agreed to, until we could get further supplies. I then questioned the cook, (knowing that he was driven into the hold of the pirate schooner,) as to what kind of a cargo she had. He said there were calicoes and all kinds of dry goods scattered about, and more than a hundred demijohns; and "O captain, it was the best old Jamaica rum that you ever tasted." I told him if the pirates had caught him drinking their rum they would have killed him. He said it looked so tempting he thought he would try it. I suppose that after having drank a large quantity he made his escape on board of the *Combine* before he felt the effects of it, as he was not aware of our release.

The next day we were boarded by a boat from a Spanish man-of-war brig. I plead hard with the officer who boarded us to go in pursuit of the pirates, which he refused to do, saying it was out of their limits to cruise. I asked him for a supply of bread, which he denied me. In our crippled state we reached Havanna in nine days, where we put in for supplies.

On my arrival at Havanna I was met by Captain Dimond, master of the brig *Harriet*, of Baltimore, who had been robbed by these pirates at the same place, on the 12th of October. Captain Dimond informed me that the pirates put a rope around his neck and hoisted him up to the fore-yard of the brig three times, and then let the rope loose, which caused

him to fall on the deck, where he lay insensible for some time. I asked him why he did not give up his money as I had done. He said that twenty-five hundred dollars of the money belonged to himself, which was all he was worth, and having a family to support, he thought he had almost as well part with his life as his money. After he had recovered his senses they made another attempt to put the rope round his neck the fourth time, when one of the pirates told his comrade to let him alone, because he had children. They hauled their vessels alongside of his brig and took out all his cargo, also the greatest part of the brig's sails, rigging, &c. together with twelve thousand dollars, which they found while removing a quantity of fire-wood, and then let him depart.

I proceeded to the American Consul's office, having on an old straw hat, which the pirates had put on my head in place of my own, an old ragged jacket, one pump, one shoe, and an empty pocket. I entered a protest, and asked him to render me some assistance, for which I would give him a draft on New-York at sight. This he refused unless I would bottom the vessel, but referred me to the house of Grey, Fenandes, & Co. who attended to my wants in the most friendly manner. Three days after, the ship *Lucies*, of Charleston, arrived in the harbor, having a prize-master on board, who informed me that the United States Brig *Enterprise*, Captain Kearney, had re-captured the *Lucies* from these pirates, and had taken three of the piratical vessels, (the crews

having escaped to the shore,) and sailed for some port of the United States. I called again on Mr. Grey, and told him that Captain Kearney would probably steer for Charleston or New Orleans with his prizes, and I felt anxious to communicate with him as soon as possible, to reclaim my property. He said they had a very respectable correspondent in Charleston, named John Stoney, to whom he would write to claim my property for me if he should arrive in that port; that I could write to Captain Kearney and enclose his letter to Mr. Stoney. Fearing he might sail for New Orleans, I addressed a letter to a friend of mine living there, to claim the property for me, should the *Enterprise* arrive at that port.

I learned here that these pirates had been fitted out in this port, where most of their cargoes were to be disposed of, and was advised not to make much noise about my robbery, as they had many friends here who would assassinate me. I found a number of American vessels here, but got little assistance from any of them except the captain of a small sloop from Bristol, Rhode Island, who tendered me a loan of thirty dollars, for which he got my draft on New-York. He gave me many articles which I stood in need of, for which I shall ever feel grateful. After my vessel was under weigh the captain of a Baltimore ship, who had arrived an hour before, learning my misfortune, sent his boat alongside with a barrel of beef, some flour, wine, &c. with a message to me, saying, if I wanted any other articles he would send

them on board. We put to sea with next to no conveniences, having no beds or bedding, and but three or four knives and forks, some trifling cooking utensils, and all my wardrobe on my back. Without any additional sails for our vessel we shaped our course for New-York. The winds proving favorable we performed the passage in sixteen days.

For a particular account of the capture of the piratical vessels I refer the reader to the following letter, published in the papers of the day :

*“ Capture of the Aristides by Pirates.*

“Copy of a letter from Captain Couthony, late master of Brig Aristides, to Mr. Edward Cruft, the owner, in this town, giving the particulars of the capture of that vessel by pirates.

*“ At Sea, United States Brig Enterprise, October 24, 1821.*

“*Dear Sir* :—The melancholy news which I am about to relate will be extremely afflicting to you. We sailed from Liverpool the 28th of August, and had a very pleasant passage till off the west end of Cuba, which we made on the 15th of October at 6 P. M. When off Cape Antonio were assailed by five piratical vessels, three schooners, one sloop, and an open boat ; the latter after firing several shots at us came alongside with nine men in her ; the men mounted the deck, armed with cutlasses, pistols and dirks ; on coming on board one took the helm, another knocked me down, seized my watch, &c. and the others ran into the cabin. By this time the other pirates got close around us, and I discovered they



were about to run my vessel on shore. On begging them to desist from this design, I was again knocked down; on rising, a musket was pointed at me and one of the villains made several passes at me with a dagger, which I avoided by running forward.

“We were soon in shoal water, when I again begged of them for God’s sake not to run the vessel ashore. They ordered us to let go the anchor.

“I then went into the cabin, where I found all my trunks, chest, &c. on the floor, and the pirates filling bags, handkerchiefs, &c. with my clothes. They took my chronometer and everything I had, even robbing me of the jacket I had on, and leaving me almost naked. They then ordered us to open the hatches, beating every one of the crew they came across, declaring they would kill every man on board, beginning with me, saying they were pirates, and should not be discovered. During the night our vessel began to strike very hard, when they compelled us to weigh anchor and the vessel was run on shore.

“They then commenced loading their craft with the most valuable part of our goods, remarking that we should be put to death in the morning to prevent discovery. They struck me down several times, beating the mate and threatening him with instant death if he did not discover where the most valuable goods were. They nearly strangled the boy, bidding him tell where my money was stowed. In the morning they had one of their cruisers loaded with dry goods, and a number of packages in the others; when on

the 16th, at 7 A. M. a sail was discovered coming round the Cape. They then consulted on the expediency of murdering me; but one, more humane than the others, dissuaded them from committing the crime. Perceiving the sail to be a vessel of war, they took to their boats, pulled for their vessels and immediately proceeded along shore.

“They had stove our yawl to prevent our using her, but we patched her so that she floated, and went on board the vessel that was approaching. She proved to be the United States Brig Enterprise, L. Kearney, Esq. commander. I stated to him my dreadful situation, and pointed out to him the five piratical vessels in shore; he immediately made all sail in pursuit, but a reef prevented his getting within gun-shot. He armed all the boats, and with the crews of the ship Lucies, and an English brig, which were likewise in the hands of the pirates, gave them chase, and overhauling them fast, they rowed their vessels on shore inside the Cape, set the loaded one on fire, and took to the woods. Lieutenant M’Intosh, who went on the expedition, took four of the vessels, the boat having escaped. The vessel sat on fire was entirely destroyed, but few remnants of goods were saved, and those partly burnt. The pirates had a train of powder to blow up the vessel on the approach of the boats.

“On the 17th, at noon, Capt. Kearney brought all the vessels at anchor near our wreck, and sent his crew to our assistance, the Combine being in a bilged

condition, with seven feet of water in her hold, and her rudder unshipped. He then loaded three of the late piratical vessels out of the cargo of the *Aristides*, also the American Schooner *Bold Commander*, of Staten Island, with goods, one cable, and some of her sails. The brig has on board some goods, a chain cable and a hawser, the latter taken from the pirates.

“Captain Kearney, after having done his utmost, and saved all he could, in loading the four vessels and his brig, set the wreck on fire on the 20th, at 7 P. M. and remained by her until she was burnt to the water’s edge. She was in ten feet of water when I abandoned her, 8 A. M. all in flames. This whole dreadful calamity has nearly overpowered me. A Columbian schooner of one long gun and eighty men likewise anchored near the wreck before she was destroyed, and took a few casks porter and a few bales goods, which would otherwise have been burnt with the vessel. This was done with the consent of Captain Kearney after he had loaded all the other vessels.

“I shall ever be grateful to Captain Kearney for his kind assistance, friendship and hospitality. He offered me his own clothes, as I was destitute of everything. He will call at Havanna, and from thence proceed to Charleston, where he will deliver the vessels and goods to the proper authorities.”

Captain Kearney proceeded with his prizes to Charleston, where the vessels and goods were condemned, and sold within eleven days after his arrival

to accommodate him and his crew, when he sailed on another cruise. This gave me no opportunity to reclaim my property, Mr. Stoney having neglected to claim it for me. Some weeks after, having learned that the property had been carried into Charleston and sold, I proceeded to that place and applied to the District Judge of the United States, who, after a detention of thirty days, awarded me about seven hundred dollars. A large portion of the coffee, and other articles, which were taken on board my vessel at Jerimie during my sickness, not being marked, caused much difficulty in identifying them. I saw in the possession of purchasers at that sale, eight anchors, two saddles, four bridles, a number of coffee bags, and other articles of mine; also a quantity of tortoise shell, which cost me eight dollars per pound. The expenses on what I recovered consumed the greatest part of the goods; deducting one-fourth for salvage, duties, cartage, storage, commissions, court fees, &c. the remainder went into the Treasury of the United States, or should have gone there. I have petitioned Congress for some remuneration, which claim has been denied.

On my arrival in New-York (being literally clothed with rags) I was met on the way to my boarding house by some of my kind friends, who took me to their houses and fitted me with a temporary suit of clothes, and some of them advanced me money to purchase more. Mr. Luman Reed loaned me two or three hundred dollars to pay the wages due my crew,

and defray other expenses. Soon after, I proceeded to Catskill with the schooner, sold one half of my interest in her; and after paying my old friend, Mr. A. Cooke, all the money he had advanced on the out bound cargo for me, I proceeded to Charleston to claim my property, as I have before related.

On my return from that port we refitted the Combine with new sails, rigging, &c. and agreed to take out an assorted cargo in her hold, and a deck load of horses, to the Island of St. Domingo.

---

## CHAPTER XXI.

### **Schooner Combine.—Second Voyage.**

About the middle of May, 1822, we commenced loading at Catskill, and finished in about ten days, when we sailed for New-York, where I shipped a crew and left for Cape Francios, in the Island of St. Domingo. We met with light winds and strong currents on the passage, which carried us some distance to the leeward of our course, and obliged me to put into the harbor of Port-au-Prince, where we arrived without any material incident. I landed my horses, and having procured a stable for them, was advised to select ten or twelve of the handsomest and proceed with them to the president's country seat, about

six miles from the city, where he was confined by ill health. This I consented to as a matter of courtesy, and a black colonel, named Burlong, volunteered to accompany me. I took my hostler and an interpreter and proceeded to his house. At his residence there was an extensive park enclosed by a high brick wall, which we entered after passing two armed sentries, when we drew near to a large wooden building fitted up in good style, having a piazza all round it, and six or eight sentries walking on it, well armed and uniformed. As we approached the outside door of the house we found a sentry stationed there, who conducted us into the hall, where we found another who conducted us into the president's room, which was splendidly furnished, where I was introduced to his excellency by Colonel Burlong. After the introduction was over, he invited us to take a glass of wine with him. The horses were then brought near the door, which, having examined, he said were worth two hundred dollars apiece; but since I had been so polite as to call on him, he would give me two hundred and fifty for as many as his groom should select. The president is about six feet in height, of a mulatto color, rather thin in flesh, and makes a good appearance on horseback, particularly in reviewing his army, who perform their evolutions in the most graceful and soldier-like manner. I sold the president one pair of horses, and disposed of a few to individuals at a fair profit; the remainder sold at a loss, after deducting expenses. The slow

sale of horses detained me nearly two months, during which time the yellow fever made its appearance, and raged with unabated violence until our departure, particularly among the shipping. By the laws of the country a ship-master is obliged to land all persons seized with sickness on board of his vessel, and place them under the care of the nurses of the city, who receive them into their houses at a charge of two dollars and fifty cents per day for seamen, and three dollars per day for masters and mates. If a seaman dies on board, the master is fined five hundred dollars.

About three weeks after our arrival here my cook and one sailor were attacked by the yellow fever, I took them ashore and placed them under the care of nurses; the hostler was next landed with the same complaint, and the third day after I put on shore another seaman in like condition. During this day, after a long walk in the hot sun, I retired to the house of one of the nurses, where I was taken down with the same fever; my cook dying about the time I became fairly sick. The next day one of the seamen died. The seamen, hostler, and myself were put under the care of different nurses, and in a few days such of us as were spared returned to duty.

After the death of my cook I hired an English negro, (who had deserted from Turks Island and taken refuge here,) on condition that he should serve a few days on trial, and if both parties were suited he was to act as cook until the voyage was ended, and

to receive the same wages I had given his predecessor. After remaining on board a few days, the mate sent a message to me on shore, informing me that the cook had threatened the lives of some of the sailors by attacking them with an axe. I sent a note to the mate requesting him to send the cook on shore. He soon made his appearance, when I took him to the store of my consignees and made out an account of his time, allowing him wages at the rate of fourteen dollars per month, according to agreement. I read the statement to him and he appeared well satisfied. I then asked one of the firm to pay the bill. He said his partner had stepped out with the key of the money drawer in his pocket, but as soon as he returned it would be paid, and asked the cook to take a seat; he walked out of the door and was missing for some time, when he entered the store in company with a black man, dressed in a sergeant's uniform, with a sword and bayonet hanging by his side, who introduced himself by saying he had a warrant for me. I was a little surprised, and asked him if he wanted me to go with him, or required any security for my appearance. He said he did not, and told me I must appear in the third ward, No. —, to-morrow, at 11 o'clock. The next day I called at the store of my consignees and got the clerk to accompany me to the court. On our way we met a genteel looking, well dressed mulatto man, who asked the clerk where we were going. The clerk related the story to him, and he volunteered his



service to defend my cause, and accompanied us to the court room. After we got inside of the door I discovered a sentry dressed in full uniform, with side arms, walking in front of the door. As I entered the court room I took off my hat to show some respect to the honorable black justice. Soon after, my antagonist, the cook, entered the door with his hat on his head, when the sentry approached him without uttering a word and struck him a heavy blow with his flat hand on the side of his head, which knocked his hat across the room; this caused the poor fellow to look amazed for a few moments, when he picked up his hat very carefully. The trial was soon called on. I related the whole story by my interpreter, and the judge, without calling a witness on either side, decided that I should pay him the same amount of money I had offered him, and that he should pay the costs, which was one dollar and fifty cents, being one-half the sum he recovered from me.

When I returned to the wharf to go on board my vessel I found the poor fellow had been impressed, and sentenced to go on board of a man-of-war, and was then lodged in the guard house. He sent a message to me imploring my pardon, and begging my assistance to obtain his release.

About this time there was a very great excitement raised in the city in consequence of the circulation of counterfeit coin, in imitation of the government silver, and a story had been circulated that a considerable quantity of this spurious silver was

expected from Baltimore. As several vessels arrived from that place soon after, they were strictly searched, by boring barrels of flour, breaking open boxes and packages of goods, by custom house officers, and otherwise searching them. After some days it was discovered that the counterfeit coin was brought from Jamaica by a Jew, who had been lurking about the city. He was arrested and brought before the president for trial, and a report circulated that he would certainly be hanged. The president sent for a silver-smith to examine the coin, who pronounced it to be one-half pure silver, while the government coin was only one-tenth part silver: upon which the president said, "Damn him, let him go, for his money is better than ours."

The laws of this country are very arbitrary, although they help to encourage industry and suppress idleness and dissipation. The president makes donations from the public lands to all poor individuals who will cultivate them. After they take possession of a lot he obliges them to cultivate it. To accomplish this, he sends a small military guard through the new settlements, accompanied by an officer, who stops at every house, where he makes the following inquiries: "Is this your house and plantation?" which being answered in the affirmative, he proceeds, "How large is your family?" The man answers, a wife and — children. The officer then compels him to go and show him the plantation, and to point out the number of coffee trees he has planted, &c. If, on examin-

ing the premises the officer finds only a few trees, and is convinced of the indolence of the occupant, he says, "You cannot maintain your family by this, and must be a cheat, or steal, you must therefore go with me," and he is obliged to join the army or navy.

The farmers being out of the cities and villages, are not allowed to come to market except two days in each week, say Sundays and Wednesdays, without a special permit. All persons found drinking or rioting about public places or grog shops are immediately taken up under the vagrant act, sent to prison, and then transported to the army or navy as a punishment. The authorities of cities and villages license a limited number of butchers in each town, and compel them to keep the market supplied with meat every day, and limit the price to twelve and a half cents per pound.

Since my last voyage to this Island the president, at the head of his army, had many engagements with the royalists under the emperor Christophe, whom he conquered, and had obtained possession of all his dominions. The emperor, fearing he should be taken prisoner, committed suicide by blowing his own brains out with his pistol. The president took possession of his castle, where they found about seven millions of dollars. By their wars with the French, and their internal wars among themselves, they have reduced the male inhabitants so much that they now estimate there is eleven females to one male, throughout all their dominions.

Having disposed of my cargo and got a return freight on board, I sailed for the port of Jerimie, where we arrived the twenty-fourth of July. Here I collected about eight hundred dollars in coffee, which was due from my last voyage. I sailed for New-York on the twenty-eighth, and arrived at Staten Island after a passage of twenty-two days, where we were compelled to perform a quarantine of thirty days, at the expiration of which time we proceeded to the city, where I disposed of my cargo and then returned with the schooner to Catskill, when we refitted her previous to the next voyage.

---

## CHAPTER XXII.

### **Schooner Combine.—Third Voyage.**

We loaded the schooner's hold with an assorted cargo, and her deck with twenty-eight horses, about fifty hogs, a number of coops of poultry; and taking on board three passengers bound for the Island of Trinidad, sailed from Catskill the tenth of November, 1822, and arrived in New-York after a passage of two days, where I shipped a crew and prepared for the voyage. About the seventeenth of November we sailed from New-York, bound to the Island of

Trinidad. After we got under weigh I found the greater part of my crew so badly intoxicated that they could not stand upon deck, but having fair wind and good weather I proceeded to sea; the mate, cooper, and cook, being sober, I thought we could manage the vessel until the crew could attend to their duty. We passed the night without getting any assistance from them. The next morning I ordered the mate to go into the fore-castle, where they slept, and search for liquor, and if necessary, break open all the seamen's chests, and if he found any he was to break the bottles or heave them overboard. He returned to the cabin with one bottle containing about a pint, being all he could find. We learned afterwards that they had some more secreted, which he was not able to discover. Towards evening the second day we were able to get them all at work but one. About eight o'clock in the evening that one came on deck and appeared somewhat bewildered with delirium tremens.

I was then called to my supper, being much fatigued, having stood at the helm over twenty-four hours, while the mate, cooper, and cook took care of the stock on deck. Within two minutes after I entered the cabin I heard the cry, "He is overboard," when I jumped on deck and threw over many articles of lumber, long lines, &c. but the night being dark, and a heavy sea running, we soon lost sight of him. This seaman's name was James Currie, who said he was born in Rhode Island, and I found by

the papers he left, that he had lately been discharged from the Frigate Constellation. One of his shipmates informed me that he had just arrived from a three years' cruise, and had received three hundred dollars when he was paid off, but had spent the whole of it in three weeks, and was indebted to his landlord about seventeen dollars more. My seamen were all sober and at their duty in a couple of days, and we proceeded on the voyage without any other occurrence worth recording, and arrived, after a passage of thirty-five days, at Port Spain, in the Island of Trinidad, where we landed our horses, which had stood on their feet the whole passage. Many of them had the heaves badly when they were taken on board, but were perfectly cured when they landed. This being the third time of successful experiment with diseased horses as a veterinarian, I pronounced a sea voyage a perfect cure for the heaves, whether in horses or other animals.

The Island of Trinidad was ceded to the English by the Spanish government, and by the law of Nations the Spanish laws were to remain in force for twenty years after the transfer, which time had not expired. A Spanish governor is clothed with almost as much power as an emperor. Sir Ralph Woodford had been selected as governor, and was a tyrannical man, and very unpopular among the inhabitants. The city of Port Spain is one of the pleasantest places I have ever seen in the West Indies. The streets are kept very clean and in good order. No

man can leave the Island without a permit from the governor. A merchant of Port Spain visited the Island of Tobago, a distance of about sixty miles, where he remained two or three days and then returned, when the governor had him arrested and committed to jail, where he remained six days: his only crime was leaving the Island without a passport signed by the governor.

A Mr. J. Robbins, an American, informed me that he owned a house in one of the principal streets in the city, which street the governor ordered to be paved, and a tax laid on the property in that street to defray the expenses of flagging. The tax on his house and lot amounting to over six hundred dollars, and not being able to pay it, the property was sold at a great loss.

The license to retail liquors in the city is sold annually at auction, to the highest bidder; one person purchasing the license for the whole town, gives security, and then divides it as he pleases. The soil of this Island is rich, producing sugar-cane and cocoa in abundance. Coffee, and all kinds of tropical provisions and fruits are raised here in large quantities. The Island abounds with snakes of an enormous size. I visited an American gentleman, residing in the country about twelve miles from Port Spain, who had a snake-skin stuffed which was twenty-three feet long; it was shot by one of his negroes, and on opening it they found a whole deer. A few hours before we left the port news was received from the

interior of the Island that a snake had been shot containing the bodies of a black woman and child. The principal currency of the country is Spanish dollars punched through the centre, making a hole about the size of a five cent piece; the dollar still passing for the same value in the way of trade, and the plug which is taken out passes for one-eighth of a dollar. After passing through a few hands they find their way to some Jew, who reams the hole so large that you can pass a twenty-five cent piece through them, but they still pass for a dollar by way of trade. To prevent deception and loss, most bargains are stipulated to be paid in whole dollars.

The English government has made a strong effort to introduce the cultivation of tea into this Island, by importing a number of Chinese laborers; it has proved to be a thorough failure. After their arrival in the country they became so indolent that it was found impossible to make them cultivate the land. They intermarried with the negroes, and became useless to society, laboring only to supply their daily wants.

Having sold all my cargo, and taken on board over a hundred hogsheads of molasses, I sailed for New-York, where we arrived about the first of April, 1823. On the passage home we experienced a heavy gale of wind, which caused the loss of one thousand gallons of molasses.

On selling the cargo we found the West India trade unprofitable, in consequence of the low prices of the produce of the Islands, which caused heavy



losses on return cargoes. I held a consultation with my partners in the vessel, when it was agreed to sell the Combine at auction and abandon the trade.

---

## CHAPTER XXIII.

The following, copied from the *Northern Whig* of December 3d, 1822, is a correct account of the capture of the piratical vessels by Lieutenant Commandant Allen, who lost his life during the engagement :

“ It becomes our painful duty to record the death of Lieutenant William Howard Allen, of the United States Navy. He commanded the United States Schooner Alligator, and on the 11th of November last, while leading his brave tars in the Alligator's boats to attack a nest of pirates near Matanzas, was shot by them in the head and breast, and survived but four hours. Undaunted, even in death, he cheered his men, and had the consolation of witnessing the surrender of one of the piratical vessels, and the re-capture of five merchantmen before he expired. He was buried on the succeeding day at Matanzas, with military honors.

“ Lieutenant Allen was a native of this city, (Hudson,) was born on the 8th of July, 1790, entered the navy in the 20th year of his age. He was Second Lieutenant on board the *Argus*, in the summer of 1813, and during the bloody conflict between the *Argus* and the *Pelican*, the command of the former devolved for a time upon him. W. H. Watson, the First Lieutenant of the *Argus*, a brave and worthy officer, speaks of his conduct in high and merited terms. He was also in the Congress Frigate during her cruise in the Chinese Seas.

“ He was attached to his profession, courted glory, and feared no danger. In the last war he saw much service; and whether in war or peace, never failed to do his duty.

“ We shall conclude our brief observations with the following remarks, which have been kindly furnished us at the particular request of a number of the friends of Lieutenant Allen, and which were the conclusion of a discourse delivered from the pulpit, by the Reverend B. F. Stanton, on the Sunday succeeding the day on which the afflictive news of the death alluded to arrived here.

“ After a reference had been made to the frequent instances in which, for a few years past, the inhabitants of Hudson have been suddenly and unexpectedly deprived of some of their most respected and valued fellow citizens, it was observed, that, ‘in addition to all the previous calamities of the nature which we had experienced, we have recently been called upon by the righteous Providence of Him whose ‘path is in the great deep, and whose footsteps are not known,’ to contemplate another, which, in some of its features, perhaps, is the heaviest of all. I shall undoubtedly be readily understood, by most of my hearers, to refer to the tidings which have lately reached us of the lamented death of Lieutenant William H. Allen, a native of this town, and an officer in the United States Navy.

“ It is not any design on this occasion to attempt to do justice to his memory by pronouncing his eulogy. This will probably be done by abler pens and more eloquent tongues. My aim at present is merely to advert to a few of the leading traits in his character, and to call on those who hear me to listen to the monitory voice of Heaven which addresses us in this afflictive dispensation. As a son he was filial, as a brother he was kind and affectionate, as a gentleman he was amiable and accomplished in his manners, as a friend he was trusty and sincere, as a man he was humane and generous: he had a soul that was indignant at meanness and vice! In his morals, I believe, he was free from those defilements which are too often known to tarnish the reputation of those in his profession, and to which they are so peculiarly liable: In his religious sentiments, if I am not mistaken, he was a candid believer in divine revelation: As a lover of his country, he was ardent and ever eager, when summoned by her call, to be foremost in her defence; and as an officer he was active, faithful, skilful, and courageous. In the engagement that terminated his naval career, he occupied a post most pregnant with danger, and though mortally wounded in the early part of it, he still animated his valiant tars, while the life-blood was fast ebbing from its seat, to persevere till the victory

was gained. By these encomiums, however, it is not intended that he was exempted from a participation in that pollution of our nature which is common to every individual of the human family. Though he was possessed of excellencies which *we* may be allowed to admire and applaud; in the sight of infinite purity, like every other human being, he was a ruined sinner,

“ Sprung from the man whose guilty fall,  
“ Corrupts our arce and taints us all.”

But neither the personal excellencies which so strongly endeared him to those who knew him, the affections of his numerous friends, nor the wants of his country, could render him impervious to the shaft of death. No, his generous spirit is fled. Though brave, he has fallen a victim to the king of terrors, who conquers all. A band of piratical marauders, whose iniquitous occupation is the plunder of the seas, and whose perfidies and cruelties, which are audaciously committed on the broad highway of nations, are continually augmenting, and in our opinion, loudly call for the interfering arm of national government, to extirpate, if possible, these freebooters, from the face of the earth; a horde of these unprincipled miscreants, who are the stigma of the human kind, have deprived his country of his valuable services. He has lain down and will rise not. 'Till the heavens be no more he shall not awake, nor be raised out of sleep. His mangled remains are deposited in a land of strangers, and far from his family and his home. He will no more return to alleviate, by his presence, the severe and long continued afflictions of 'the mother that bare him,' to meet the embraces of the fond sisters that loved him, and to receive the congratulations of the inhabitants of this place, who were proud to claim him as their fellow-citizen. Yes, his generous spirit has gone! The war song has died away upon his ear. By the thrilling notes of the clarion, which once prompted him to deeds of valor, he is now unmoved! His body is silent and still in 'the narrow house of all living.' He reposes, with others of his valiant compeers, to await 'the sound of the archangel and the trump of God.' But it is the consolation of surviving friends to reflect, that, though he sleeps, and they shall behold him no more, he has fallen in the arms of victory, and in the common cause of his country and of mankind. His memory will be for ever embalmed in the tenderest recollections of his acquaintances. His loss will be de-

plored as a national calamity; and we would reverently trust, that, before his spirit took its returnless flight, as he had been educated in the principles of the Christian faith, and knew to whom a sinner has to go, if his soul is ever saved, from his bloody bed of glory he raised his dying eyes and his supplicating voice to that God who is no respecter of persons, but who is rich in mercy unto all that call upon him, in whose presence the rich and the poor alike meet together; with whom the high and the low, the noble and the ignoble, stand upon the same level, in the effulgence of whose holiness the lustre of the hero is dimmed, who permits none to glory before Him, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with whom alone can avail the sacrifice of a broken and a contrite heart."

---

From the New-York Evening Post.

"With emotions of indignation and unavailing grief, we find from the following article, that one of our bravest American officers and most valuable citizens, Lieutenant Commandant Allen, has fallen by the merciless hands of the sea-robbers who for several years have roamed the seas unchecked, fearlessly plundered our vessels, and remorselessly assassinated their crews with every species of barbarity that hellish ingenuity could invent."

---

From Relf's Philadelphia Gazette.

"**MELANCHOLY TIDINGS.**—We have to-day to record an event which must excite in the breast of every American, and we may venture to add, in that of every civilized man, emotions of profound regret and indignation—Lieutenant Commandant Allen, one of the rising stars in our national galaxy, has fallen by the hands of unprincipled pirates. In the earnest and honorable execution of his duty to his country and to mankind, this gallant and accomplished young officer has become the victim of a gang of desperate buccaneers; but in this, as in most of the occurrences of our naval warfare, he died in the lap of victory. This melancholy intelligence was received this morning from an intelligent gentleman, passenger in the *Mary Ann*, Captain Cory, from Havanna, (now below,) and is furnished to us in these words:

“About the 9th, two masters of American vessels came to Havanna for the express purpose of raising money for the ransom of their vessels, bound to Havanna, which with two other Americans (bound to New Orleans) had been recently captured by two piratical schooners near Key Romain, and left at anchor in that neighborhood waiting their return. Captain Allen, of the *Alligator*, on coming into port next day, being informed thereof, started, without coming to anchor, in search of the pirates, whom on that or the next day he discovered in the channel of Matanzas. The *Alligator* drawing too much water, two boats were manned and stood for them; an action ensued, in the early part of which Captain Allen received two musket balls, one in the head, the other in his breast, and soon died, encouraging his men to do their duty; which they nobly performed, for after a short contest the pirates abandoned their vessel and swam to the shore. The vessels were taken possession of by the victors and carried into Matanzas.

“They mounted one gun each, amid-ship, with forty men each, well armed, and considerable plunder on board. Our informant does not know what became of their prizes.

“The *Mary Ann* has despatches on board from the American Agent at Havanna, furnishing official information in relation to this disastrous occurrence.

“Since the above was in type, (says *The Evening Post*,) the following letter was handed us, confirmatory of the melancholy truth of the account, with further particulars. We cannot but express our unqualified admiration of the gallantry of spirit that impelled the undaunted Allen, undismayed by the bloody signal of *no quarter*, which waved aloft, to attack an armed vessel, with a desperate crew in an open boat, and with only a few men. His virtuous indignation bore away all prudent reflections, and he rushed into the jaws of death itself to rescue or avenge his fellow citizens. Captain Allen is a native of Hudson, in this State, where his mother and sisters now reside. May we not hope that the vessels in our harbor will unite in giving at least one outward testimony of their mourning for his loss, by raising their flags half-mast high to-morrow.

“MATANZAS, November 11, 1822.

“To Messrs. G. G. & S. Howland,

“My dear Sirs:—The gallant Allen is no more! You witnessed the promptitude with which he hastened to relieve the vessel which

I informed him had been captured off this port. He arrived just in time to save five sail of vessels, which he found in possession of a gang of pirates, three hundred strong, established in the Bay of Lejuapo, about fifteen leagues east of this. He fell, pierced by two musket balls, in the van of a division of boats, attacking their principal vessel, a fine schooner of about eighty tons, with a long eighteen-pounder on a pivot, and four guns, *with the bloody flag nailed to the mast*. Himself, Captain Freeman, of marines, and twelve men, were in the boat much in advance of his other boats, and even took possession of the schooner after a desperate resistance which nothing but a bravery almost too daring could have overcome. The pirates, all but one, escaped by taking to their boats and jumping overboard, before the Alligator's boats reached them. Two other schooners escaped by the use of their oars, the wind being light.

"Captain Allen survived about four hours, during which his conversation evinced a composure and firmness of mind, and correctness of feeling, as honorable to his character and more consoling to his friends than even the dauntless bravery he before evinced.

"The Alligator arrived here to-day, in company with the prize, and five re-captured vessels. Arrangements are making with the governor, with the concurrence of the commander of the Spanish Brig of war Marte, [of whose conduct the officers of the Alligator speak in the highest terms,] to inter him with the honors of war to-morrow morning. It is certain that the pirates are but little weakened by this contest, and there is reason to fear that our commerce with this Island and New Orleans will be almost annihilated, unless an effectual force is stationed here to prevent it. But the best comment I can make is to add a list of vessels retaken, and to state that many of the men are missing, and probably have been murdered. Should any of our vessels of war arrive, please state these facts, and leave no efforts untried to procure some additional force to come immediately here.

"In great haste, your's very truly,

"FRANCIS ADAMS.

"Loss in Alligator's two boats—Captain Allen and two oarsmen killed; two men mortally wounded; three severely.

"[By an arrival at Philadelphia we learn that the United States

Schooner Alligator had arrived at Matanzas with the pirate schooner and the vessels re-taken from the pirates, (the Ship William & Henry, of New-York, Brig Iris, of Boston, and Brig Sarah Marael, of New-York, bound to New Orleans; Schooner Sarah, of Boston, for Mobile, Schooner Mary Ann, of Salem, for Matanzas,) are all ordered for Charleston. The pirate schooner has arrived, it is said, at Norfolk.]”

After the arrival of the piratical schooner at Norfolk she was condemned and sold to a citizen of that place, who gave her the name of Allen, in remembrance of the brave but unfortunate commander who lost his life in capturing her. Some time after she was purchased by Messrs. H. & D. Cotheal and A. D. Hallett, the former owners of the Price, and I was employed to take the command of her, and proceed to the Island of St. Andreas, and from thence to Chagres.

---

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### Schooner Allen.

About the twenty-seventh of December, 1823, I took charge of the Allen. She was a small sharp-built schooner, armed with a long six-pound cannon, mounted on a circle, with a patent slide, and was well fitted for sea. My crew were three seamen, a mate and cook. We sailed from New-York the

twenty-ninth of December, and made our passage to the Island of Old Providence in seventeen days, where we stopped and traded two or three days, and then proceeded to the Island of St. Andreas, where I met Mr. Henry T. Smith, who had been my former clerk in the Indian trade. I supplied him with what goods he wanted and then sailed for Chagres. On my arrival there I wrote a letter to the American Consul at Panama, informing him that I had a consignment of goods on board for him. After a few days I received a letter from a Mr. Montaudevert, informing me that Mr. Craig, the consul had left Panama and departed for New-York on a visit, leaving him in charge of his business during his absence. In three or four days after I received his letter he arrived at Chagres and took lodgings on board with me. The next day he hired a large canoe to take the goods up the river to a place called Cruses, a distance of forty-two miles, which is said to be the head of canoe navigation on that river. The provisions I had on board was all put up in half barrels for the customary mule transportation over the Isthmus, by slinging two across each mule's back, two half barrels being a load for a mule. After all our arrangements were made the canoe was hauled alongside of the Allen. When she made her appearance there I was struck with surprise at her length and breadth, she being some feet longer than my little schooner. I took up a rule and measured her breadth, which I found was eight feet from one side to the other, and her length



over sixty feet, being dug out of one solid tree, free from shakes or cracks.

In the morning we loaded the canoe with one hundred and forty-one half barrels of flour, and twenty half barrels of pork and mackerel, and two hogsheads filled with firkins of butter. The canoe had a large quantity of other freight on board before she came alongside of the *Allen*. After delivering all the goods consigned to Mr. Craig, I sold Mr. Montaudevert thirteen hundred and forty dollars' worth of goods consigned to myself, on a credit of ninety days, and took his note, payable in gold dust, at two hundred and fifty dollars per pound, or Spanish dollars, at my option. Mr. Montaudevert told me if I returned there in the *Allen* next voyage he would ship on board of her on freight, thirty thousand dollars' worth of dust. This may show the reader that gold dust has been gathered in that region for many years; and if that country was as well searched as California is at this day, no doubt many beds of that valuable ore might be found. I remained in Chagres eight or ten days, selling goods from the vessel at retail at good prices. Having four hogsheads of rum and brandy on board, which I found was a contraband article in that government, I entered them at the custom house for exportation, and afterwards sold them to an American captain, who agreed to meet me a few miles at sea, out of the jurisdiction of that government, where I delivered them and received my pay.

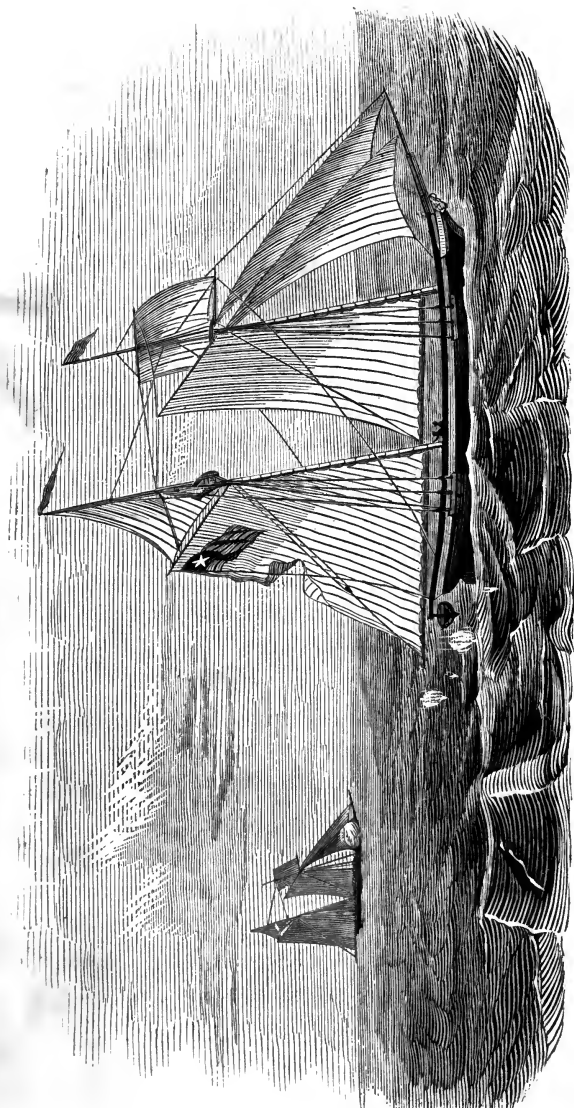
The river Chagres is navigable for small vessels.

about half a mile inside of the bar, which has about eleven feet of water on it at full tide. The town contains about fifty huts, called houses, built after the model of the Indians. The inhabitants are called Samboes, being a mixture of native Indian, Negro, and white blood. They are a very indolent, harmless, and inoffensive race; and their customs and manners are much like the native Indians.

I got under weigh and proceeded a few miles to sea, when I found the vessel lacked ballast, so we ran into Porto Bello and purchased a few tons of fustic, which put her in good sailing trim, when we shaped our course back towards the Island of St. Andreas, where I took Mr. Henry T. Smith, and his return cargo on board, consisting of four hundred pounds of tortoise shell, and five or six thousand dollars in gold and silver, which he had collected for the owners of the Allen. We soon got under weigh and shaped our course for New-York.

As my little schooner was a fast sailor, pilot-boat model, I beat to the windward, hoping to get sight of the Island of St. Domingo and sail through the windward passage. After a few days we succeeded in obtaining sight of that Island and sailed along under the lee of it; keeping a bright look-out for suspicious looking vessels. Knowing that my vessel had been taken from the pirates, I was fearful that some of the former gang who once had possession of her might capture me, when I could not expect anything but immediate death.





Schooner Renegade firing into the Schooner Allen.

The morning after we got sight of the Island we discovered a suspicious looking schooner laying at anchor near the land, about five miles to the windward of us, who got under weigh in great haste. I soon perceived with my spy glass that her deck was full of men. She bore down towards us, we hauled close upon the wind, which brought her into our wake about four miles astern of us. Both vessels had their colors flying. Neither of us dared to trust the other. Our new neighbor soon after rounded too, hauled up his fore-sail, and fired a large shot, which we could plainly discover skipping on the surface of the water some distance from us. I took the helm myself and kept the vessel close to the wind, fearing my seamen would be careless about steering her. The strange schooner continued firing at us about every half hour, while we were going fast to the windward of him, until about twelve o'clock. In the afternoon the wind became light, when we discovered that the strange vessel was gaining upon us. The captain afterwards informed me that he had thirty sweeps, and most of his men employed in rowing for some hours, being determined to overhaul us. We kept on our course until about 3 o'clock, when we found ourselves near the land on the Island of Cuba, and the suspicious craft gaining fast upon us. We had no alternative but to tack ship; soon after, he fired a shot which struck under our bowsprit, and wet our fore-sail up to the gaff, this was followed by another that grazed our mast-head, and another fell

a few feet under the stern. The fourth shot struck the after leach of the main-sail and cut off the bolt rope and the after-cloth of the sail, and glancing downwards, struck the trunk-deck and entered the cabin, passed through my bed, and then followed the ceiling into the hold, cutting away the plank and three timbers and landed in a bag of cotton. Although the ball, weighing thirty-two pounds, passed through the deck within six feet from where I stood at the helm, being much engaged in giving orders to set the square-sail, I did not discover that it had passed through the deck until some minutes after, when the cook came out of the cabin and told me that Mr. Smith was wounded by a splinter striking him on the head. I then raised my spy-glass and took a good survey of my antagonist, supposing him to be a pirate. On looking at him some time, (all hands on board the *Allen* being greatly agitated,) I discovered a number of red coats on her deck, when our grief was turned to joy, being satisfied that they were English marines. Soon after she approached within hailing distance of us, when I was ordered to hoist out my boat and come on board of her. When I got on board I was accosted by the captain with, "Did you not see the colors flying on board of my vessel." I answered, "Yes, sir, but I do not trust to colors in these piratical days." He then said, "You have cost me a great deal of powder and shot this day." I answered, by saying, "Never mind, King George is able to pay for it." He then asked me if my vessel

leaked badly. I told him that I had but little time to ascertain how bad she did leak, but knew that she had some holes in her. He sent a lieutenant, carpenter, and four men on board of the *Allen* to examine and pump her out, and invited me into the cabin to drink with him. I told him I did not drink any ardent spirits; he then said, "Damn it, you're a Yankee, and can take a bottle of cider with me." After we entered the cabin and were seated, he looked at me with a smile, saying, "Curse me if you ain't game, you stand fire well." In the mean time he called the gunner to the cabin door, saying, "Gunner, how many shot have you fired at this man this day." The gunner answered him, "Sixteen thirty-two pound shot, and four long twelve-pounders."

He then told me, if I thought it necessary to put into some port for repairs, he would recommend Kingston, Jamaica, as the best to sail for; and if I had any valuable articles in her, he would take them on board of his vessel for safety, and convoy me to that port. I informed him that I had over eight thousand dollars in specie, and four hundred pounds of tortoise-shell, worth ten dollars per pound. In the mean time, the lieutenant arrived from the *Allen* and reported that he thought she could be kept perfectly free from water by having the pump well manned. After some consultation together, he agreed to let his carpenter, sailing master, and four seamen remain on board the *Allen*, and he would hoist lights and signals, and convoy her to Kingston

for repairs. He then gave his name, and a history of himself and the schooner he now commanded. He said, "About one year since I obtained a furlough from my government, and took charge of a merchant ship bound from Liverpool to Jamaica and back to that port. On my passage from Jamaica towards home I was captured by the pirates, robbed of eight thousand dollars, and many articles, and most cruelly beaten and horribly tortured. The vessel he was now in was taken from the pirates by one of his Majesty's ships, and carried into Jamaica, condemned, and then fitted out under the name of the Renegade, for the purpose of capturing pirates; and that he was appointed to the command of her, and was determined to cruise after them until he had obtained some satisfaction from them." After this conversation ended I went on board my vessel and followed the Renegade, who shaped her course for Kingston. Night soon approached, when she showed her signal light, which we followed. During the night the light winds and smoky weather caused us to lose sight of her until the next morning, when we found ourselves near a place called the White Horse, about twelve miles from Port Royal, which lies at the entrance of Kingston harbor. Our vessels were now laying becalmed a short distance from each other. Soon after the sea-breeze arose, both vessels being under weigh, near together, we set all our sails and steered for the mouth of the harbor, and the Allen arrived there three miles ahead of the Renegade.



This satisfied me that the use of the sweeps on board of the *Renegade* caused the long chase between us, and the loss of his Majesty's powder and shot.

On my arrival at Kingston I called on Messrs. O'Hara & Onfloy for advice, when we applied to the admiral on that station to allow the *Allen* to be taken into the king's dock-yard for repairs, which he refused. We then applied to the collector of the port for leave to take out her cargo, in order to heave her bottom out of water and repair it. The collector informed us that he could not grant us that leave without permission from the governor, who resided at Spanish Town, twelve miles from Kingston. We had to employ a competent person to draw the petition, who let us know that we must advance him thirty dollars to purchase a sheet of stamped paper to write the petition upon. After the article was drawn I was obliged to hire a man and furnish him with a horse and carriage to convey it to the governor, who granted my request. The only favor I had to acknowledge was, the governor's sending me the thirty dollars which I paid for the sheet of stamped paper, in consequence of the assault being committed by an English government vessel.

The carpenter hove the schooner's bottom out and repaired her in three or four days; but I was detained eight days in obtaining a permit to land the cargo for that purpose. The whole of the expenses were about two hundred and sixty dollars. During this time I often met Captain Fiatt, the commander

of the Renegade, at public houses and elsewhere, who was a gentleman in all respects. He was profuse in expressing his regret that the unfortunate occurrence had happened to my vessel; and was still full of his determination to pursue the pirates until he got some revenge for the injuries he had received from them. After the vessel was repaired I took on board four thousand six hundred dollars belonging to my owners, and returned with the Allen to New-York. About one year after, I visited Kingston on my way home from the Spanish Main. When I inquired after Captain Fiatt, whom I left in the Renegade, an English naval officer informed me that while cruising he landed with his boat and crew on the Isle of Pines, and was missing for some time, when another man-of-war's boat was sent in search of him. When the officer and boat's crew landed on the Island they found the bodies of Captain Fiatt and his boat's crew strewn on the ground, riddled with balls, and the captain so horribly and vulgarly mangled as showed that none but fiends could have been guilty of murdering them.

To give the reader some idea of the horrible atrocities committed by the pirates at that time, I have thought proper to insert the following account, copied from *The Evening Post* of April 15th, 1822:

*“ Commodore Porter's Squadron.*

*“ Piracies.*—The last news that has been received from this squadron is contained in the New-York papers extracted from the *St. Thomas' Times* of March 5. On the 4th the squadron got un-

der weigh and put to sea from St. Thomas'. Piracies of an enormity that the bare recital of them make the blood run cold, are continually taking place. A Dutch Brig was taken in sight of Moro Castle, at Havanna. The French Brig La Jeune Henrietta was taken on the 17th of March, the captain, passengers, and all the crew were most cruelly beaten, and they and the vessel robbed. The Schooner Success, from Matanzas, bound to New Providence, was captured and converted into an assistant pirate, two ladies, passengers, made prisoners, one of whom was hanged up till life was almost extinct, in order to make her confess where the money on board was secreted. The Dutch Brig Minerva was captured and burned. The Brig Columbia, from Washington, North Carolina, was captured, robbed of parts of her cargo and sails. The Brig Alert, from New Orleans, was boarded off the Moro by three boats, the captain and cook killed, and one man mortally wounded. A brig has lately arrived from the Balize, belonging to Kennebunk, formerly commanded by Captain Perkins, she was from Port-au-Prince, via Campeachy, where he was boarded by a pirate schooner of about forty tons, manned by forty ruffians. 'They stabbed Captain Perkins in a cruel manner and cut off one of his arms; he then told them where the money was, which amounted to two hundred doubloons; after which they cut off his other arm and thigh, placed oakum dipped in oil under his body and in his mouth, and set fire to it, which soon put an end to his life. The mate had a sword thrust through his thigh, and the vessel was robbed of everything moveable, such as cables, anchors, charts, books, rigging, sails, &c.' It would seem by these accounts, which have all come to hand the past week, that our squadron was of little or no use in those seas. The true way we think would be to put armed crews on board of merchantmen; at sea, after they had left the port they sailed from, and in this way the pirates could get no intelligence of vessels destined to go against them.

"Captain Harding, of the Schooner Aspray, who arrived at Boston last Monday, from Havanna, in twelve days, informs that he was chased out of the Bay of Matanzas by two piratical boats, and running down for Havanna threw off her deck load to get clear of a piratical schooner. Brig Alert, of Portsmouth, from New Orleans, had just arrived off the Moro with a deck load of hogs. She was boarded in the night by two piratical boats, with six men each, and Captain Charles Blunt was murdered and thrown over-

board; the cook was stabbed, thrown among the hogs and partly devoured by them. The crew were maltreated, and the vessel plundered. Captain Harding states, that when she sailed from Havanna it was hourly expected that orders would be issued for the detention of French vessels in port."

---

## CHAPTER XXV.

### Schooner Frances.

On the sixteenth day of July, 1824, I made a contract with one Captain Oliver C. Murray, master of the Schooner Frances, of New-York, to proceed with him on a trading voyage to the Musquitto Shore, Chagres, Porto Bello, St. Blas, &c. as a pilot and assistant trader.

We took on board an assorted cargo, and sailed from New-York about the last of July. After being at sea some three days Captain Murray was taken sick, when he called the mate and crew into the cabin and told them that he had given up the charge of the schooner to me, that they must obey me accordingly. This was unsolicited by me. We then proceeded direct to Porto Bello, where we opened a trade with the inhabitants, remaining there about three weeks, experiencing heavy showers of rain every day we tarried there, it then being the rainy season on that coast. We proceeded from that port

to Carthagena, a distance of about two hundred and sixty miles, where we were informed by the inhabitants that there had not fallen a drop of rain in that place during the last ten months.

Carthagena is the strongest fortified city I ever visited, being enclosed with a wall some fifteen feet high, which is approached by a slope of easy ascent. The wall appears to be from fifteen to twenty feet thick, having embrasures with heavy cannon mounted on it, about one hundred feet from one to another, all around the city, with a good road on the top of the wall. On the outside of the wall there is a deep trench, where water can be let in five or six feet deep if the city should be invaded by an enemy. Vessels bound into the harbor are obliged to keep close to the main land, which brings them near a long tier of forts. The greatest part of the channel is filled in with large stones, which appears to have been the work of ages.

We remained here about two weeks, and were visited by numbers of captains of Columbian privateers, most of them Americans, who had obtained commissions signed by General Bolivar; they purchased many articles from us. Before we got the schooner under weigh we took on board three members of the Columbian Congress and their servants. A son of one of the congressmen had been educated in Europe, and spoke good English. We agreed to convey them to Chagres. They came direct from Bogata, the seat of government of this Republic,

their congress having just adjourned ; they were on their way home, across the Isthmus. The Columbian Congress had passed a law to raise the duties on imports about twelve per cent. We had a large assortment of goods on board, which we sold at retail at every port where we landed. On our passage these members of congress, who had come direct from the seat of government, and assisted to pass laws to raise the revenue and prevent smuggling, purchased over three hundred dollars' worth of goods of us on the passage, and had them put up in proper packages to pass through the custom house as their baggage, so as to defraud the government of the duties.

A short time before we arrived at Chagres one of them, who had an English negro servant, ordered him to tell Captain Murray that he could put some of his goods amongst their baggage if he wanted to smuggle them on shore through the custom house, as their baggage was considered sacred, and that no custom house officer dare to examine it. Being well acquainted with the tricks of these Spanish officers, I prevailed on Murray not to trust them, telling him this was only a trick to cheat him out of his goods, as I had heard, from good authority, of a number of tricks of this kind which had been practised by the collector of Porto Bello and other ports on the Main.

We landed our passengers and remained some days at Chagres, where we sold some goods and then returned to Porto Bello. We purchased some fustic and other articles, and proceeded to the coast of St.

Blas, touching at a number of small harbors, where we bought fustic in small quantities. While laying in the mouth of one of these narrow rivers, called Nombre Dios, (name of God,) I found by inquiry that I was only about thirty miles from the residence of one of my old traders, named Campbell, who had visited New-York with me in the Schooner Price, and was there when General Jackson made his first visit to that city. I told Captain Murray that I should feel much pleased to visit Campbell, and I would willingly assist to paddle a canoe thirty miles to see any honest friend. This pleased him much, as he wanted an introduction to the trade on that coast. The next morning we fitted out our canoe, by putting a dinner-pot, fire-works, and some provisions, and a large jug, containing two or three gallons of gin, on board, to treat my Indian friends on my arrival among them. We were now well prepared for the trip, having plenty to eat and drink. If the winds or weather detained us on the passage we could go on shore, haul up our canoe, build a fire, cook our provision and then lay down on the ground and get a comfortable sleep, by keeping a kind of watch amongst ourselves to prevent the fire from going out, that being our only protection from tigers, panthers, and other wild beasts, who will never approach a fire. They are very numerous on this coast. I tried this experiment many years successfully.

We left the schooner early in the morning and

proceeded more than one half of our journey, when a strong breeze of head wind compelled us to go on shore and take up our lodging for the night. The next morning, the wind having abated, we got under weigh, and reached Campbell's house that afternoon. I was received by my old friend in the most affectionate manner. He, knowing that I was very fond of craw-fish, wilkes, &c. despatched a number of young men to fish for them, and others to go and gather some of their best fruits for us to eat. At the same time the most of his neighbors visited his house, many of them bringing fruits, sugar-cane, &c. We were treated to the best supper the country afforded, and he furnished us with clean hammocks to sleep in. The morning after, we made a good breakfast; a large assemblage of Indians met at Campbell's house, when he asked me to christen his children, which I declined, by saying I had no book with me. I soon discovered that he felt dissatisfied with my denial, for he had invited all his neighbors there to witness the performance. He earnestly entreated me a second time to perform the ceremony. After some further entreaty I yielded to his request, which seemed to throw a gleam of joy on all the assembly of Indians, whose eyes were steadily fixed upon me. When I got prepared to perform the ceremony, I asked Campbell in his usual way of speaking English, "What him name." He answered me, saying, "Dat General Jackson." I then sprinkled water on his head, laid my hand upon it, and pronounced his



name with an audible voice ; this was the oldest boy. I called for the next, when he brought forward a younger lad ; when I asked his name, the answer was, "Dat must be your name," so I christened him Jacob Dunham ; then calling for another, he brought me a small girl, when I asked concerning the name, he answered me, "Dat must be your wife name," and I christened her Fanny Dunham. The fourth one being called for, Captain Murray requested Campbell to have it christened after his wife ; he agreed to it, as it was a small girl, and I named her Lucretia Murray. After the ceremony was ended Captain Murray presented the children with fifty cents each. A good dinner was prepared on the occasion, which we partook of in the most jovial and friendly manner, after which we visited a number of the neighboring houses in company with my friend Campbell, where we were received with a hearty welcome, and presented with such fruits as the country afforded.

In the morning, while we were preparing to return to the schooner, Campbell called me out to a small store house, where he took up the hind quarter of a baboon or large monkey, well smoked, and presented it to me to eat on our passage back to the schooner. I did not like to wound his feelings by refusing his present. On looking into his store room I observed a number of large smoked birds about the size of a common turkey, which I told him suited my taste much better than monkey, which he readily ex-

changed, as the natives consider a fat monkey the best meat that the country produces. He supplied us with bread-stuff and fruits. We took our departure for the vessel, and arrived on board that night.

We continued trading along the coast a few days, when we fell in with an old schooner under Columbian colors, but American built, said to belong to a man named Varney, who was on board of her, but could not hold her papers while sailing under that flag, not being a naturalized citizen of that government. It appeared he had employed a black citizen of that country to hold her papers, in the capacity of captain, who was then laying sick in a canoe on the schooner's deck.

Captain Murray told me he had heard from Carthage that a government schooner was cruising in pursuit of the Frances to capture her for trading on this coast without license, that we must take the goods out of her and put them on board of Varney's old schooner as speedily as possible, and then proceed to sea with her immediately; that I must go on board of her and take charge of the goods as supercargo. The goods were transferred that afternoon in great haste, without my having time to examine the old vessel as I ought to have done. She had a motley crew of different nations on board. When I took a view of them, I told Murray that I would not trust my life on board of her without he gave me two or three of the Frances' crew to go with me, which request he complied with, when we hurried to sea,

bound to the Island of St. Andreas. After we got out a little from the land we tried the pump, and found she leaked very badly, but dared not put back, fearing we might be captured. So we all agreed to pursue the voyage. We were now compelled to try the pump every fifteen minutes during the passage to St. Andreas, which was twenty-three days.

Immediately after our arrival in that harbor I took all the goods on shore. Two days after, Varney undertook to heave the old schooner out, to repair her bottom, when the deck slid off, and she sunk, never to rise again. The negro captain died the second day after we went to sea, when we committed his body to a watery grave.

Some time after Captain Murray arrived with the Frances in the harbor and learned the fate of Varney's old vessel, when he chartered a small schooner belonging to St. Andreas to take the remainder of his goods on board, and carry them to St. John's, on the Spanish Main. The next day they were all put on board of the new schooner. Murray now made up his mind to send the Frances back to New-York, and wanted me to take charge of her as master, which I refused to do, knowing it to be a broken voyage, and if I acted as master of her I could not libel the vessel for my wages. I told him he could give the mate charge of the Frances, and that I would assist to navigate her back to New-York, which he agreed to. He and Varney went on board of the new chartered schooner, and proceeding

to St. John's, took out the goods and transported them up that river into Nunanger Lake, on a trading voyage. All our arrangements being finished, both vessels proceeded to sea, when we shaped our course for New-York.

Soon after we got to sea I examined the list of return cargo which Murray had left on board the *Frances*; it consisted mostly of fustic, which was selling in New-York at that time at reduced prices, and I found that the whole cargo would not pay the charter of the schooner, which was two hundred dollars per month, besides victualing, manning and port charges.

The *Frances* proved to be such a dull sailer that we could seldom force her more than seven knots per hour, in addition to which her sails and rigging had been badly injured by the continued rains on that coast, which rendered her unfit for any voyage. We were beating to the northward about fourteen days before we made the land, which proved to be Cape Antonio, we then steered into the Gulf-stream, which assisted us to work our way to the northward and eastward, and were a number of days sailing in the Gulf before we reached the latitude of Charleston, where we encountered a succession of heavy gales of wind which split our sails and carried away the greatest part of our running rigging. Finding our water and provisions growing short, we concluded to put into Charleston for relief, and the next day the wind proving favorable we steered direct for that

port, where we anchored in a crippled condition. After our arrival there, we wrote to the men whom we supposed were Captain Murray's sureties for the charter of the *Frances*, informing them of our misfortune, when they applied to the underwriters for relief. When we had waited two or three weeks in Charleston, an agent of the underwriters arrived there from New-York, bringing with him rigging and sails, when we made some temporary repairs, and then sailed for New-York, where we arrived after a passage of two weeks.

After we arrived in port it was discovered that Murray had not over twenty dollars when he first undertook the voyage. He was a good looking man, and belonged to the Masonic order, could sing a good song, and tell a humorous story, and had a peculiar way of gaining the confidence of his associates. He had but few personal acquaintances in the city; but had obtained security from two or three responsible merchants for the charter of the schooner *Frances* for a voyage of some months, at two hundred dollars per month, and they had loaned him money to pay the advance wages of the mate and seamen, and supplied him with ship stores, besides making large shipments of goods on their own account. He took many goods from different people in invoices of from fifty to one thousand dollars, agreeing to carry them free from freight, and return them one-half of the net profits. Among the shippers was his landlady, a poor widow woman, whom he persuaded to make a ship-

ment of crockery amounting to fifty or sixty dollars, who, no doubt expected it would be sold at California prices. I have since conversed with many of the shippers by the Frances on this voyage, who say that they never received any returns for the goods which they shipped on board the schooner, or any account of the sales of them. The sureties were compelled to pay the seamen's wages and all other expenses. Some years after I learned that Murray died in some part of Central America.

---

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### Voyage to New Orleans.

About the first of December, 1831, I entered into an agreement in Philadelphia with a large contractor, who had engaged to open a canal from the city of New Orleans to Lake Ponckertrain. He had hired about one hundred and fifty men, and chartered a brig to carry them to New Orleans. We sailed about the sixth of December, and made our passage out in twenty days. The captain of the brig was a young man who was but little acquainted with that coast. As he found that I was more experienced than himself, he was very civil to me. I gave him

information about this dangerous coast. On our arrival at New Orleans we were conveyed to some large shantees, built for the accommodation of the workmen. I was stationed in the store-room, with orders to weigh out the provisions, keep a daily account of the expenditures, and make weekly returns to the treasurer. This I found a very disagreeable situation, as the men were constantly finding fault with their provisions, although they were furnished with good tea, coffee, sugar, smoked shoulders, potatoes, salt fish, wheat bread and butter every Friday, fresh beef twice in the week, and eight glasses of whiskey per day. Notwithstanding this good treatment, we had riots among the men every few days, and all deficiency in stores or cooking was laid to my charge, and they often threatened my life. There were two other encampments on the same canal, one on the lake side, and one in the middle station, where they murdered one cook, mortally wounded one overseer, and severely injured many others.

A few months after they grew so riotous that the City Guards had to be called out to suppress them, when they were discharged by the company, and I was released from my contract. After they had spent all their wages they returned to their work and were very orderly. This canal is only six and a half miles long, and eight feet deep, but has added greatly to the wealth of the city. There was an old canal, formed mostly by nature, running nearly paral-

lel with this new one, having about five feet depth of water in it, but it was often so much out of repair as to make it difficult to navigate, and as it did not answer the desired purpose, the new one was made. I obtained employment in a little schooner, which ran between New Orleans and Covington, through the old canal, crossing the lake and ascending a small river called Chepunkee, navigable some twenty-two miles. We sailed into the mouth of it about three miles, and then took in our sails and towed her the remaining distance to the little village called Covington. The river is so narrow in many places that vessels have scant room to pass by each other; a slight current sets down the river the whole time.

At Covington I found a number of steam saw-mills, and abundance of sawed timber and boards, a few hotels, boarding houses, stores, and a printing office and several dwelling houses. This place is considered a healthy resort in the sickly season. Many small vessels find employment here in transporting lumber, brick, and cotton. We soon took in a cargo of lumber and returned to New Orleans, where we discharged it; when I entered on board of another schooner and made a trip to Mobile, which I found a very handsome city. The houses are built in modern style, the place has in it a number of large elegant hotels and stores, and many handsome streets. I was much annoyed with musquittoes while we remained in port, but soon left for New Orleans, where we landed after a passage of



two days. In a short time I started for another trip across the lake. On my return I was taken sick. Finding that my small means would not support me long at a boarding house, and also pay the doctor's bills, I applied to the collector of the port, who gave me an order to go to the Marine Hospital, supposing I had a just claim to go there after paying hospital money to support such institutions over thirty years. During my stay in the hospital I found it was a private institution; that the collector and the keeper of it were kinsmen, and that the collector paid the keeper seventy-five cents per day for the board of every seaman he sent there. The daily rations allowed each man were about eight or ten ounces of bread, and five or six ounces of fresh meat, with the accompaniment of a small bowl of tea. The whole would not cost per day over twelve cents per man.

A number of seamen remain here a long time after they are restored to health, without receiving a discharge from the doctor, who is making fifty cents per day, or more, for their board. These men leave the hospital in the morning in pursuit of work, which they generally find, purchase their dinners at eating houses, and return to the hospital at night, where they receive their small rations and lodgings, the keeper pocketing his seventy-five cents per day from government during their stay here. They are left to decide for themselves when it is best to be well. In consequence of this, many of the sick in the hospital are crowded out of comfortable lodgings.

It will easily be seen that the greatest part of the tax collected from the hard earnings of seamen is used to enrich political favorites. I remained in this establishment about sixty days, during that time the yellow fever raged there violently, causing a number of deaths in the house. Many patients were brought there who were unable to walk or stand on their feet, and were most of them soon cured.

After I left the hospital I found some light employment for a few days, when I agreed to take another trip across the lake. Previous to my going on board of the vessel I returned to the hospital, where I had left some of my clothing, took with me such as I wanted, and left some of my heavy articles in charge of a sailor named Daniel Dunn, with whom I had formed a short acquaintance in the hospital, and proceeded over the lake, where we remained a few days, and then returned to the city. On my return I found the cholera had broken out and was raging to such an alarming degree that the inhabitants were terror-struck. The returns of deaths were over two hundred per day. Laborers wages for digging in the church burying ground was seven dollars per day. Not being able to procure laborers sufficient to dig single graves, they dug canals about one hundred rods in length, of sufficient depth to place three coffins one above the other, the water in the bottom of it being about eighteen inches deep. All graves dug in New Orleans are half filled with water before the coffins are deposited in them.

The morning after my return I proceeded to the hospital to see after my clothing. On visiting the building I was much surprised on walking through many of the rooms without seeing a living soul. In the back yard I found eight or ten dead bodies laying on the ground in a putrid state. I then searched the upper stories, and in a room called the small-pox ward, I found one dead body laying on a bed covered with a woollen blanket, in a very putrid state, the offensive gas rising through the blanket like a dense fog. Some few were still alive, but suffering for want of attendance. On descending the stairs I met the assistant physician of the hospital, and asked him the cause of this great neglect of the few who were still living. He told me that Doctor M'Farlane, the proprietor, was very sick, and that the cook, steward, washer woman, and the black man who conveyed the corpses to the grave, were all dead, and that they could not procure any assistance. He asked me if I would try to hire some help for him. I told him that I would use my best exertions to procure him some, but if I could not obtain any I would assist him myself. I then left him and returned to my lodgings. Just before I left my boarding house to visit the hospital I heard one of the boarders, a journeyman hatter, who had been on a drunken frolic for some days, say that he had spent all his money and had not enough left to get his bitters that morning. Knowing that the want of money in such circumstances stimulate men to undertake unpleasant jobs sooner

than go without their bitters, I proposed his going to work with me at the hospital, and rendering the doctor all the assistance in our power, which he readily agreed to. When we arrived at the place I introduced the doctor to the hatter: After the introduction was over my partner showed a great anxiety to fix on the price of our day's work, which was soon settled at five dollars each. The bargain being closed we were presented with some antidote, which we were ordered to snuff up our noses.

About this time three or four carts arrived at the door, when we were requested to assist in carrying out the few sick persons that remained in the building, which we found to be only sixteen, being all that were left alive out of about sixty inmates that I left there some ten days before.

The doctor showed us a number of rough boxes, called coffins, which were placed in the back yard. Many of them were made very wide, that they might hold two dead bodies. He requested us to harness up a poor old half-starved horse, which we found on the premises. After a long search we found the old harness scattered about the yard, which we gathered up, both of us being ignorant of the way of putting it together. After a long consultation we placed it on the horse's back, which was so sore that he trembled badly during the operation. After we had rigged him and the cart, we agreed to take on one of the double coffins for the first load. We opened one of them and placed a large body in it, and then hunted for a small

one to crowd into the same box ; when we had accomplished this we attempted to lift the double coffin on to the cart ; finding that we were not able to accomplish it we were obliged to roll it on. I asked the hatter if he would drive the horse to the graveyard, telling him I was unacquainted with that employment. He told me he was a stranger to that business, and insisted upon it that I must be the driver. I mounted the cart and proceeded towards the burying ground, on the road we found the mud so deep that the cart wheels buried themselves nearly up to the hubs. After driving nearly a mile we arrived at the Catholic burying ground, where we found a long canal and twenty or thirty men employed in digging and receiving dead bodies. Before our arrival there, a board burst off from the coffin, which caused one arm to hang out. The Irish laborers employed there commenced a quarrel with us, swearing that they would be the death of us if we brought any more coffins there in that situation, and we found some difficulty in prevailing upon them to receive the present one. They at last agreed to help lift it off the cart. It was then placed in the canal, where the water was about two feet deep, two men stood upon it until they put another coffin on the top of it, when they placed the third one on the top of the second one, making the tier three deep, laying the coffins crossways in the canal. When one tier was finished they hove large quantities of lime upon it and commenced another.

We now returned to the hospital and took in two more bodies, enclosing them in single coffins. This time we found a number of chickens busily employed in the hospital yard picking maggots out of the eyes and ears of the putrid bodies laying on the ground in the yard. The hatter and myself had a long consultation about handling the putrid carcasses, and agreed between ourselves to pick out the soundest of them first. We noticed some cartmen drawing a number of loads of wood and depositing them on a vacant lot of ground near the hospital. A report was circulated that the Mayor of the city had ordered the building to be burned down that night. We proceeded back to the grave-yard, where we met with a more peaceable reception. On our return we found the fowls still busily engaged on the dead bodies, which had become more putrid during our short absence. This was one of the most unpleasant scenes I ever witnessed. We stopped on our way and took some refreshments, and then conveyed two more loads to the burying ground, carrying two at each load.

About sunset we unharnessed our old horse and put him in his place. Having satisfied our employer we took our discharge. We agreed between ourselves to stop at the hospital a short time and see what disposal was to be made of the remaining dead bodies. Soon after sunset some eight or ten men made their appearance and took up an old door and bored one or two holes through it, and putting a rope through

the holes, rolled two of the putrid bodies upon it, and then took hold of the rope and dragged it to a vacant lot near the hospital, which process they continued until they had gathered them all into one heap, when they went to the various rooms and took all the beds and bedsteads containing the dead bodies, and carried them into the same yard and deposited them on the putrid heap; they next broke down the fence to more readily kindle the fire on this offensive mass, when they piled on the three cords of wood which the Mayor had sent there for that purpose, set it on fire, and consumed the whole of it.

On viewing the place, while passing it the next morning, I could not discover a particle of bone larger than a man's finger-nail left.

The Cholera raged in New Orleans to a frightful degree for some months after; the average number of deaths in the city was two hundred per day for several weeks.

Soon after this I made a trip in a little schooner to St. Marks, and a small port called Magnolia, in West Florida, and then returned to the city, where I remained about two months, when I found employment as a mate on board of a brig called the Commodore Barry, bound to New-York, where I was to receive my wages and be discharged. We performed our passage home without meeting with any occurrence worth recording.

New Orleans is one of the most immoral cities I ever visited. All kinds of amusement are indulged

in on Sundays: most of the military companies, both foot and horse, are assembled on that day in a public square in front of the Mayor's office and drilled. The Sabbath is the day elected for sham fights. The piazzas of the largest hotels are filled with bands of musicians, playing enchanting tunes to attract customers. The doors of billiard rooms are thrown open to public view, and large sums of money are often bet on the games. Strolling negro musicians are found playing on their banjos and tamborines at the corners of the streets. On Sunday-evenings, circuses, play-houses and gambling rooms, attract a large collection of people.

---

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### **Schooner Horizon.**

Having lost all my property except a small homestead, by the many captures I had experienced, the perils of the sea, and the fluctuations of prices in the West India produce, and being now out of employment, and looking upon every man as slothful who remained idle when he could earn a competence by working for less wages than he formerly received, I agreed with a young inexperienced captain to per-



form a voyage with him in a small schooner of seventy tons, called the *Horizon*, from New-York to the Island of Teneriffe. My name was entered on the shipping articles as mate, although it was verbally understood that I was to be considered as the navigator and sailing master.

We commenced loading about the first of January, 1835, with staves and a few other articles, and went to sea about the eighth, the vessel being deeply loaded, which made her wet and uncomfortable for a winter's voyage. We proceeded on the passage without any material accident until we arrived in the latitude of Teneriffe, when we were overtaken by a violent gale of wind, which lasted nearly two days; we shipped a number of seas, which cleared our decks of staves, carried away our bulwarks, broke our bowsprit, and sprung the head of our foremast; rendering the schooner totally unmanageable. The next day the wind abated, and the sea became more moderate, when we made all the repairs that our scant materials would admit of, and in the afternoon discovered the high Peak of Teneriffe. Finding our water running low, having had our last cask stove during the gale, we agreed to come upon an allowance of one bottle of water for each man per day. The weather became mild, with light variable winds, which rendered the vessel quite unmanageable, as we had no head sail to keep her before the wind in light breezes. With longing eyes we viewed the majestic pyramid for fourteen days, the wind

remaining the same during all that time, when we approached so near the harbor of Oratava that we were boarded by a pilot who conducted us into that port. Our schooner's cables being only about forty fathoms long, would not reach the bottom in that harbor, and we were obliged to hire a cable and anchor to ride by during our stay in port.

While lying here it is necessary to keep a pilot constantly on board, that we may be ready to proceed to sea the moment the wind changes so as to blow towards the land. After we had remained in the harbor some four or five days, and procured carpenters to repair our vessel, a gale of wind commenced, and we were compelled to slip our cable and go to sea again, where we remained about two days, when we put into the Island of Palmos, at which place we continued three or four days. After the gale abated we returned to our former anchorage in Oratava harbor.

The harbor of Oratava is surrounded by high rocks, almost perpendicular, faced with sharp points, which makes it impossible to ascend them. When vessels are wrecked in this place they are very soon dashed to pieces, and their crews meet a watery grave. The anchorage is situated about twelve miles from the foot of the Peak, where the weather is so mild that sailors are working on board vessels with no clothing except shirts and trowsers, while the Peak is covered with snow. Our pilot informed me that snow fell on the Peak every month in the

year except March. The snow, from the appearance, forms a body of ice, and the brilliant rays of the sun at its rising are reflected on this ice-capped mountain with such dazzling light that the beholder is struck with awe as he surveys this mighty wonder of the world. I had but one opportunity to visit the shore, where I remained but a few moments while signing a protest. My short stay prevents my giving the reader any description of the place.

We employed two native carpenters to repair the damages the schooner had received on the passage, they came on board early every morning, bringing their dinners with them, which consisted of a six cent loaf of wheat bread, one head of lettuce, and a bottle of wine; this being the only food they had. At twelve o'clock they sat down on deck, made their meal and drank the wine. They brought on board a few very coarse carpenter's tools, among which was a hand-saw that attracted my particular attention, as it had a small hole in the point of it, through which they put a nail gimblet; when they wanted to split a board they lined in the usual manner, then placed one end on the deck and raised the other end up to an angle of about forty-five degrees, being supported by a saw-bench, when one of them took the saw by the handle in the common way, while the other put the gimblet through the hole in the point, which he took hold of by placing his fingers on both sides of the blade, and assisted in drawing the saw through the board, his comrade shoving on the other

end; this was the first time I ever knew that it took two men to work one hand-saw.

The expenses of repairs here are very great. I think one American carpenter will perform more labor in one day than six of those natives.

We were detained here a long time in discharging our cargo for want of lighters, being obliged to land it in small boats, which made but a few trips on shore each day, the same boats bringing back our return cargo. Our supply of fire wood getting very short we inquired the price of that article on shore, and found that they asked twenty dollars per cord for it. We purchased a few sacks of coal for the return passage. After remaining here some weeks we sailed for New-York, where we shortly arrived, all in good health. The cargo was soon discharged, all hands paid, and I returned to my home.

---

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### **Sinking of the Sloop First Consul.**

About the first of September, 1842, two of my friends in New-York purchased a Sloop called the First Consul, about twenty-five tons burden, and gave me the charge of her with orders to employ her

in any trade I thought proper to earn a living in. I remained in the city some weeks seeking employment for my vessel, but after many applications for freights, without success, I found myself disappointed in my calculations in obtaining business for her in the city. As a last resort, I determined to proceed up the Hudson River as far as Rondout, where I expected to procure some small freights of coal to deliver at the neighboring villages on the river.

On the fifteenth of October I left New-York for Rondout, where I obtained a freight of about thirty tons of coal to be delivered at Poughkeepsie. We loaded and left for our port of destination, where we discharged our cargo and agreed to return and take in another for the same company. Finding the sloop proved leaky I proceeded home to Catskill, where I procured a caulker and gave her some repairs, when we returned to Rondout and took on board another cargo of coal. Supposing the vessel to be perfectly tight in her upper works after the overhauling she had received, we loaded her deep, in order to take a full canal boat's cargo on board. After we had proceeded some distance on our passage we discovered that the vessel leaked badly. We had light baffling winds during the night, and tried the pump hourly. Finding we could keep her free without very heavy fatigue, we apprehended no serious danger, and soon arrived at the same wharf in Poughkeepsie where we had landed our last cargo, and hauled into a small slip which I considered a very safe harbor. I

had one man on board with me, whom I told we would get some breakfast, when we would go below and take a short nap, as we had been on deck all night; after which I would find the owner of the coal and obtain leave to discharge the deck load that day, although it was Sunday. We then retired into the cabin and laid down to sleep, it being about eight o'clock in the morning. After laying about two hours I was aroused by a loud cry, "Come out, come out, you are sinking." I sprang upon my feet, determined to save my trunk and clothing, which I was prevented from doing by a column of water rushing in at the cabin door. I forced myself upon deck, which at this time was some feet under water, when I found my legs entangled with old rigging and lumber. While trying to extricate them, the shore being steep the vessel settled down, which parted the hawser that held her fast to the wharf, when she slid off into the channel and sunk in thirty feet water, with all my clothing, &c. and I was compelled to swim on shore, which I reached in a shivering condition, but was soon furnished with dry clothing, and treated in the kindest manner by a gentleman living near by.

Two or three days after I hired two vessels, procured spars, chains, and necessary apparatus, together with a number of men, and made an attempt to raise the *First Consul*. After several days' hard labor and fatigue we succeeded in raising her, so as to float her on the flats, when we bailed the water out

and discharged the coal from her hold, the bulk of the deck load having been washed overboard. I found most of my clothing, books, papers, &c. in the cabin in a very dirty condition. My troubles did not end here: before I could receive any assistance from my friends, the sloop was attached for the expenses of getting her up, and sold for less than the amount of the bills, when I returned home penniless, my mind fixed on the distich—

Since all things to destruction tend,  
My voyage of life will shortly end.

**FINIS.**







G530

D9



