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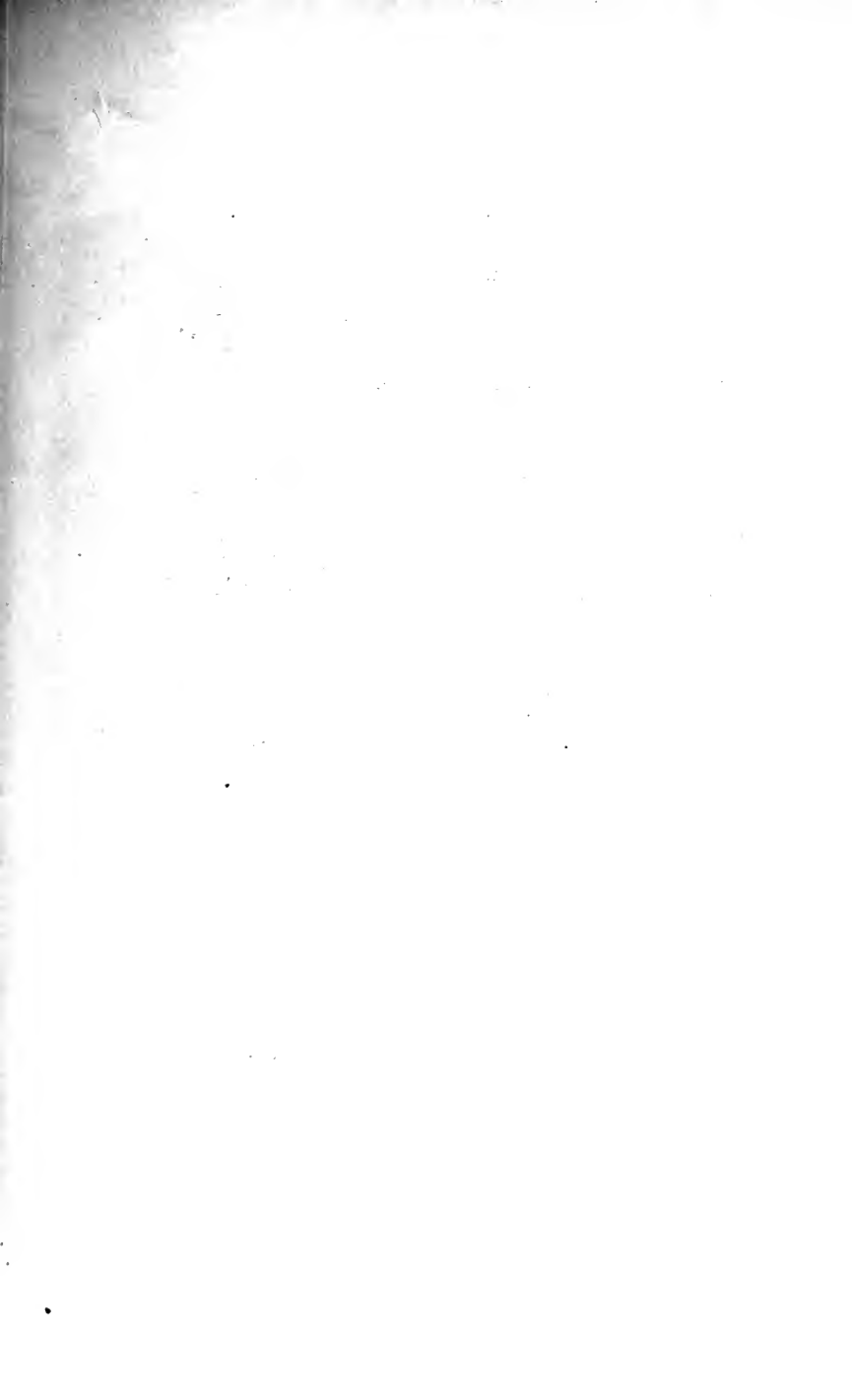
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**TOILERS OF THE SEA.**









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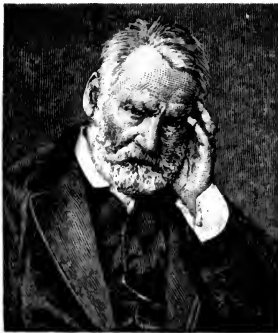
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THE  
TOILERS OF THE SEA

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

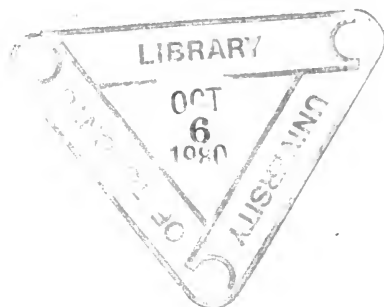
BY VICTOR HUGO



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

W. B. BOSTON

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# TOILERS OF THE SEA.

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## PART II.

### MALICIOUS GILLIATT.

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## BOOK I.

### THE REEF.

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## CHAPTER I.

### EASY TO REACH, BUT DIFFICULT TO LEAVE.

THE bark which had been seen by so many persons on the coast of Guernsey the previous evening was, as the reader has probably suspected, the old Dutch barge or sloop. Gilliatt had chosen the channel between the rocks along the coast. It was the most dangerous route, but it was also the most direct. To reach his destination as soon as possible was his only thought. Shipwrecks will not wait; the sea is an urgent creditor; an hour's delay may be irreparable. He was anxious to go to the rescue of the machinery immediately.

One of his objects in leaving Guernsey at night was to avoid notice.

He set out like one fleeing from justice, and anxious to hide from human eyes. He shunned the eastern coast, as if he did not care to pass within sight of St. Sampson and St. Peter's Port, and glided silently along the opposite coast, which is comparatively uninhabited. It was necessary to ply the oars among the breakers; but Gilliatt managed them on scientific principles. Taking the water quietly, and dropping it with perfect regularity, he was able to move on in the darkness with very little noise and great rapidity. So stealthy were his movements that one might have supposed him bent upon some evil deed.

The fact is, though he was embarking in an enterprise which might well be called impossible, and was risking his life with every chance against him, his greatest fear was of some possible rival.

As day began to break, those unseen eyes which look down on the world from boundless space might have beheld, in one of the most dangerous and lonely places in the channel, two objects, the distance between which gradually decreased as one approached the other. One, which was almost imperceptible in the general movement of the waters, was a sailboat. In this sailboat was a man. It was Gilliatt's sloop. The other, black, motionless, colossal, rose high above the waves. It was of singular form. Two tall pillars emerging from the sea bore aloft a sort of cross-beam that strongly resembled a bridge between them. This bridge, so singular in shape that it was impossible to imagine what it really was, from a distance, touched each of the two pillars. The whole thing looked like a vast portal. Of what use could such a structure be in the open sea, which stretched far and wide around it? It might have been a Titanic Dolmen, planted there in mid-ocean by an imperious whim, and built by hands accustomed to proportion their

labours to the mighty deep. Its huge outlines stood out in bold relief against the clear sky.

The morning light was growing stronger in the east; the whiteness in the horizon made the water look still darker. In the western sky the moon was sinking.

The two tall perpendicular rocks were the Douvres. The huge mass held fast between them, like an architrave between two pillars, was the wreck of the Durande.

The rocks, thus holding fast and exhibiting their prey, were terrible to behold. Inanimate things sometimes look as if they were endowed with a grim and hostile spirit towards man. There was a menace in the attitude of these rocks. They seemed to be biding their time.

Their whole appearance was highly suggestive of haughtiness and arrogance.

The two rocks, still dripping from the tempest of the day before, were like two wrestlers sweating from a recent contest. The wind had subsided; the sea rippled gently, but the presence of breakers might be detected here and there in light streaks of foam upon the surface of the waters. A sound like the murmuring of bees arose from the sea.

Up to a certain height the Douvres were thickly covered with sea-weed; above this, their steep haunches glittered in places like polished armour. They seemed ready to commence the strife anew. The beholder felt that they were rooted deep in mountains whose summits were beneath the sea. Their aspect was full of tragic power.

Ordinarily the sea conceals her crimes. She delights in secrecy. Her unfathomable depths maintain a rigorous silence. She envelops herself in mystery and very rarely consents to disclose secrets. We know her savage nature, but who knows the extent of her evil deeds? She is at once open and secretive. She wrecks a vessel, and covering it with the waves, ingulfs it deep, as if con-

scious of her guilt. One of her worst crimes is hypocrisy. She slays and steals, then she conceals her booty, assumes an air of unconsciousness, and smiles. She roars like a lion one minute, and bleats like a lamb the next. There was nothing of that kind here, however. The Douvres, lifting above the level of the waters the shattered hull of the *Durande*, wore an air of triumph. One might have fancied they were two monstrous arms, reaching upwards from the gulf, and exhibiting to the tempest the lifeless body of the ship. Their aspect was like that of an assassin boasting of his evil deeds.

The hour contributed not a little to the solemnity of the scene. There is a mysterious grandeur in the dawn, as of the border-land between the region of consciousness and the world of our dreams. There is something almost ghastly about this transition period. The immense form of the two Douvres, like a capital letter H, the *Durande* forming its cross-stroke, stood out against the horizon in a sort of gruesome majesty.

Gilliatt was attired in his seaman's rig,—a woollen shirt, woollen stockings, thick shoes, a knitted jacket, trousers of thick stuff, with pockets, and upon his head a cap of red worsted, of the kind then in use among sailors, and known in the last century as a *galérienne*.

He recognized the rocks, and steered towards them.

The situation of the *Durande* was exactly the contrary of that of a vessel gone to the bottom: it was a vessel suspended in mid-air.

No stranger instance of salvage was ever seen.

It was broad daylight when Gilliatt neared the Douvres.

As we have said, there was very little sea. The slight agitation of the water was due almost entirely to its confinement among the rocks. Every passage, small or large, is subject to this chopping movement. The inside of a channel is always more or less white with foam.

Gilliatt did not approach the Douvres without caution. He cast the sounding-lead several times.

He had a cargo to land.

Accustomed to long absences, he had a number of necessaries always ready at home. He had brought with him a sack of biscuit, another of rye-meal, a basket of salt fish and smoked beef, a large can of fresh water; a gaily painted Norwegian chest, containing several coarse woollen shirts, his tarpaulin and waterproof overalls, and a sheepskin which he was accustomed to throw over him at night. On leaving the Bû de la Rue he had put all these things into the barge, with the addition of a large loaf of bread. In his haste, he had brought no other tools but his huge forge-hammer, his axe and hatchet, and saw, and a knotted rope, fastened to a grappling-iron. With a ladder of that sort, provided one knows how to use it, the steepest rocks become accessible, and a good sailor will find it possible to scale the highest escarpment. In the island of Sark the visitor can see what feats the fishermen of the Havre Gosselin manage to accomplish with a knotted rope.

His nets and lines and all his fishing tackle were in the sloop. He had placed them there mechanically and rather from force of habit than otherwise; for he intended, if his enterprise succeeded, to remain for some time in a region of breakers, where fishing nets and tackle are of very little use.

When Gilliatt approached the great rock the sea was retiring; a circumstance favourable to his purpose, for the ebbing tide left bare one or two table-rocks, horizontal, or only slightly inclined, at the foot of the smaller Douvre. These table-rocks which varied considerably in breadth, some being narrow and some very wide, and which stood at unequal distances along the side of the great perpendicular column, were continued in the form of a thin

cornice up to a spot just beneath the *Durande*, which was held fast between the two rocks as in a vice.

This series of platforms would be convenient for approaching and surveying the position. It was convenient also for disembarking the contents of the barge provisionally; but it was necessary to make haste, for it was only above water for a few hours. With the rising tide the table-rocks would be again covered with foam.

It was in front of these table-rocks that Gilliatt pushed in and brought the boat to a standstill.

A thick mass of wet and slippery sea-wrack covered them, rendered more slippery here and there by their sloping surface.

Gilliatt pulled off his shoes, sprang bare-footed on to the slimy weeds, and made the sloop fast to a point of rock.

Then he advanced as far as he could along the granite cornice, reached the rock immediately beneath the wreck, looked up, and examined it.

The *Durande* had been caught between the two rocks, about twenty feet above the water. It must have been a huge billow that had carried her there.

Such effects from furious seas are not surprising to those who are familiar with the ocean. To cite one example only:—On the 25th January, 1840, in the Gulf of Stora, a tempest struck a brig, and carried it intact over the broken wreck of the corvette "*La Marne*," and fixed it immovably, bowsprit first, in a gap between the cliffs.

The *Douvres*, however, held only a part of the *Durande*.

The vessel had been, as it were, uprooted from the waters by the hurricane. A whirlwind had hurled it against the counteracting force of the rolling waves, and the vessel thus caught in contrary directions by the two claws of the tempest had snapped like a lath. The after-part, with the engine and the paddles, lifted out of the



foam and driven by the fury of the cyclone into passage between the Douvres, had plunged in up to her midship beam, and remained wedged there. The blow that had driven it in this fashion between the two rocks, had been as accurately directed as if dealt with a hammer. The forecastle, carried away by the sea, had fallen in fragments among the breakers.

The hold, broken in, had scattered the bodies of the drowned cattle upon the sea.

A large portion of the forward side and bulwarks still hung to the riders by the larboard paddle-box, and by some shattered braces that could be severed with a blow from a hatchet.

Beams, planks, bits of canvas, pieces of chain, and other fragments of wreck were lying around here and there on the rugged rocks.

Gilliatt examined the Durande attentively. The keel formed a roof over his head.

A cloudless sky stretched far and wide over the motionless waters. The sun rose gloriously above the vast azure circle.

Now and then a drop of water oozed from the wreck and fell into the sea below.

## CHAPTER II.

### A CATALOGUE OF DISASTERS.

THE Douvres differed in shape as well as in height. Upon the Little Douvre, which was curved and pointed, long veins of reddish rock, of a comparatively soft texture, could be seen running through the granite. At the edges of these red veins were fractures which would be of great service in climbing. One of these openings, a little above the wreck, had been so worn and scooped out by the action of the waves that it had become a sort of niche, in which it would have been quite possible to place a statue. The granite of the Little Douvre was rounded at the surface, and as soft as the touchstone; but this peculiarity did not impair its durability. The Little Douvre terminated in a point like a horn. The Great Douvre, polished, smooth, glossy, perpendicular, and looking as if it had been cut out by the builder's square, was in one piece, and seemed made of black ivory. There was not a hole or a break in its smooth surface. The place looked inhospitable enough. A convict could not have used it for a refuge, nor a bird for its nest. True, there was a horizontal space on its summit as upon "The Man" rock; but the summit of the Great Douvre was inaccessible.

It was possible to scale the Little Douvre, but not to remain on the summit; it would have been possible to remain on the summit of the Great Douvre, but not to scale it.

Gilliatt, having rapidly taken in the situation of affairs, returned to the sloop, landed its contents upon the largest of the horizontal rocks, made the whole mass into a sort of bale, which he rolled up in tarpaulin, made a slip-noose around it with his rope, pushed the package into a nook in the rocks where the waves could not reach it, and then clutching the Little Douvre with his hands, and holding on with his naked feet, he clambered from projection to projection, and from niche to niche, until he found himself on a level with the wrecked vessel.

Having reached the height of the paddle-wheels, he leaped on deck.

The interior of the wreck presented a terrible aspect.

Traces of a frightful struggle were everywhere visible. The ravages of the wind and waves could be seen on every side. The action of the tempest resembles the violence of a band of pirates. The storm-cloud, the thunder, the rain, the squall, the waves, and the breakers are a formidable band of destroyers.

Standing upon the dismantled deck, it was easy to picture the orgy that had been held there by spirits of the storm. All around were traces of their rage. The strange distortion of many parts of the iron-work testified to the terrific force of the gale.

No wild beast can compare with the sea for mangling its prey. Each wave has its talons. The north wind rends, the billows shatter, the waves are like hungry jaws. The ocean strikes as a lion strikes with its heavy paw, tearing and dismembering at the same time.

The destruction everywhere apparent in the *Durande* had the peculiarity of being detailed and minute. It was a sort of horrible stripping and plucking. Much of it seemed to have been done designedly. The beholder was tempted to exclaim, "What wanton mischief!"

The planking was jagged here and there artistically

This peculiarity is common in the ravages made by a cyclone. To chip and tear away is one of the whims of that great devastator. Its ways resemble those of the professional torturer. The damages which it causes appear like ingenious punishments. One might fancy it actuated by the worst passions of man. It has the refined cruelty of a savage. While it is exterminating, it dissects bone by bone. It tortures its victim, revenges itself, and appears to take delight in its work. It even seems to stoop to petty acts of malice.

Cyclones are rare in our latitudes, and are for that reason the more dangerous, being generally unexpected. A rock in the pathway of a heavy wind may become the pivot of a storm. It is probable that the squall had rotated around the Douvres, and been suddenly turned into a waterspout by its encounter with the rocks,—a fact which explained the casting of a vessel so high between them. In a cyclone the wind drives the largest vessel onward as swiftly and easily as a stone is hurled from a sling.

The injury which the *Durande* had received was like the wound of a man cut in twain. It was a divided trunk from which depended a mass of *débris* like the entrails of a human body. Various kinds of cordage hung floating and trembling, chains swung clattering; the fibres and nerves of the vessel hung there naked and exposed. Everything that was not shattered was disjointed. Some fragments of the sheathing resembled currycombs bristling with nails; a hand-spike had become nothing but a piece of iron; a sounding-lead, nothing but a lump of metal; a dead-eye had become a mere piece of wood; a halliard, an end of rope; a strand of rope, a tangled skein. Naught remained that was not unhooked, unnailed, cracked, torn, warped and pierced with holes. Nothing hung together in the dreadful mass, everything was torn.

dislocated or broken. Upon every side reigned that wild disorder which characterizes the scene of all struggles,— from the *melées* of men, which are called battles, to the *melées* of the elements, to which we give the name of chaos. Everything was hanging loose and dropping off. A rolling mass of planks, panelling, iron-work, cables, and beams had stopped just at one edge of the big rent in the hull, where the least additional shock would have precipitated it into the water below.

This remnant of her once powerful frame, suspended here between the two Douvres and in imminent danger of falling at any moment, was cracked here and there, showing through big apertures the dismal gloom within.

## CHAPTER III.

### SOUND, BUT NOT SAFE.

GILLIATT had not expected to find only a part of the ship left. Nothing in the account given by the captain of the "Shealtiel" had led him to anticipate this division of the vessel in the centre. It was probable that the "frightful crash" heard by the captain of the "Shealtiel" had marked the moment when this destruction had taken place under the blows of a tremendous sea. The captain had borne off a little doubtless just before this last heavy squall; and what he had taken for a huge wave was probably a waterspout. Later, when he drew near again to observe the wreck, he had only been able to see the stern of the vessel, the remainder, — that is to say, the large opening where the forepart had given way, — having been concealed from him by huge masses of rock.

With that exception, the information given by the captain of the "Shealtiel" was strictly correct. The hull was useless, but the engine remained intact.

Such cases are common in the history of shipwrecks. The logic of disaster at sea is beyond human science.

The masts, having snapped off short, had fallen over the side; the smoke-stack was not even bent. The thick iron plating which supported the machinery had kept it together. The planks of the paddle-boxes were disjointed, like the slats of wooden shutters; but through the apertures thus made the paddles themselves could be

seen in good condition. A few of their floats only were missing.

The huge stern capstan had escaped destruction as well as the machinery. Its chain was there, and, thanks to its firm fixture in a frame of joists, might still be of service, unless the strain of the voyal should break away the planking. The floor of the deck bent at almost every point, and seemed unsafe throughout.

On the other hand, the trunk of the hull, wedged between the Douvres, held together, as we have already said, and appeared strong.

There was something like derision in this preservation of the machinery; something which imparted an air of irony to the misfortune. The grim malice of the unseen powers of mischief displays itself sometimes in such bitter mockeries. The machinery was safe, but its preservation did not make it any the less lost. The ocean seemed to have kept it only to demolish it at her leisure, as a cat toys with her prey.

To suffer there and to be dismembered day by day seemed its inevitable fate. It seemed doomed to be the plaything of the cruel, relentless sea, and slowly to dwindle away until it disappeared altogether. For what could be done? That this huge mass of machinery and gearing, so ponderous and yet so delicate in its construction, thus hopelessly imprisoned here, could escape slow, but none the less sure, destruction in this lonely, inaccessible spot, seemed an utter impossibility.

The Durande was the captive of the Douvres.

How could she be extricated from that position?

How could she be delivered from her bondage?

This was, indeed, a perplexing problem!

## CHAPTER IV.

### A PRELIMINARY SURVEY.

GILLIATT was beset on every side with urgent demands upon his attention. The most pressing, however, was to find a safe harbour for the sloop; then, a shelter for himself.

The *Durande* having settled down more on the larboard than on the starboard side, the right paddle-box was much higher than the left.

Gilliatt climbed upon the right paddle-box. From that position, although the cleft extending at an acute angle behind the *Douvres* had several elbows, he was able to study the ground-plan of the group.

This survey was the preliminary step of his operations.

The *Douvres*, as we have already described them, were like two high-gable ends, forming the narrow entrance to a straggling alley of small cliffs with perpendicular sides. It is not unusual to find in primitive submarine formations these singular passages, which seem to have been cut with a hatchet.

This defile was extremely winding, and never dry even at low water. A turbulent current traversed it from end to end at all times. The sharpness of its turnings was favourable or unfavourable, according to the nature of the prevailing wind; sometimes it broke the swell and caused it to subside; sometimes it augmented it. This latter effect was the most frequent. An obstacle arouses the anger of the sea, and leads it into excesses.



Stormy winds are subjected to similar compression in these narrow, winding passages between the rocks, and acquire the same malevolent character. The tempest chafes against its sudden imprisonment. Its bulk is still immense, but sharpened and contracted. It is both ponderous and keen. It pierces even while it fells. It is a hurricane contracted, like the draught through the crevice of a door.

The two ridges of rock, leaving this passage-way between them, were much lower than the Douvres, and gradually decreased until they finally disappeared altogether beneath the waves.

There was another, but much narrower inlet, which formed the eastern entrance of the defile. It was evident that the double prolongation of the ridge of rocks continued under water as far as "The Man" rock which stood like a square citadel at the extremity of the group.

At low water, indeed, which was the time when Gilliatt was observing them, the two rows of rock showed their tops, some high and dry, all visible, and maintaining an unbroken line.

"The Man" formed one boundary, and buttressed on the eastern side the entire mass, which was protected on the opposite side by the two Douvres.

The whole looked like a winding chaplet of rocks, having the Douvres at one extremity and "The Man" at the other.

The Douvres themselves were merely two gigantic shafts of granite which rose perpendicularly out of the water, almost touching each other, and forming the crest of one of the mountain ranges lying beneath the ocean. The surf and the squall had broken them up and divided them like the teeth of a saw. Only the highest part of the ridge was visible; this was the group of rocks. The base, which was concealed by the waves, must have been

enormous. The passage in which the storm had wedged the *Durande* was between these two colossal shafts.

This passage, which was as zig-zag in form as forked lightning, was of the same width throughout. The ocean had so fashioned it. Its eternal commotion sometimes produces singular regularities. There is a sort of geometry in the action of the sea.

From one extremity of the defile to the other, the two granite walls confronted each other at a distance in which the midship frame of the *Durande* exactly fitted. Between the two *Douvres*, the widening of the Little *Douvre*, curved and turned back as it was, had left space enough for the paddles. Any where else they would have been hopelessly shattered.

The high double façade of rock within the passage was hideous to behold. When in the exploration of the watery waste we call the ocean, we encounter the unknown world of the sea, all is uncouth and shapeless. All of the defile that Gilliatt could see from the deck, was appalling. In the rocky gorges of ocean we can often trace a forcible representation of shipwreck. The defile of the *Douvres* was one of these gorges, and its effect was exciting to the imagination. The oxides in the rock showed on the escarpment here and there in red splotches, like marks of clotted blood; it resembled the splashes on the walls of an abattoir. Associations of the charnel-house haunted the place. The rough marine stones, diversely tinted, here by the decomposition of metallic amalgams, there by mould causing purple scales, hideous green blotches, and lurid splashes, aroused ideas of murder and extermination. It was like the unwashed walls of a chamber which had been the scene of an assassination; or it might have been imagined that men had been crushed to death there, leaving traces of their wretched fate. Some spots seemed to be

still dripping with carnage; here the wall was wet, and it seemed impossible to touch it without making one's fingers bloody. The blight of massacre seemed everywhere. At the base of the double escarpment, scattered along the water's edge, or just below the waves, or in the worn hollows of the rocks, were monstrous rounded masses of shingle, some scarlet, others black or purple, which bore a strange resemblance to the internal organs of the body; they might have been taken for fresh lungs, or decaying livers. Giants might have been disembowelled there. From the top to the bottom of the cliff, ran long red lines, which might have been mistaken for ooziings from a funeral bier.

Such sights are frequent in marine caverns.

## CHAPTER V.

### A WORD UPON THE SECRET CO-OPERATIONS OF THE ELEMENTS.

THOSE who, by the disastrous chances of sea-voyages, happen to be condemned to a temporary sojourn upon a rock in mid-ocean, find that the shape of their inhospitable refuge is by no means a matter of indifference. There is the pyramidal-shaped rock, — a single peak rising out of the water; there is the round rock somewhat resembling a circle of big stones; and there is the corridor-rock. The latter is the most alarming of all. It is not only the incessant agony of the waves between its walls, or the tumult of the imprisoned sea; there are also certain obscure meteorological characteristics which seem to result from the parallelism of two rocks in mid-ocean. The two straight sides seem to form a genuine galvanic battery.

The first result of the peculiar position of these corridor-rocks is an action upon the air and the water. The corridor-rock acts upon the waves and the wind mechanically by its form; galvanically, by the different magnetic action rendered possible by its vertical sides and by the masses in juxtaposition and opposite to each other.

This kind of rock attracts to itself all the forces scattered in the winds, and exercises a singular power of concentration over the tempest.

Hence there is an increased violence in storms that occur in the immediate neighbourhood of such rocks.

It must be borne in mind that the wind is composite in character. The wind is believed to be simple ; but it is by no means simple. Its power is not merely chemical, but also magnetic. Its effects are often inexplicable. The wind is as much electrical as aerial. Certain winds coincide with the *auroræ boreales*. The wind blowing from the bank of the Aiguilles heaps up waves one hundred feet high ; a fact noticed with astonishment by Dumont-d'Urville. "The corvette," he says, "knew not what to make of it."

In southern seas the waters often become inflated like an immense tumour ; and at such times the ocean becomes so terrible that the savages flee from the sight of it. The storms in polar seas are different. The air is filled with tiny bits of ice ; and the fierce gusts of wind blow the sledges of the Esquimaux backwards on the snow. Other winds burn. The simoon of Africa is the typhoon of China and the samiel of India. Simoon, typhoon, and samiel are believed to be the names of demons. These storms come down from the mountains. A storm vitrified the volcano of Toluca. This hot wind, a whirlwind of inky blackness, rushing upon red clouds, is alluded to in the Vedas : "Behold the black god, who comes to steal the red cows." In all these facts we trace the presence of the electric mystery.

The air is full of it ; so are the waves. The sea, too, is composite in its nature. Beneath the waves of water which we see, it has its waves of force, which are invisible. Its constituents are innumerable. Of all the elements the ocean is the most indivisible and the most profound.

Think of this chaos, so enormous that it reduces all other things to one level. It is the universal recipient, the reservoir of germs of life, and the crucible of transformations. It amasses and then disperses, it accumulates and then sows, it devours and then creates. It

receives all the waste and refuse waters of the earth, and converts them into treasure. It is solid in the iceberg, liquid in the wave, fluid in suspension. Regarded as matter, it is a mass; regarded as a force, it is an abstraction. It equalizes and unites all phenomena. It may be called the infinite in combination. By force and disturbance, it arrives at transparency. It dissolves all differences, and absorbs them into its own unity. One of its drops is complete, and represents the whole. From the abundance of its tempests, it attains equilibrium. Plato beheld the mazy dances of the spheres. Strange as the assertion may seem, it is nevertheless true that the ocean, in its vast terrestrial journey round the sun, becomes, with its flux and reflux, the balance of the globe.

Any marine phenomenon is only a repetition of some other natural phenomenon. The sea is expelled from a waterspout as from a syphon; the storm carries out the principle of the pump; lightning issues from the sea as well as from the air. Aboard ships faint shocks are sometimes felt, and an odour of sulphur issues from the receptacles of chain cables. The ocean seethes and boils. "The devil has put the sea in his caldron," said De Ruyter. In the tempests which characterize the equinoxes and the restoration of equilibrium to the prolific power of Nature, vessels breasting the foam seem to emit a kind of fire; phosphoric lights chase each other along the rigging, so close sometimes to the sailors at their work that the latter stretch forth their hands and try to catch these birds of flame as they fly past. After the great earthquake of Lisbon, a blast of hot air, as from a furnace, drove before it towards the city a wave sixty feet high. The convulsions of the ocean are closely related to the convulsions of the earth.

These immeasurable forces sometimes produce extraordinary inundations. At the end of the year 1864, one of

the Maldivé Islands, a hundred leagues from the Malabar coast, actually foundered in the sea. It sunk to the bottom like a shipwrecked vessel. The fishermen who sailed from it in the morning found nothing when they returned at night. They could scarcely distinguish their villages under the sea. On this occasion, boats were spectators of the wreck of houses.

In Europe, where Nature seems restrained by the presence of civilization, such events are rare and are supposed to be impossible. Nevertheless, Jersey and Guernsey originally formed a part of Gaul; and even now, as we write these lines, an equinoctial gale has just demolished the cliff on the frontier of England and Scotland, called the "First of the Fourth" (*Première des Quatre*).

Nowhere do these terrific forces appear more formidably conjoined than in the surprising strait known as the Lyse-Fiord. The Lyse-Fiord is the most dangerous of all the Gut reefs of the ocean. Their terrors are there complete. It is in the Norwegian sea, near the inhospitable Gulf of Stavanger, and in the 59th degree of latitude. The water is black and heavy, and subject to intermitting storms. In this sea, and in the midst of this solitude, there is a great sombre passage-way, — a passage-way for no human foot. None ever pass through it; no ship ever ventures in. It is a corridor ten leagues in length, between two rocky walls three thousand feet in height. The defile has its elbows and angles like all such marine thoroughfares, — never straight, having been formed by the irregular action of the water. In the Lyse-Fiord, the sea is almost always tranquil; the sky above is serene; but the place is terrible. Where is the wind? Not on high. Where is the thunder? Not in the heavens. The wind is under the sea; the lightnings within the rock. Now and then there is a convulsion of the water. At certain

moments, when there is perhaps not a cloud in the sky, nearly half way up the perpendicular rock, at a thousand or fifteen hundred feet above the water, and usually on the southern rather than on the northern side, the rock suddenly thunders, lightnings dart forth, and then retire like those toys which lengthen out and spring back again in the hands of children. They contract and enlarge; strike the opposite cliff, re-enter the rock, issue forth again, recommence their play, multiply their heads and tips of flame, strike wherever they can, begin again, and then begin again with startling abruptness. Flocks of birds fly away in terror. Nothing could be more mysterious than this artillery issuing out of the invisible. One cliff attacks the other, raining lightning blows from side to side. Their warfare is not waged against mankind. It is the old enmity of two rocks in the impassable gulf.

In the Lyse-Fiord, the rock performs the function of the clouds, and the thunder breaks forth like volcanic fire. This strange defile is a voltaic pile, the plates of which are the double line of cliffs.



## CHAPTER VI.

### A STABLE FOR THE HORSE.

GILLIATT was sufficiently familiar with marine rocks to grapple effectively with the Douvres. First of all, as we have just said, it was necessary to find a safe shelter for the sloop.

The double row of reefs, which stretched in a sinuous form behind the Douvres, was connected here and there with other rocks, and suggested the existence of blind passages opening out in a straggling way, and attached to the principal ridge like branches to the trunk of a tree.

The lower part of these rocks was covered with kelp, the upper part with lichens. The uniform level of the sea-weed indicated the high-water mark in calm weather. The parts which the water had not touched presented those silver and golden hues imparted to marine rocks by the white and yellow lichen.

A sort of leprosy of conoidal shells covered the rock at certain points, — the dry rot of the granite.

At other points in the retreating angles, where fine sand had accumulated, worn from the surface by the wind rather than by the action of the waves, appeared tufts of blue thistles.

In the indentations, sheltered from the winds, could be traced the little perforations made by the sea-urchin. This shelly mass of prickles, which moves about like a living ball, by rolling on its spines, and the armour of which is composed of ten thousand pieces, artistically

adjusted and welded together, — the sea-urchin, which is popularly called, for some unknown reason, "Aristotle's lantern," gnaws away the granite with his five teeth, and then lodges himself in the hole. It is in such holes that the cockle gatherers find them. They cut them in halves and eat them raw, like an oyster. Some steep their bread in the soft flesh. Hence its other name, "Sea egg."

The tops of the further reefs, left visible by the receding tide, extended close to the escarpment of "The Man" and into a sort of creek, enclosed on nearly all sides by rocky walls. Here was evidently a possible harbourage.

It was shaped like a horseshoe, and was open only on the side of the east wind, which was the least violent of all winds in this marine labyrinth. The water was consequently protected there, and almost motionless.

The shelter seemed comparatively safe. Gilliatt, moreover, had not much choice.

If he wished to take advantage of the low water, it was necessary to make haste.

The weather continued to be fine and calm. The insolent sea was for a while in a gentle mood.

Gilliatt descended, put on his shoes again, unmoored the cable, re-embarked, and pushed out into the water.

He used his oars, and kept quite close to the side of the rock.

Having reached "The Man" rock, he examined the entrance to the little creek.

A fixed, wavy line in the motionless sea, a sort of wrinkle, imperceptible to any eye save that of a sailor, marked the channel.

Gilliatt studied its curve for a moment, then he held off a little in order to veer easily, and steer well into the channel; and suddenly with a stroke of the oars he entered the little bay.

He sounded.

The anchorage appeared to be excellent.

The sloop would be safe there against almost any of the contingencies of the season.

The most formidable reefs have quiet nooks of this sort. The ports which are thus found among the breakers are like the hospitality of the fierce Bedouin, — friendly and sure.

Gilliatt got the sloop as near to "The Man," as he could, but still far enough off to escape grazing the rock; then he cast his two anchors.

This done, he folded his arms, and reflected on his position.

The sloop was protected. Here was one problem solved. But another remained. Where could he find shelter himself?

He had the choice of two places, — the sloop itself, with its bit of cabin, which was scarcely habitable, and the summit of "The Man" rock, which could be scaled without much difficulty.

From both of these refuges it was possible at low water, by jumping from rock to rock, to reach the passage between the Douvres where the *Durande* was fixed, almost without wetting one's feet.

But low water lasts only a little while, and all the rest of the time he would be cut off either from his shelter or from the wreck by more than two hundred fathoms. Swimming among breakers is difficult at all times; if there is the least commotion in the sea it is impossible.

He was obliged to give up the idea of a shelter in the sloop or upon "The Man."

No resting-place was possible among the neighbouring rocks.

The summits of the lower ones disappeared twice a day beneath the rising tide.

The summits of the higher ones were constantly swept by flakes of foam, and promised nothing but an inhospitable drenching.

No choice remained but the wreck itself.

Was it possible to find a refuge there?

Gilliatt hoped it might be.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A CHAMBER FOR THE VOYAGER.

**H**ALF AN HOUR afterwards, Gilliatt having returned to the wreck, climbed to the deck, and soon afterwards descended into the hold, thus completing the summary survey begun on his first visit.

By the help of the capstan he had raised to the deck of the *Durande* the bale into which he had made the cargo of the sloop. The capstan had worked well. Bars for turning it were not wanting. Gilliatt had only to select one from a pile of rubbish.

He found among the *débris* a cold chisel, dropped, no doubt, from the carpenter's box, and which he gladly added to his little stock of tools.

Besides this, for in such a dearth of appliances every little counts, he had his jack-knife in his pocket.

Gilliatt worked all day long on the wreck, clearing away, propping, and arranging.

By nightfall he had discovered the following facts:

The entire wreck shook in the wind, and trembled with every step he took. There was nothing stable or strong except that portion of the hull which was jammed between the rocks and which contained the engine. There, the beams were effectually supported by the granite walls.

Establishing his home in the *Durande* would be imprudent. It would increase the weight; and instead of adding to her burden, it was important to lighten it.

To burden the wreck in any way was indeed the very contrary of what he wanted.

The dilapidated mass required, in fact, the most careful management. It was like a sick man on the verge of dissolution. A strong wind would suffice to put an end to it.

It was, moreover, bad enough to be compelled to work there. The amount of disturbance which the wreck would have to withstand would necessarily strain it, perhaps beyond its strength.

Besides, if any accident should happen in the night while Gilliatt was sleeping, he would necessarily perish with the vessel. No assistance was possible; all would be over. In order to save the shattered vessel, it was absolutely necessary to remain outside of it.

How to be outside and yet near it,—this was the problem.

The difficulty became complicated.

Where could he find a shelter under such conditions?

Gilliatt reflected.

Nothing remained but the two Douvres. They seemed hopeless enough.

From below it was impossible to tell with certainty whether the upper surface of the Great Douvre was flat or conical.

High rocks with flattened summits like the Great Douvre and "The Man," are usually decapitated peaks. They abound among mountains and in the ocean. Certain rocks, particularly those which are met with in the open sea, bear marks like half-felled trees. They appeared to have received a terrific blow from an axe. They have been subjected, in fact, to the blows of the gale, that indefatigable wood-cutter of the sea.

There are other and still more powerful causes of marine convulsions. Hence the innumerable bruises

upon these primeval masses of granite. Some of these sea giants have had their heads struck off; and sometimes these heads, from some inexplicable cause, do not fall, but remain shattered on the summit of the mutilated trunk. These cases are by no means rare. The Devil's Rock, at Guernsey, and the Table, in the Valley of Anweiler, illustrate some of the most surprising examples of this strange geological enigma.

Some such phenomenon had probably fashioned the summit of the Great Douvre.

If the protuberance which Gilliatt fancied he could discern on the plateau were not a natural irregularity in the stone, it must necessarily be some remaining fragment of the shattered summit.

Perhaps the fragment might contain some excavation, — some hole into which a man could creep for cover. Gilliatt asked for no more.

But how could he reach the plateau? How could he scale that perpendicular wall, hard and polished as a pebble, half covered with a growth of glutinous confervæ, and having the slippery look of a soapy surface?

The edge of the plateau was at least thirty feet above the deck of the Durande.

Gilliatt took from his box of tools the knotted rope, hooked it to his belt by the grapnel, and set to work to scale the Little Douvre. The ascent became more difficult as he climbed. He had forgotten to take off his shoes, — a fact which increased the difficulty. With great labour and straining, however, he reached the edge. Once there, he raised himself and stood erect. There was scarcely room for his two feet. To make it his lodging would be difficult. A Stylite might have contented himself there; Gilliatt, more luxurious in his requirements, wanted something more commodious.

The Little Douvre, leaning towards the great one, looked from a distance as if it was saluting it, and the

space between the Douvres, which measured a score of feet below, was only eight or ten at the highest point.

From the spot to which he had climbed, Gilliatt could see more distinctly a rocky excrescence which partly covered the plateau of the Great Douvre.

This plateau was at least twenty feet above his head.

A precipice separated him from it. The curved escarpment of the Little Douvre sloped away out of sight beneath him.

He detached the knotted rope from his belt, took a rapid glance at the dimensions of the rock, and slung the grapnel up to the plateau.

The grapnel scratched the rock, and slipped. The knotted rope with the hooks at its end fell beneath his feet, swinging against the side of the Little Douvre.

He renewed the attempt; slung the rope farther, aiming at the granite protuberance, in which he could perceive crevices and scratches.

The cast was so neat and skilful this time, that the hooks caught.

He pulled on it with all his strength. A piece of the rock broke, fell, and the knotted rope with its heavy iron came down once more, striking the escarpment beneath his feet.

He slung the grapnel a third time.

It did not fall.

He put a hard strain upon the rope; it resisted. The grapnel was firmly anchored at last.

The hooks had caught in some fracture in the plateau which he could not see.

It was necessary to trust his life to that unknown support.

He did not hesitate.

The case was urgent. He was compelled to adopt the quickest course.

Moreover, to descend again to the deck of the *Durande*,



in order to devise some other step, was impossible. A slip was probable, and a fall almost certain. It was easier to climb than to descend.

Gilliatt's movements were decisive, like those of all good sailors. He never wasted force. He always proportioned his efforts to the work in hand. Hence the wonderful feats of strength he performed with ordinary muscles. His biceps were no more powerful than those of ordinary men, but his heart was firmer. He added, in fact, to physical strength, the energy which is one of the most potent of the mental faculties.

The feat to be accomplished was appalling.

It was to cross the space between the two Douvres, supported only by this slender line.

Oftentimes in the path of duty and devotion, the gaunt form of death rises before men to present this momentous question:—

“Wilt thou dare this?” asks the shadow.

Gilliatt tested the cord again; the grappling-iron held firm.

Wrapping his left hand in his handkerchief, he grasped the knotted rope with his right hand, which he covered with his left; then stretching out one foot, and striking the rock vigorously with the other in order that the impetus might prevent the rope twisting, he hurled himself from the top of the Little Douvre upon the side of the larger one.

The shock was severe.

In spite of his precautions, the rope twisted, and his shoulder struck the rock.

There was a rebound.

In their turn his clinched fists struck the rocks, and the handkerchief having become loosened, they were terribly scratched. They had, indeed, narrowly escaped being crushed.

Gilliatt remained hanging there a moment with his brain whirling wildly.

He was sufficiently master of himself not to let go his hold of the rope.

A few moments passed in unavailing jerks and oscillations before he could seize the rope with his feet; but he succeeded at last.

Recovering himself, and holding the rope at last between his feet as with two hands, he gazed into the depth below.

He had no anxiety about the length of the rope, which had many a time served him for great heights, and which, in fact, trailed upon the deck of the *Durande*.

Assured of being able to descend again, he began to climb.

In a few moments he had gained the summit.

Never before had any wingless creature found a footing there. The plateau was covered in parts with the dung of birds. It was an irregular trapezium, a mass broken from the colossal granitic prism of the Great *Douvre*. This block was hollowed in the centre like a basin,—the work of the rain.

Gilliatt, in fact, had guessed correctly.

At the southern angle of the block he found a mass of superimposed rocks,—probably fragments of the fallen summit. These rocks, which looked like a heap of gigantic paving-stones, would have afforded plenty of room for a wild beast to secrete himself between them, if one could have found its way there, for they were piled one upon the other, leaving interstices like a heap of ruins. They did not form grottoes or caves, but the pile was full of holes like a sponge. One of these holes was large enough to admit a man.

The floor of this recess was covered with moss and a few tufts of grass. Gilliatt could fit himself in it as

in a kind of sheath. The entrance was about two feet high, but it became smaller near the bottom. Stone coffins are sometimes of this form. The mass of rocks behind lying towards the south-west, the recess, though protected from showers, was open to the cold north wind.

Gilliatt was satisfied with the place.

The two chief problems were solved, — the sloop had a harbour, and he himself had found a shelter.

The chief merit of his cave was its accessibility from the wreck.

The grappling-iron of the knotted cord having fallen between two blocks, had become firmly hooked, but Gilliatt prevented any possibility of its giving way by rolling a huge stone upon it.

He was now free to operate at leisure upon the *Durande*.

Henceforth he was at home.

The Great *Douvre* was his dwelling, the *Durande* his workshop.

It was a comparatively easy matter for him to go to and fro, ascending and descending.

He dropped down easily by means of the knotted rope on to the deck.

The day's work was a good one, the enterprise had begun well; he was satisfied, and began to feel hungry.

He untied his basket of provisions, opened his knife, cut a slice of smoked beef, took a bite from his brown loaf, took a draught from his can of fresh water, and thus supped admirably.

To do well and eat well are two great comforts. A full stomach resembles an easy conscience.

This supper ended, there was still a little more daylight at his disposal. He took advantage of it to begin the lightening of the wreck, — an urgent necessity.

He had passed part of the day in gathering up the fragments. He now put to one side, in the strong compartment which contained the engine, all articles that might prove of use to him, such as wood, iron, cordage, and canvas; all that was useless he cast into the sea.

The cargo of the sloop, hoisted on to the deck by the capstan, compact as he had made it, was an encumbrance. Gilliatt surveyed the sort of niche, at a height within his reach, in the side of the Little Douvre. These natural closets, not entirely shut in, it is true, are often seen in rocks. It struck him that it would be possible to intrust some stores to their keeping, and he accordingly placed in the back of the recess the two boxes containing his tools and his clothing, and his two bags of rye-meal and biscuit. In front — a little too near the edge perhaps, but he had no other place — he deposited his basket of provisions.

He had taken care to remove from the box of clothing his sheepskin, his big coat with a hood, and his waterproof overalls.

To lessen the action of the wind upon the knotted cord, he made the lower extremity fast to one of the riders of the Durande.

This rider being bent a good deal, held the end of the cord as firmly as a stalwart hand.

There was still some difficulty concerning the upper end of the cord. To control the lower part was all very well, but at the summit of the escarpment, at the spot where the knotted cord touched the ridge of the plateau, there was reason to fear that it would be fretted and worn away by the sharp edge of the rock.

Gilliatt searched in a pile of rubbish, and took from it some scraps of sail, and from a bunch of old cables pulled out some strands of rope-yarn with which he filled his pockets.

Any sailor would have suspected that he intended to bind with these pieces of canvas and ends of yarn that portion of the knotted rope which rubbed against the edge of the rock, so as to preserve it from friction,—an operation which is called “keckling.”

Having provided himself with these things, he drew his overalls over his legs, put his waterproof coat over his jacket, drew its hood over his red cap, tied the sheepskin around his neck by the two legs, and arrayed in this complete panoply, he grasped the rope, now firmly fastened to the side of the Great Douvre, and again began the assault of this grim citadel of the sea.

In spite of his scratched hands, Gilliatt easily regained the summit.

The last pale tints of sunset were fading from the sky. It was night upon the sea below.

A little light still lingered upon the top of the Douvre.

Gilliatt profited by this remnant of daylight to bind the knotted rope. He wound around it again and again at the part which passed over the edge of the rock, a bandage of several thicknesses of canvas strongly tied at every turn. The whole resembled somewhat the padding which actresses place upon their knees, to prepare them for the agonies and supplications of the fifth act.

This accomplished, Gilliatt rose from his stooping position.

While he had been busied in his task, he had had a vague sense of a strange fluttering in the air.

It resembled, in the silence of evening, the noise which an immense bat might make with the beating of its wings.

Gilliatt raised his eyes.

A big black circle was revolving above his head in the pale twilight sky.

Such circles are seen around the heads of saints in old

pictures. These, however, are golden on a dark ground, while the circle around Gilliatt was dark upon a pale ground. The effect was strange. It spread round the Great Douvre like an aureole of night.

The circle came nearer, then retired; grew narrower, and then spread wide again.

It was an immense flock of gulls, sea-mews, and cormorants; a vast multitude of affrighted sea-birds.

The Great Douvre was probably their lodging-place, and they were coming to rest for the night. Gilliatt had appropriated their home. It was evident that their unexpected fellow-lodger annoyed them.

A man there was an object they had never beheld before.

Their wild fluttering continued for some time.

They seemed to be waiting for the stranger to leave the place.

Gilliatt followed them dreamily with his eyes.

The flying multitude at last seemed to abandon their design. The circle suddenly assumed a spiral form, and the cloud of sea-birds settled down upon "The Man" rock at the extremity of the group, where they seemed to be conferring and deliberating.

Gilliatt, after settling down in his granite alcove, and covering a stone for a pillow for his head, could hear the birds for a long time chattering to one another, or croaking, as if by turn.

Then they were silent, and finally they all fell asleep, — the birds upon their rock, Gilliatt upon his.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### IMPORTUNÆ VOLUCRES.

GILLIATT slept well; but he was cold, and this caused him to wake from time to time. He had naturally placed his feet at the end and his head at the mouth of his cave. Unfortunately, he had not taken the precaution to remove from his couch a number of angular stones, which did not by any means conduce to sleep.

Now and then he half opened his eyes.

At intervals he heard loud noises. It was the rising tide entering the caverns below with a sound like the report of a cannon.

All the circumstances of his position conspired to produce the effect of a vision. Hallucinations seemed to surround him. The darkness strengthened this impression; and Gilliatt felt himself plunged into a region of unrealities. He asked himself if it were not all a dream?

Then he dropped to sleep again, and this time in a veritable dream, fancied himself at the Bû de la Rue, at the Bravées, at St. Sampson. He heard Déruchette singing; everything seemed real now. While he slept he seemed to wake and live; it was when he awoke again that he appeared to be sleeping.

In fact, from this time on he lived in a dream.

Towards the middle of the night a confused murmur filled the air. Gilliatt had a vague consciousness of it even in his sleep. It was perhaps a breeze rising.

Once, awakened by a cold shiver, he opened his eyes a little wider than before. Clouds were moving in the

zenith; the moon was flying through the sky, with one large star following closely in her wake.

Gilliatt's mind was full of the incidents of his dreams. The fantastic outlines of the objects around him as seen in the darkness mingled confusedly with the impressions of his sleeping hours.

By daybreak he was half frozen; but he slept on soundly.

The sudden daylight aroused him from a slumber which might have proved dangerous. The alcove faced the rising sun.

Gilliatt yawned, stretched himself, and sprang out of his resting-place.

His slumber had been so deep that he could not at first recall the circumstances of the night before.

By degrees the sense of reality returned, and he began to think of breakfast.

The weather was calm; the sky cool and serene. The clouds were gone; the night wind had cleared the horizon, and the sun rose brightly. Another fine day was dawning. Gilliatt felt cheerful and hopeful.

He threw off his overcoat and his overalls, rolled them up in the sheepskin with the wool inside, fastened the roll with a bit of rope-yarn, and pushed it into the cave for protection in case of rain.

This done, he made his bed, — that is, he removed the stones.

His bed made, he slid down the rope to the deck of the *Durande* and approached the niche where he had placed his basket of provisions. The basket was not there; as it was very near the edge, the wind in the night had blown it down, and rolled it into the sea.

This seemed to indicate that the rock was defending itself.

There was an evident spirit of mischief and malice in a wind which had sought out his basket in that position.



It was the beginning of hostilities. Gilliatt understood the token.

To those who live in a state of familiarity with the sea, it is natural to regard the wind as an individual, and the rocks as sentient beings.

Nothing remained for Gilliatt but the biscuit and the rye-meal, except the shell-fish, on which the shipwrecked sailor had supported a lingering existence upon "The Man" rock.

It was useless to think of fishing. Fish are naturally averse to the neighbourhood of rocks. The drag and bow net fishers would only waste their time among the reefs, the sharp tops of which would prove destructive only to their nets.

Gilliatt breakfasted on a few limpits which he plucked with difficulty from the rocks. He narrowly escaped breaking his knife in the attempt.

While he was making his frugal meal, he became aware of a strange disturbance on the sea. He looked around.

It was a swarm of gulls and sea-mews which had just alighted upon some low rocks, and were beating their wings and tumbling over each other, screaming and shrieking the while. All were swarming noisily around the same object. This horde with beaks and talons were evidently pillaging something.

It was Gilliatt's basket.

Blown down upon a sharp point by the wind, the basket had burst open, and the birds had gathered round it immediately. They were carrying off in their beaks all sorts of fragments of provisions. Gilliatt, even at that distance, recognized his smoked beef and salt fish.

It was their turn now to be aggressive. The birds were retaliating. Gilliatt had robbed them of their lodging, they deprived him of his supper.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE ROCK, AND HOW GILLIATT USED IT.

A WEEK passed. Although this was the rainy season no rain fell, a fact for which Gilliatt felt very thankful.

But the work he had entered upon was apparently beyond the power of human strength or skill. Success appeared so improbable that the attempt seemed like madness.

It is not until a task is fairly grappled with that its difficulties and perils become fully manifest. There is nothing like a beginning for proving how difficult it will be to reach the end. Every beginning is a struggle against resistance. The first step is an exorable undeceiver. A difficulty that one touches pricks like a thorn.

Gilliatt found himself immediately confronted by obstacles.

In order to raise the engine of the *Durande* from the wreck in which it was three-fourths buried, — in order to accomplish a salvage in such a place and in such a season, it seemed necessary to be a legion of men. Gilliatt was alone; a complete complement of carpenters' and engineers' tools and implements were needed. Gilliatt had a saw, a hatchet, a chisel, and a hammer. He needed both a good workshop and a good shed; Gilliatt had not a roof to cover him. Provisions, too, were necessary, and Gilliatt had not even bread.

Any one who could have seen Gilliatt working on the rock during that first week might have been puzzled to determine the nature of his operations. He seemed to have no thought either of the Durande or the two Douvres. He was busy only among the breakers; he seemed absorbed in saving the smaller portions of the wreck. He took advantage of every high tide to strip the reefs of everything that the shipwreck had distributed among them. He went from rock to rock, picking up whatever the sea had scattered, — bits of sail, pieces of iron, splintered panels, shattered planking, broken yards, — here a beam, there a chain, there a pulley.

At the same time, he carefully examined all the recesses in the rocks. To his great disappointment none were habitable. He suffered greatly from the cold in the night in his present lodgings on the summit of the rock, and he would have been glad to find some better shelter.

Two of those recesses were quite large. Although the natural pavement of rock was for the most part oblique and uneven, it was possible to stand upright, and even to walk within them. The wind and the rain entered there at will, but the highest tides did not reach them. They were near the Little Douvre, and were approachable at any time. Gilliatt decided that one should serve him as a storehouse, the other as a forge.

With all the lanyards, rope-bands, and reef-points he could collect, he tied the wood and iron in bundles, and the canvas in rolls, then lashed all these together carefully. As the rising tide approached these packages, he began to drag them across the reefs to his storehouse. In a hollow in the rocks he had found a top-rope, by means of which he had been able to haul even the large pieces of timber. In the same manner he dragged from the sea the numerous pieces of chain which he found scattered among the breakers.

Gilliatt worked at these tasks with astonishing activity and tenacity. He accomplished whatever he attempted; nothing could withstand his ant-like perseverance.

By the end of the week he had gathered into this granite warehouse of marine stores, and arranged in order, this miscellaneous mass of salvage. There was a corner for the tacks of sails and a corner for sheets. Bow-lines were not mixed with halliards; parrels were arranged according to their number of holes. The coverings of rope-yarn, unwound from the broken anchorings, were tied in bunches; the dead-eyes without pulleys were separated from the tackle-blocks. Belaying-pins, bulls-eyes, preventer-shrouds, down-hauls, snatch-blocks, pendants, kevels, trusses, stoppers, and sailbooms, if they were not too much damaged by the storm, were placed in different compartments. All the cross-beams, timber-work, uprights, stanchions, mast-heads, binding-strakes, portlids, and clamps were heaped up apart. Whenever it was possible, he arranged the broken planks from the vessel's bottom in their proper order. There was no mixing up reef-points with nippers, or crow's-feet with tow lines, or pulleys for the small with pulleys for the large ropes, or fragments from the waist with fragments from the stern. A place had even been reserved for the cat-harpings, which had supported the shrouds of the top-mast and the futtock-shrouds. Every part had its appointed place. The entire wreck was there classed and ticketed.

A stay-sail, fixed by huge stones, served, though torn and damaged, to protect what the rain might have injured.

Shattered as the bows of the boat were, he had succeeded in saving the two cat-heads with their three pulley-blocks.

He had found the bowsprit too, and had had much

trouble in unrolling its gammoning ; it was very hard and tight, having been, according to custom, made by the help of the windlass, and in dry weather. Gilliatt, however, persevered until he had detached it ; for this heavy rope was likely to be very useful to him.

He had been equally successful in discovering the little anchor which had become fast in the hollow of a reef, where the ebb tide left it uncovered.

In what had once been Tangrouille's cabin he found a piece of chalk, which he preserved carefully. He reflected that he might have some marks to make.

A fire-bucket and several pails in pretty good condition completed this stock of working materials.

All that remained of the Durande's supply of coal he carried into the warehouse.

In a week this salvage of *débris* was finished ; the rock was swept clean, and the Durande was lightened. Nothing was left to burden the hull now except the machinery.

The portion of the fore-side bulwarks which hung to it did not distress the hull. The mass hung without dragging, being partly sustained by a ledge of rock. It was large and broad, however, and heavy to drag, and would have encumbered his warehouse too much. These bulwarks strongly resembled the stocks in a shipyard.

Gilliatt left the mass where it was.

He had been profoundly thoughtful during all this labour. He had sought in vain for the figurehead, — the "doll," as the Guernsey folks called it, — of the Durande. It was one of the things that the waves had swept away forever.

Gilliatt would have given his right hand to find it, if he had not been in such urgent need of both his hands just at that time.

At the entrance to the storehouse and outside it were

two piles of rubbish, — a pile of iron that would do for forging, and a pile of wood for fuel.

Gilliatt was always at work by early dawn. He did not take a moment's rest except at night.

The wild sea-birds, flying hither and thither, watched him curiously at his work.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE FORGE.

THE warehouse completed, Gilliatt constructed his forge.

The other recess which he had chosen had within it a sort of passage like a gallery in a mine. He at first conceived the idea of making this his lodging; but the draught was so continuous and so strong in this passage that he had been compelled to abandon the plan. This current of air so incessantly renewed first gave him the notion of the forge. As it would not answer for a chamber, he was determined that this recess should be his blacksmith's shop. To make obstacles serve our purpose, it is a great step towards triumph. The wind was Gilliatt's enemy. He set about making it his servant.

The proverb applied to certain kinds of men — "fit for everything, good for nothing" — may also be applied to the hollows in rocks. They give no advantages gratuitously. Here we find a hollow fashioned in the shape of a bath; but it allows the water to run off through a fissure; there is a rocky chamber, but without a roof; here a bed of moss, but reeking with moisture; here an arm-chair, but one of hard stone.

The forge which Gilliatt intended to establish had been roughly outlined by nature; but it was a troublesome matter to reduce this rough sketch to manageable shape; — to transform this cave into a laboratory and smith's shop. Out of three or four large rocks, shaped like a funnel and ending in a narrow fissure, chance had

constructed a sort of ponderous, ill-shapen blower, of very different power from those huge old forge bellows fourteen feet long, which poured out at every breath ninety-eight thousand inches of air. This was quite a different kind of machine. The proportions of the hurricane cannot be definitely measured.

This excess of power was an embarrassment. The incessant draught was difficult to regulate.

The cavern had two inconveniences, — the wind traversed it from end to end; so did the water.

This was not sea-water, but a continual little trickling stream, more like a spring than a torrent.

The foam which the surf hurled upon the rocks and sometimes more than a hundred feet in the air, had filled with sea-water a natural cave situated among the high rocks overlooking the excavation. The overflowings of this reservoir formed, a little back of the escarpment, a tiny waterfall about an inch in breadth, but twelve or fourteen feet high. An occasional contribution from the rains also helped to fill the reservoir. From time to time a passing cloud dropped a shower into this rocky basin which was always overflowing. The water was brackish and unfit to drink, but clear, and fell in graceful drops from the ends of the long marine grasses, as from the ends of a length of hair.

He was struck with the idea of making this water serve to regulate the draught in the cave. By means of a funnel made of rough planks and hastily put together to form two or three pipes, one of which was furnished with a valve, and of a large tub arranged as a lower reservoir, without checks or counterweight, and completed solely by air-tight stuffing above and air-holes below, Gilliatt, who, as we have said before, was handy at the forge and at the mechanic's bench, succeeded in constructing, instead of the forge-bellows, which he did not



possess, an apparatus less perfect than what is known nowadays by the name of a "*cagniardelle*," but less rude than that which the people of the Pyrenees formerly called a "*trompe*."

He had some rye-meal, and out of it he manufactured some paste. He had also some white rope, which he picked out into tow. With this paste and tow, and some scraps of wood, he stopped all the crevices of the rock, leaving only a tiny air-hole made of a powder-flask which he had found aboard the *Durande*, and which had served for loading the signal gun. This powder-flask was directed horizontally upon a large stone, which Gilliatt made the hearth of the forge. A stopper made of a piece of tow served to close it in case of need.

After this he heaped up the wood and coal upon the hearth, struck his steel against the bare rock, caught a spark upon a handful of loose tow, and having ignited it, soon lighted his forge fire.

He tried the blower: it worked well.

Gilliatt felt the pride of a Cyclops: he was now the master of air, water, and fire. Master of the air; for he had given lungs to the wind, and changed the rude draught into a useful blower. Master of water, for he had converted the little cascade into a "*trompe*." Master of fire, for out of this moist rock he had struck a flame.

The cave being almost everywhere open to the sky, the smoke issued freely, blackening the curved escarpment. The rocks which seemed made only for foam became now familiar with soot.

Gilliatt selected for an anvil a large, smooth stone, of about the required shape and dimensions. It formed a substantial base for the blows of his hammer; but one that was very dangerous inasmuch as fragments were liable to fly off from it. One of the extremities of this block, rounded and ending in a point, might, for want of something better, serve instead of a conoid horn; but the

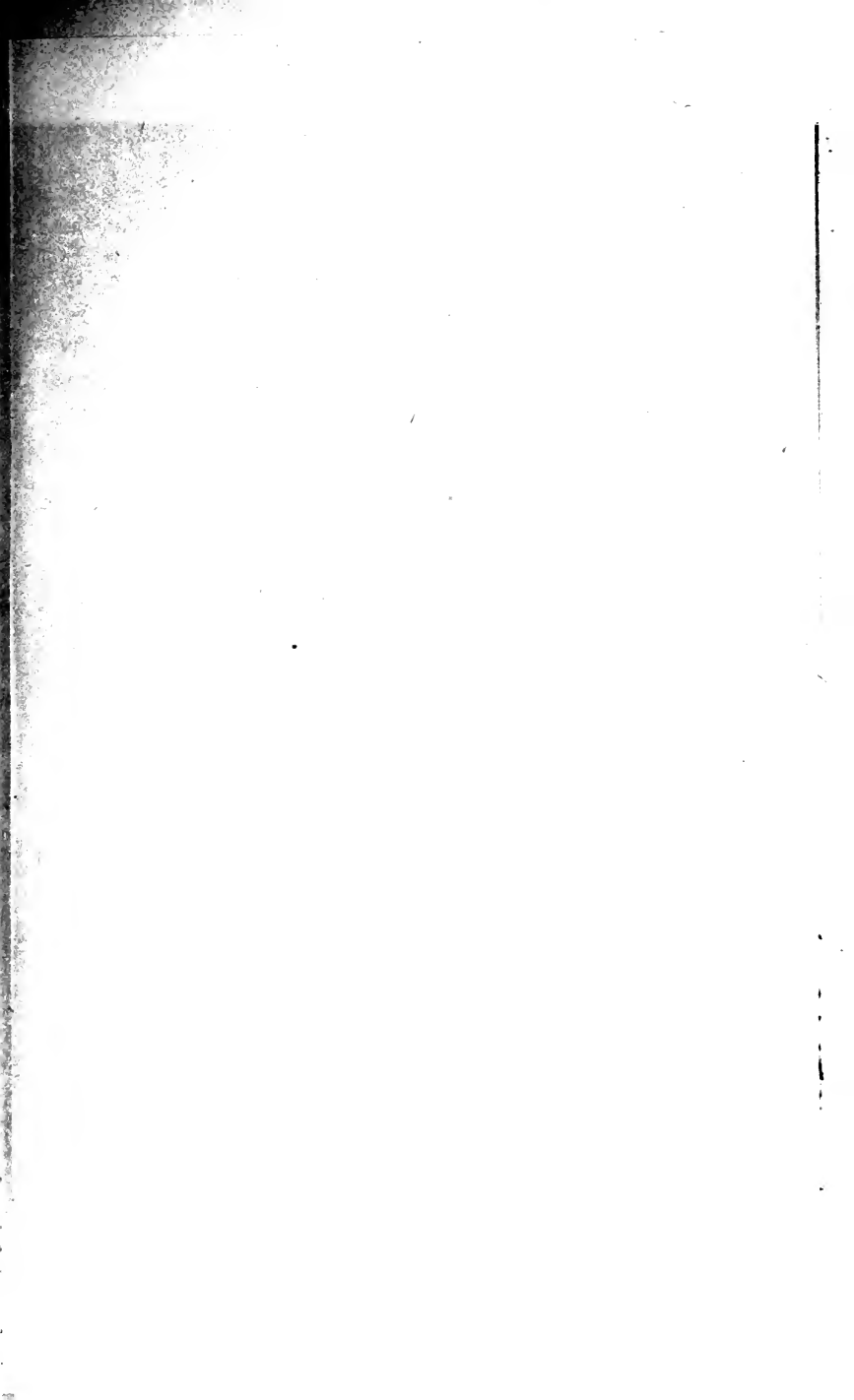
other kind of horn of the pyramidal form was wanting. It was the ancient stone anvil of the Troglodytes. The surface, polished by the waves, had almost the firmness of steel.

He regretted not having brought his anvil. As he did not know that the *Durande* had been broken in two by the tempest, he had hoped to find the carpenter's chest and all the tools generally kept in the forehold. But it was the forepart of the vessel that had been carried away.

The two excavations which he had found in the rock were contiguous. The warehouse and the forge communicated with each other.

Every evening, when his work was ended, he supped on a small biscuit, moistened in water, a sea-urchin or a crab, or a few *châtaignes de mer*, the only food to be found among these rocks; and, shaking like his knotted rope, mounted again to his cell on the Great Douvre.

The very drudgery of his daily occupation increased the sort of abstraction in which he lived. To be steeped too deeply in realities is in itself a cause of visionary moods. His bodily labour, with its infinite variety of details, did not lessen the feeling of stupor which arose from the strangeness of his position and his work. Ordinary physical fatigue is a thread which binds man to earth; but the very peculiarity of the enterprise he was engaged in kept him in a kind of ideal. There were times when he seemed to be striking at the clouds. At other times, his tools seemed to him like weapons. He had a singular feeling as if he were repressing or providing against some latent danger of attack. Untwisting ropes, unravelling threads of yarn in a sail, or propping up a couple of beams seemed to him at such times like fashioning engines of war. The infinite pains which he had taken in his salvage operations seemed at last so many precautions against probable aggressions.



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*Gilbert*

Photogravure by Goupil et Cie. — From Drawing  
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His instincts became less and less those of a worker, and more and more those of a keeper of wild beasts.

His business there was that of a tamer. He had a vague perception of the fact.

Around him, far as eye could reach, was the spectacle of infinite labour wasted and lost. Nothing is more disturbing to the mind than the contemplation of the diffusion of forces at work in the unfathomable and illimitable space of the ocean. The mind tends naturally to seek the object of these forces. The incessant movement in space, the ever restless sea, the clouds that seem continually hurrying somewhere, the vast mysterious prodigality of effort, — all this is a problem. Whither does all this perpetual movement tend? What are these winds constructing? What are all these giant blows building up? These howlings, shriekings, and sobbings of the storm, what do they result in? and what is the object of this tumult? The ebb and flow of these questionings is eternal as the tide. Gilliatt could answer for himself; he knew his work, but the agitation which surrounded him on all sides and at all times perplexed him with its eternal questionings. Unknown to himself, mechanically, by the mere pressure of external things, and without any other effect than a strange, unconscious bewilderment, Gilliatt, in this dreamy mood, blended his own toil somehow with the prodigious, wasted labour of the sea. How under such circumstances could he hope to escape the influence of that mystery of this dread, laborious ocean? how do other than meditate, so far as meditation was possible, upon the vacillation of the waves, the perseverance of the foam, the imperceptible wearing away of the rocks, the furious beatings of the winds, and all this travail and weariness for no apparent object.

For no object? No! O Thou Unknown, Thou only knowest for what!

## CHAPTER XI.

### DISCOVERY.

A ROCK near the coast is sometimes visited by men ; a rock in mid-ocean never. What object would any one have in visiting it? It is not an island. No supplies can be obtained there ; there are no fruit-trees, no pasturage, no beasts, no springs of water fit for man's use. Nothing is to be found there but inevitable shipwreck.

This kind of rocks, which in the old sea dialect were called *Isolés*, are, as we have said, strange places. The sea is their only visitor ; she works her own will with them. There is no sign of terrestrial life to disturb her. Man is a terror to the sea ; she is shy of his approach, and hides her deeds from him. But she among the lone sea rocks is bolder. The unceasing murmur of the waves is not interrupted here. She labours at the rock, repairs its damage, sharpens its peaks, makes them rugged or renews them. She pierces the granite, wears down the soft stone, and denudes the hard ; she rummages, dismembers, bores, perforates, and grooves ; she fills the rock with cells, and makes it sponge-like, hollows out the inside, or adorns the outside with sculptures. She makes caves, sanctuaries, and palaces for herself in this lonely spot. She has her exuberant and hideous vegetation, composed of floating plants which bite, and of monsters which take root ; and she hides away all this terrible magnificence in her secret depths. No eye watches her



on these isolated rocks; no spy embarrasses her movements. Here she freely develops her mysterious side, which is inaccessible to man. Here she deposits all her strange secretions. Here, all the unknown wonders of the sea are congregated.

Promontories, capes, headlands, breakers, and shoals are veritable works of art. The geological formations of the earth are nothing in comparison with the vast operations of the ocean. These breakers, these submarine habitations, these pyramids, and crests of foam are all productions of that mysterious art which the author of this book has somewhere called "the Art of Nature." Their style is recognizable by its vastness. The effects of chance seem to be design. Its works are multiform. They reproduce the mazy labyrinths of the coral groves, the sublimity of the cathedral, the extravagance of the pagoda, the amplitude of the mountain, the delicacy of the jeweller's work, the horrors of the sepulchre. They are filled with cells like wasps' nests, with dens like menageries, with subterranean passages like the haunts of moles, with dungeons like bastiles, with ambuscades like a hostile camp. They have their doors, but they are barricaded; their columns, but they are shattered; their towers, but they are tottering; their bridges, but they are broken. Their compartments are unaccommodating; these are fitted for the birds only, those only for fish. Their style of architecture is varied and inconsistent; it regards or disregards at will the laws of equilibrium, — breaks off, stops short, begins in the form of an archivolt, and ends in an architrave. Enceladus is the mason. A wondrous science of dynamics here exhibits its problems ready solved. Fearful overhanging blocks threaten, but fall not; the human mind cannot guess what power supports the toppling masses. Blind entrances, gaps, and ponderous suspensions multiply and vary infinitely. The

laws which regulate this Babel baffle human induction. The Unknown, that great architect, plans nothing, but succeeds in all. Rocks massed together in confusion form a monstrous monument, defy reason, yet maintain equilibrium. Here is something more than solidity: it is eternity. But order is wanting. The wild tumult of the waves seems to have passed into the wilderness of stone. It is like a tempest petrified forever. Nothing could be more impressive than this architecture; always standing, yet always seeming to fall; in which everything seems to give support, and yet to withdraw it. A struggle between opposing lines has resulted in the construction of an edifice, filled with traces of the efforts of those old antagonists, — the ocean and the storm.

This architecture has its hideous masterpieces, of which the Douvres was one.

The sea had fashioned and perfected it with grim solicitude. The snarling waters had licked it into shape. It was hideous, treacherous, dark, full of hollows.

It had a complete venous system of submarine caverns ramifying and losing themselves in unfathomable depths. Some of the orifices of this labyrinth of passages were left exposed by the low tides. A man might enter there, but only at the peril of his life.

Gilliatt was obliged to explore all these grottoes, for the purpose of his salvage labour. There was not one which was not repulsive in aspect. Each cave bore that strong resemblance to an abattoir which is a characteristic of such formations. A person who has never seen these hideous natural frescoes upon walls of everlasting granite, in excavations of this kind, can form no idea of the strange effect they produce.

These pitiless caverns, too, were crafty and treacherous. Woe betide him who might loiter there! The rising tide filled them to their very roofs.

Rock limpets and edible mosses abounded among them.

They were obstructed by quantities of shingle, heaped together in their recesses. Some of the big smooth stones weighed more than a ton. They were of every size, and every hue; but the greater part were blood-coloured. Some, covered with a hairy and glutinous seaweed, looked like big green moles boring their way into the rock.

Several of the caverns terminated abruptly in the form of a half cupola. Others, main arteries of a mysterious circulation, lengthened out in the rock in dark and tortuous fissures. They were the streets of the submarine city; but they contracted more and more, and at length left no way for a man to pass. Peering in with the help of a lighted torch, he could see nothing but dark hollows dripping with moisture.

One day, Gilliatt, in his explorations, ventured into one of these fissures. The state of the tide favoured the attempt. It was a beautiful, calm, sunshiny day. There was no fear of any accident from the sea to increase the danger.

Two necessities, as we have said, compelled him to undertake these explorations. He had to gather fragments of wreck and other things to aid him in his labour, and also to search for crabs and crayfish for his food. The shell-fish on the rocks had begun to fail him.

The fissure was narrow, and the passage difficult. Gilliatt could see daylight beyond. He made an effort, contorted himself as much as he could, and penetrated into the cave as far as possible.

He had reached, without suspecting it, the middle of the rock, the very point upon which Clubin had steered the *Durande*. Though abrupt and almost inaccessible without, it was hollow within. It was full of galleries, pits, and chambers, like the tomb of an Egyptian king. This network of caverns was one of the most complicated of the labyrinths created by the restless sea.

The branches of this submarine tunnel probably communicated with the sea outside by more than one issue; some, opening on a level of the waves, others, deep and invisible.

It was near here, but Gilliatt knew it not, that Clubin had dived into the sea.

In this crocodile cave, — where crocodiles, it is true, were not among the dangers, — Gilliatt wound in and out striking his head occasionally, bent low and rose again, lost his footing and regained it many times, advancing laboriously the while. By degrees the gallery widened; a glimmer of daylight appeared, and he found himself suddenly at the entrance to a cavern of a singular kind.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE INTERIOR OF AN EDIFICE UNDER THE SEA.

THIS gleam of daylight was most fortunate.

One step further, and Gilliatt must have fallen into a pool that was, perhaps, bottomless. The waters of these cavern pools are so cold and paralyzing as to prove fatal to the strongest swimmers.

There is, moreover, no means of remounting or of clinging to any part of their steep walls.

He stopped short. The passage from which he had just emerged ended in a narrow and slippery projection, a sort of corbel in the peaked wall. He leaned against the side and surveyed it.

He was in a large cave. Over his head was a roof not unlike the inside of a vast skull, which had just been dissected. The dripping ribs of the striated indentations of the roof seemed to imitate the branching fibres and jagged sutures of the bony cranium. A stony ceiling and a watery floor. The rippling waters between the four walls of the cave looked like wavy paving tiles. The grotto was shut in on all sides. Not a window, not even an air-hole visible. No breach in the wall, no crack in the roof. The light came from below and through the water, a strange, sombre light.

Gilliatt, the pupils of whose eyes had contracted during his explorations of the dusky corridor, could distinguish everything around him in the pale glimmer.

He was familiar, from having often visited them, with the caves of Plémont in Jersey, the Creux-Maillé at Guernsey, the Botiques at Sark; but none of these marvellous caverns could compare with the subterranean and submarine chamber into which he had made his way.

Under the water at his feet he could discern a sort of arch. This arch, a natural ogive, fashioned by the waves, glittered brightly between its two dark and deep supports. It was through this kind of submerged porch that the daylight entered the cave from the open sea. A strange light shooting upward from the gulf.

The glimmer spread out beneath the waters like a large fan, and was reflected on the rocks. The direct rays, divided into long, broad shafts, shone out in strong relief against the darkness below; while the refracted rays being much duller looked as if they were seen through panes of glass. There was light in the cave it is true; but it was an unearthly light. The beholder might have dreamed that he had entered some other planet. The glimmer was an enigma, like the glaucous light from the eye of a Sphinx. The whole cave represented the interior of a death's head of enormous proportions, and of a strange splendour. The vault was the hollow of the brain, the arch the mouth; the sockets of the eyes were wanting. The cavern, swallowing and disgorging by turn the flux and reflux through its mouth wide opened to the full noonday without, seemed to drink in the light and vomit forth bitterness, like some intelligent but malevolent human beings. The light, traversing this inlet through the vitreous medium of the sea-water, became green, like a ray of starlight from Aldebaran; and the pool seen in this light looked like a liquid emerald. A tint of aquamarine of marvellous delicacy pervaded the entire cave. The roof, with its cerebral lobes and countless ramifications, like fibres of nerves, gave out a tender

reflection of chrysoprase. The ripples reflected on the roof enlarged and contracted their glittering scales in a mysterious and mazy dance. They gave the beholder an impression of something weird and spectral; he wondered what prey secured, or what expectation about to be realized, moved with a joyous thrill this magnificent network of living fire. From the projections of the vault and the angles of the rock hung lengths of delicate fibrous plants, bathing their roots probably through the granite in some pool above, and distilling from their silky tips, one by one, a pearly drop. These drops fell in the water now and then with a gentle splash. The effect of the scene was singular. Nothing more beautiful or more mournful could be imagined.

It was a wondrous palace, in which death sat smiling and content.

## CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT WAS SEEN THERE ; AND WHAT WAS HALF-SEEN.

CONTRADICTORY as the terms appear, this strange cave was a place of dazzling gloom.

The palpitation of the sea made itself felt throughout the cavern. The oscillation without raised and depressed the level of the waters within, with the regularity of respiration. A mysterious spirit seemed to pervade this vast organism, as it swelled and subsided in silence.

The water had a magical transparency ; and Gilliatt distinguished at various depths submerged recesses, and jutting rocks of a deeper and deeper green. Certain dark hollows, too, were there, probably too deep for soundings.

On each side of the submarine portico, elliptical arches indicated the position of small lateral caves, low alcoves of the central cavern, accessible, perhaps, at low tides.

These openings had roofs in the shape of inclined planes, and at more or less acute angles. Little sandy beaches of a few feet wide, laid bare by the action of the water, extended inward, until they were lost to view in these recesses.

Here and there sea-weeds more than a yard in length undulated beneath the water, like long tresses waving in the wind ; and one caught glimpses of dense masses of aquatic plants.

Above and below the surface of the water, the walls of the cave were covered from top to bottom with that won-



derful efflorescence of the sea, rarely seen by human eyes, which the old Spanish navigators called *praderias del mar*. A luxuriant moss of varied tints of olive concealed and adorned the rough granite. From every jutting point hung the thin fluted strips of tangle which sailors use as barometers. The light breath which stirred in the cavern waved their glossy lengths to and fro.

Under this mossy covering, one caught occasional glimpses of some of the rarest gems in the casket of the ocean, — ivory shells, whorls, mitres, casks, purple-fish, univalves, struthiolaires, and turriculated cerites. Many bell-shaped limpet shells adhered to the rocks, forming settlements like tiny huts between alleys in which prowled oscabrions, those beetles of the sea. As very few large pebbles found their way into the cavern, many shell-fish took refuge there. The crustacea are the grandees of the sea, who, in their lacework and embroidery, avoid the rude contact of the pebbly crowd. The glittering heaps of shells, in certain spots under the wave, gave out singular irradiations, among which the eye caught glimpses of confused azure and gold, and mother-of-pearl of every tint of the water.

Upon the side of the cave, a little above the water-line, a strange but magnificent plant, attaching itself like a fringe to the border of sea-weed, continued and completed it. This plant, thick, fibrous, inextricably intertwined, and almost black, hung in big dusky festoons, dotted with thousands of tiny flowers of the colour of lapis-lazuli. In the water they seemed to glow like small blue flames. Out of the water they were flowers; beneath it they were sapphires. When the water rose and inundated the base of the wall clothed with these plants, the rock seemed to be covered with gems.

With every swelling of the wave these flowers in-

creased in splendour, and at every subsidence grew dull again. So it is with the destiny of man; aspiration is life, expiration is death.

One of the greatest marvels of the cave was the rock itself. Forming here a wall, there an arch, and here again a pillar or pilaster, it was often rough and bare; while sometimes the rock close beside it was enriched with the most delicate natural carving. It was the wondrous art-work of the ocean. Here a sort of panel, cut square and covered with round embossments, simulated a bas-relief. Seeing this sculpture, with its shadowy designs, a man might have fancied that Prometheus had sketched it for Michael Angelo. It seemed as if that great genius with a few blows of his mallet could have finished the labours of the giant. In other places the rock was damasked like a Saracen buckler, or engraved like a Florentine vase. There were portions which looked like Corinthian brass, others like arabesques, as on the door of a mosque; others like Runic stones with indistinct and mystical designs. Plants with twisted creepers and tendrils, crossing and re-crossing upon the groundwork of lichens, covered it with filigree. The grotto reminded one not a little of the Alhambra. It was a strange compound of barbarism and the goldsmith's art, with the imposing and rugged architecture of ocean.

The magnificent sea-mosses covered the angles of granite as with velvet. The escarpments were festooned with flowering bindweed, sustaining itself with graceful ease, and ornamenting the walls with a tasteful design. Wall-pellitories showed their strange clusters here and there. All the beauty possible to a cavern was there. The wondrous light of Eden which came from beneath the water, at once a submarine twilight and a heavenly radiance, softened down and blended all harsh lineaments. Every wave was a prism. The outlines of things under these

rainbow-tinted undulations produced the chromatic effect of a too convex glass. Solar spectra shot through the waters. Fragments of rainbows seemed floating in that auroral diaphany. In more secluded corners, there was a sort of moonlight effect discernible on the water. Every kind of splendour seemed to unite there, forming a strange twilight. Nothing could be more perplexing or enigmatical than the weird beauties of this cavern. It seemed to be an enchanted region. The fantastic vegetation and the rude masonry of the place seemed to harmonize.

The effect of all these strange contrasts was marvelously lovely. The branches seemed to droop under their weight of bloom. The savage rock and the delicate flower closely embraced each other. Massive pillars had for capitals and bands frail quivering garlands; it was like the fingers of fairies tickling the feet of Behemoth, and the rock sustained the plant, and the plant enfolded the rock with wondrous grace.

The result of these mysteriously harmonized deformities was one of sovereign beauty. The works of Nature, no less supreme than those of genius, contain something of the Absolute, and have an imposing air. Their very unexpectedness makes a profound impression on the mind, and are never more ravishing than when they suddenly cause the Exquisite to spring forth from the Terrible.

This unknown grotto was, so to speak, siderealized. One felt overwhelmed with amazement there. This crypt was filled with an Apocalyptic light. You were not sure what this or that thing was. There was reality stamped with impossibility before one's eyes. It could be seen, it could be touched, it was there, but it was difficult to believe it.

Was it really daylight that entered through this sub-

marine casement? Was it really water that trembled in this dusky pool? Were not these arched roofs and porches fashioned out of sunset clouds? What stone was that beneath one's feet? Was not this solid shaft about to melt away and vanish in thin air? What was this cunning jewelry of glittering shells, half-seen beneath the wave? How very remote life, and the green earth, and human faces were! What strange enchantment haunted this mystic twilight!

At the extremity of the cave, which was oblong in form, rose a Cyclopean archivolt, singularly perfect in form. It was a sort of cave within a cave, a tabernacle within a sanctuary. Here, behind a sheet of brilliant verdure, interposed like the veil of a temple, a square rock bearing some resemblance to an altar rose out of the water. The water surrounded it on all sides. It seemed as if a goddess had just descended from it. One might have fancied that some celestial creature dwelt there in pensive beauty, but became invisible on the approach of mortals. It was hard to conceive of that superb chamber without a majestic vision within it. The imagination of the intruder might evoke again the marvellous apparition. A flood of chaste light falling upon white shoulders; a forehead bathed in the light of dawn; an oval-shaped Olympian visage; a bust of marvellous beauty; arms modestly drooping; floating tresses forming a sort of aureole; a delicately modelled body of snowy whiteness, half-enveloped in a sacred cloud, the form of a nymph with the glance of a virgin; a Venus rising from the sea, or an Eve emerging from Chaos,—this was the vision that filled the mind.

There could be no doubt that a supernatural form inhabited this sanctuary. Some woman in celestial nudity, with the soul of a star, had probably been there just now. On that pedestal, whence an ineffable ecstasy emanated,

imagination beheld a gleaming whiteness, living and erect. The mind pictured for itself, in the midst of the silent wonders of this cave, an Amphitrite, a Tethys, a Diana with the power to love. It was she, who, departing, had left in the cave this wonderful effulgence, this sort of perfumed light. The dazzling glory of the vision was no longer there; this female, created to be seen only by the unseen, was not visible, but was felt. The goddess was absent; but the divine influence was present.

The beauty of the recess seemed specially adapted for this celestial presence. It was for the sake of this deity, this fairy of the pearl caverns, this queen of the Zephyrs, this goddess born of the waves, it was for her—or so, at least, the mind imagined—that this subterranean dwelling had been thus religiously walled in, so that nothing might ever trouble the majestic silence in which she dwelt.

Gilliatt, who was a kind of seer amid the secrets of Nature, stood there musing,—a prey to varied and bewildering emotions.

Suddenly he became aware of a strange object rapidly approaching through the wonderfully transparent water, a few feet from him. A sort of long ragged band was moving amidst the oscillation of the waves. It did not float, but swam. It seemed to have an object in view; it was advancing somewhere rapidly. The object resembled a jester's bawble, in shape, with points that hung flabby and undulating, and seemed to be covered with a thick slime. It was worse than horrible; it was foul. The beholder felt that it was something monstrous. It was a living thing, unless, indeed, it were only an illusion. It seemed to be seeking the darker portions of the cave, where it finally vanished. The deep waters grew darker as its sinister form glided into them and disappeared.

## BOOK II.

### THE TASK.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE RESOURCES OF ONE WHO HAS NOTHING.

THE cavern seemed loath to part with its visitor. The entrance had been difficult; the return proved more difficult still. Gilliatt finally succeeded in extricating himself, however; but he did not return to the spot. He had found nothing that he was in quest of, and he had no time to indulge his curiosity.

He put the forge in operation at once. Tools were wanting; he set to work and made them.

For fuel he had the wreck; for motive power, the water; for his bellows, the wind; for his anvil, a stone; for skill, his instinct.

He entered upon his herculean task with ardour.

The weather seemed to smile upon his work. It continued to be as dry and serene. The month of March had come, but it was tranquil. The days grew longer. The blue sky, the gentleness of the breeze, the serenity of the noontide,—all seemed to preclude any idea of mischief. The waves danced merrily in the sunlight. A kiss is the first step in treachery; the ocean is prodigal of such caresses. Her smile, like that of woman's sometimes, cannot be trusted.

There was very little wind, and the hydraulic bellows worked all the better on that account. Much wind would have hindered rather than aided it.

Gilliatt had a saw; he manufactured for himself a file. With the saw he attacked the wood; with the file, the metal. Then he availed himself of the two iron hands of the smith, the pincers and the pliers. The pincers gripe, the pliers handle; one is like the closed hand, the other like the fingers. Tools are organs. By degrees he made for himself a number of auxiliaries, and constructed his armour. He made a screen for his forge-fire with a piece of barrel hoop.

One of his principal labours was the sorting and repairing of pulleys. He mended both the blocks and the sheaves of tackle. He cut down the irregularities of all broken joists, and re-shaped the extremities. He had, as we have said, a great many pieces of wood, stored away and arranged according to their shape and dimensions, as well as the nature of their grain; the oak on one side, the pine on the other; the short pieces like riders, separated from the straight pieces like binding strakes. This formed his reserve of supports and levers, which he might need at any moment.

A person who intends to construct hoisting tackle ought, of course, to provide himself with beams and blocks; but these are not sufficient. He must have cordage as well. Gilliatt restored the cables, large and small. He frayed out the tattered sails, and succeeded in converting them into an excellent yarn, of which he made twine. With this he joined the ropes. The joins, however, were liable to rot. It was necessary, therefore, to make use of these cables as soon as possible. He had only been able to make white tow, for he was without tar.

The ropes mended, he proceeded to repair the chains.

Thanks to the lateral point of the stone anvil, which served the part of the conoid horn, he was able to forge rings, rude in shape, it is true, but strong. With these he fastened together the severed lengths of chains, and made long pieces.

To work at a forge without assistance is a difficult matter; nevertheless, he succeeded. It is true that he had only to forge and shape comparatively small articles, which he was able to hold by his pliers with one hand, while he hammered with the other.

He cut into small pieces the iron bars of the captain's bridge, by which Clubin used to pass to and fro from paddle-box to paddle-box giving his orders; fashioned one end of each piece into a point, and affixed a flat head to the other. In this way he manufactured huge nails nearly a foot in length. These nails, much used in pontoon making, are useful in fixing anything in rocks.

What was his object in all these labours? We shall see.

He was several times compelled to renew the blade of his hatchet and the teeth of his saw. For renotching the saw he had manufactured a three-sided file.

Occasionally he made use of the capstan of the *Durande*. The hook of the chain broke: he made another.

By the aid of his pliers and pincers, and by using his chisel as a screwdriver, he set to work to remove the two paddle-wheels of the vessel, — a task which he finally accomplished. This was rendered practicable by reason of a peculiarity in their construction. The paddle-boxes which covered them were of great service to him in stowing them away. With the planks from these paddle-boxes he made two cases, in which he deposited the two paddles, piece by piece, each part being carefully numbered.

His lump of chalk became precious for this purpose.



He kept the two cases on the strongest part of the wreck.

When these preliminaries were completed, he found himself face to face with the great difficulty. The problem of the engine of the Durande was now clearly before him.

Taking the paddle-wheels to pieces had proved practicable. It was very different with the machinery.

In the first place, he was almost entirely ignorant of the details of the mechanism. Working thus blindly he might do some irreparable damage. If he ventured to dismember it, very different tools would be required than those he could fabricate with a cavern for a forge, a draught of wind for a bellows, and a stone for an anvil. In attempting, therefore, to take the machinery to pieces, there was great danger of destroying it.

The attempt seemed, at first, wholly impracticable.

The apparent impossibility of the project rose up before him like a stone wall, blocking further progress.

What was to be done ?

## CHAPTER II.

### HOW SHAKSPEARE MAY MEET ÆSCHYLUS.

A PLAN at last occurred to Gilliatt. Since the time of the carpenter-mason of Salbris, who, in the sixteenth century, in the dark ages of science, — long before Amontons had discovered the first law of friction, or Lahire the second, or Coulomb the third, — without any other helper than a child, his son, with ill-fashioned tools, in the chamber of the great clock of La Charité-sur-Loire, solved at one stroke five or six problems in statics and dynamics inextricably intervolved like the wheels in a block of carts and wagons, — since the time of that grand and marvellous achievement of the poor workman, who found means, without breaking a single piece of wire, without throwing one of the teeth of the wheels out of gear, to lower in one piece, by a marvellous simplification, from the second story of the clock-tower to the first, that massive monitor of the hours, made all of iron and brass, “large as the room in which the man watches at night from the tower,” with its movements, its cylinders, its barrels, its drums, its hooks, and its weights, the barrel of its spring steelyard, its horizontal pendulum, the holdfasts of its escapement, its reels of large and small chains, its stone weights, one of which weighed five hundred pounds, its bells, its peals, its jacks that strike the hours, — since the time, I say, of the man who accomplished this miracle, and of whom posterity knows not even the name, nothing that could be compared with the

project which Gilliatt was meditating had ever been attempted. What Gilliatt dreamed of doing was still harder, that is, still grander.

The ponderousness, the delicacy, the manifold difficulties, were no less in the machinery of the Durande than in the clock of La Charité-sur-Loire.

The untaught mechanic had his helpmate, his son; Gilliatt was alone.

A crowd gathered from Meung-sur-Loire, from Nevers, and even from Orleans, able in time of need to assist the mason of Salbris, and to encourage him with their friendly voices. Gilliatt had no voices but those of the wind around him; no crowd but the assemblage of waves.

There is nothing more remarkable than the timidity of ignorance, unless it be its temerity. When ignorance becomes daring, she has sometimes a sort of compass within herself, — the intuition of the truth, clearer oftentimes in a simple mind than in a learned brain.

Ignorance impels to an attempt. It is a state of wonderment, which, with its concomitant curiosity, forms a power. Knowledge often disconcerts one and makes one over-cautious. Gama, had he known what lay before him, would have recoiled before the Cape of Storms. If Columbus had been a great geographer, he might have failed to discover America.

The second successful climber of Mont Blanc was the savant, Saussure; the first, the goatherd, Balmat.

These instances, I admit, are exceptions, which detract nothing from science, which remains the rule. The ignorant man may discover; it is the learned who invent.

The sloop was still at anchor in the creek of "The Man" rock, where the sea left it in peace. Gilliatt, it will be remembered, had arranged everything for maintaining constant communication with it. He visited the sloop and measured her beam carefully in several parts,

but particularly her midship frame. Then he returned to the *Durande* and measured the diameter of the floor of the engine-room. This diameter, of course, without the paddles, was two feet less than the broadest part of the deck of his bark. The machinery, therefore, might be put aboard the sloop.

But how could it be got there?

### CHAPTER III.

#### GILLIATT'S MASTERPIECE COMES TO THE RESCUE OF LETHIERRY'S MASTERPIECE.

ANY fisherman, who was insane enough to loiter at that season in the neighbourhood of Gilliatt's labours, would have been repaid for his hardihood by a singular sight between the two Douvres.

Before his eyes would have appeared four stout beams, at equal distances, stretching from one Douvre to the other, and apparently forced into the rock, which is the firmest of all holds. On the Little Douvre, their extremities were laid and buttressed upon the projections of rock. On the Great Douvre, they had been driven in by blows of a hammer, by the powerful hand of a workman standing upright upon the beam itself. These supports were a little longer than the distance between the rocks. Hence the firmness of their hold; and hence, also, their slanting position. They touched the Great Douvre at an acute, and the Little Douvre at an obtuse, angle. Their inclination was slight; but it was unequal, which was a defect. But for this defect, they might have been supposed to be prepared to receive the planking of a deck. To these four beams were attached four sets of hoisting apparatus, each having its pendent and its tackle-fall, with the bold peculiarity of having the tackle-blocks with two sheaves at one extremity of the beam, and the simple pulleys at the opposite end. This distance, which was too great not to be perilous, was necessitated by the operation

to be effected. The blocks were firm, and the pulleys strong. To this tackle-gear cables were attached, which looked like threads from a distance; while beneath this apparatus of pulleys and spars, the massive hull of the *Durande* seemed to be suspended in the air by threads.

It was not yet suspended, however. Under the cross beams, eight perpendicular holes had been made in the deck, four on the port, and four on the starboard, side of the engine; eight other holes had been made beneath them through the hull. The cables, descending vertically from the four tackle-blocks, through the deck, passed out at the starboard side under the keel and the machinery, re-entered the ship by the holes on the port side, and passing upward again through the deck, returned, and were wound around the beams. Here a sort of jigger-tackle held them in a bunch bound fast to a single cable, capable of being directed by one arm. The single cable passed over a hook, and through a deadeye, which completed the apparatus and kept it in check. This combination compelled the four tacklings to work together, and, acting as a complete restraint upon the suspending powers, became a sort of dynamical rudder in the hand of the pilot of the operation, maintaining the movements in equilibrium.

The ingenious adjustment of this system of tackling had some of the simplifying qualities of the Weston pulley of these days, with a mixture of the antique polypaston of Vitruvius. Gilliatt had invented the arrangement, although he knew nothing of the dead Vitruvius or of the still unborn Weston. The length of the cables varied, according to the unequal inclination of the cross-beams. The ropes were dangerous, for the untarred hemp was liable to give way. Chains would have been better in this respect, but chains would not have passed through the tackle-blocks easily.

The apparatus was full of defects ; but as the work of one man, it was surprising.

For the rest, it will be understood that many details are omitted which would render the construction perhaps intelligible to practical mechanics, but obscure to others.

The top of the funnel passed between the two beams in the middle.

Gilliatt, unconscious plagiarist, without suspecting it, had reconstructed, three centuries later, the mechanism of the Salbris carpenter, — a mechanism rude and incorrect, and fraught with no little danger to him who might venture to use it.

Here let us remark that defects do not prevent a piece of machinery from working after a fashion. It may limp, but it moves.

The obelisk in the square of St. Peter's at Rome is erected in a way which offends against all the principles of statics. The carriage of the Czar Peter was so constructed that it looked ready to overturn at every step ; but it travelled onward for all that. What blunders characterize the machinery at Marly ! Everything that is heterodox in hydraulics ! Yet did it not supply Louis XIV. with water all the same ?

Come what might, Gilliatt had faith. He even anticipated success so confidently as to fix in the bulwarks of the sloop, on the very day when he measured its proportions, two pair of corresponding iron rings on each side, exactly at the same distances as the four rings on board the *Durande*, to which the four chains of the funnel were attached.

He had a very complete and settled plan in his mind. All the chances being against him, he had evidently determined that all the precautions at least should be on his side.

He did some things which seemed useless ; a sign of careful premeditation. )

His manner of proceeding would, as we have said, have puzzled an observer, even though he was familiar with mechanical operations.

A witness of his labour who had seen him, for example, with enormous efforts and at the risk of breaking his neck, driving eight or ten huge nails which he had forged into the base of the two Douvres at the entrance to the passage between them, would have had some difficulty in understanding the object of these nails, and would probably have wondered what could be the use of all that trouble.

If he had then seen him measuring the portion of the fore bulwark which had remained hanging to the wreck, then attaching a strong cable to the upper edge of that portion, cutting away with strokes of his hatchet the fastenings which held it, then dragging it out of the defile with the aid of the receding tide, pushing the lower part while he dragged the upper part, and, finally, with great labour, fastening with the cable this heavy mass of planks and piles wider than the entrance of the defile itself, with the nails driven into the base of the Little Douvre, the observer would perhaps have found the operation still more difficult to comprehend, and might have wondered why Gilliatt, if he wanted, for the purpose of his operations, to disencumber the space between the two rocks of this mass, had not allowed it to fall into the sea, where the tide would have carried it away.

Gilliatt had his reasons, however.

In fixing the nails in the base of the rocks, he had taken advantage of all the cracks in the granite, enlarging them when needful, and inserting, first of all, wooden wedges in which he drove the nails. He made a rough beginning of similar preparations in the two rocks which stood at the other end of the narrow passage on the eastern side. He placed plugs of wood in all the crevices, as if he desired to have them, too, in readiness; but



this appeared to be a mere precaution, for he made no use of them. He was compelled to economize, and to use his materials only when he had need of them. This was another great drawback.

As fast as one task was accomplished, another became necessary. Gilliatt passed unhesitatingly from one to another, making gigantic strides all the while.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SUB RE.

THE aspect of the man who accomplished all these labours became terrible.

Gilliatt expended all his strength at once in his multifarious tasks, and regained it with difficulty.

Privations on the one hand, and fatigue on the other, had greatly reduced him in flesh. His hair and beard had grown long. He had only one shirt that was not in rags. He went about barefooted, the wind having carried away one of his shoes, and the sea the other. Flying fragments of the rude and dangerous stone anvil which he used had left small wounds upon his hands and arms. These wounds, or rather scratches, were not deep; but the keen air and the salt water irritated them continually.

He was hungry, thirsty, and cold.

His store of fresh water was gone; his rye-meal was used up. He had nothing left but a little hard tack.

This he gnawed with his teeth, having no water in which to steep it.

Little by little, and day by day, his strength decreased.

These terrible rocks were consuming his life.

How to obtain food was a problem; how to get drink was a problem; how to find rest was a problem.

He ate when he was fortunate enough to find a crayfish or a crab; he drank when he chanced to see a sea-bird descend upon a point of rock; for on climbing up to the spot he generally found a hollow there, with a little fresh water. He drank from it after the bird, sometimes with

the bird; for the gulls and sea-mews had become accustomed to him, and no longer flew away on his approach. Even in his greatest need of food he did not attempt to molest them. He had, as will be remembered, a superstition about birds. The birds on their part, now that his hair was rough and wild, and his beard long, had no fear of him. The change in his face gave them confidence; he had lost all resemblance to man and taken the form of the wild beast.

In fact, the birds and Gilliatt had become good friends. Companions in poverty, they helped each other. So long as he had had any meal, he had crumbled for them some bits of the cakes he made. In his deeper distress they showed him, in their turn, the places where he could find tiny pools of water.

He ate the shell-fish raw. Shell-fish help in a certain degree to quench thirst. The crabs he cooked. Having no kettle, he roasted them between two stones heated red-hot in his fire, after the manner of the Färøe island savages.

Meanwhile, signs of the equinoctial season had begun to appear. Then came rain, — an angry rain. No showers or steady torrents, but fine, sharp, icy points which penetrated to his skin through his clothing, and to his bones through his skin. It was a rain which yielded very little drinking water, but which drenched him none the less.

Chary of assistance, prodigal of misery, such was the character of these rains. For one entire week Gilliatt suffered from them day and night.

At night, in his rocky recess, nothing but the overpowering fatigue occasioned by his daily toil enabled him to sleep. The big sea-gnats stung him, and he generally awoke covered with blisters.

He had a kind of slow fever, which sustained him; but

this fever is a succour which destroys. By instinct he chewed the mosses, or sucked the leaves of wild cochlearia, scanty tufts of which grew in the dry crevices of the rocks. Of his suffering, however, he took little heed. He had no time to devote to the consideration of his own privations. The rescue of the machinery of the *Durande* was progressing well. That sufficed for him.

Every now and then, as the necessities of his work demanded, he jumped into the water, swam to some point, and gained a footing there. He plunged into the sea and left it, as a man passes from one room to another in his dwelling.

His clothing was never dry. It was saturated with rain water, which had no time to evaporate, and with sea water, which never dries.

Living in wet clothing is a habit which may be acquired. The poor groups of Irish people, — old men, mothers, half naked girls and infants, — who spend the winter in the open air, in the snow and rain, huddled together at the corners of the London streets, live and die in this condition.

To be soaked through, and yet be thirsty: Gilliatt became accustomed to this strange torture. There were times when he was glad to suck the sleeve of his big coat.

The fire that he made scarcely warmed him. A fire in the open air yields very little comfort. It burns a person on one side, while he freezes on the other.

Gilliatt often shivered while sweating over his forge.

Everywhere about him resistance loomed amid a terrible silence. He felt himself to be the enemy of an unseen combination.

There is a dismal *non possumus* in Nature.

The inertia of matter is like a grim threat.

A mysterious persecution environed him. He suffered

equally from sudden flushes and sudden chills. The fire ate into his flesh; the water froze him; feverish thirst tormented him; the wind tore his clothing; hunger undermined the organs of the body. The mental depression all this caused was terribly exhausting. Obstacles silent, immense, seemed to converge from all points towards him with the blind irresponsibility of fate, yet full of a savage unanimity. He felt them pressing inexorably upon him. There was no way of escaping them. His sufferings produced the impression of some living persecutor. He had a constant sense of something working against him, of a hostile form ever present, ever labouring to circumvent and to subdue him.

He could flee from the struggle; but so long as he remained, he had no choice but to war against this secret hostility. He asked himself what it was. It took hold of him, grasped him tightly, overpowered him, deprived him of breath. The invisible persecutor was destroying him by slow degrees. Every day the feeling of oppression became greater, as if the mysterious screw had received another turn.

His situation in this dreary spot resembled a duel, in which a suspicion of treachery haunts the mind of one of the combatants.

It seemed to be a coalition of obscure forces which surrounded him. He felt that there was an invincible determination to be rid of his presence. It is thus that the glacier drives away the loitering ice-block.

Almost without seeming to touch him, this latent coalition had reduced him to rags; had left him bleeding, distressed, and, as it were, *hors de combat*, even before the real battle began. He toiled no less assiduously and unremittingly; but as the work progressed the workman himself seemed to lose ground. One might have fancied that Nature—that wild beast in dread of the soul—

had resolved to undermine the man. Gilliatt toiled on and left the rest to the future. The sea had begun by consuming him ; what would come next ?

The double Douvres, — that granite dragon lying in ambush in mid-ocean, — had sheltered him. It had allowed him to enter, and to do his will ; but its hospitality resembled the welcome of devouring jaws.

The unfathomable space around and above him, so full of opposition to man's will ; the mute, inexorable determination of phenomena, following their appointed course ; the great general law of things, implacable and passive ; the ebbs and flows ; the rock itself, a dark Pleiad, whose points were each a star amid vortices, the centre of radiating currents ; the strange, indefinable conspiracy to crush with indifference the temerity of a living being ; the wintry winds, the clouds, and the beleaguering waves which enveloped him, — closed in around him slowly, and shut him out from all companionship, like a dungeon built up stone by stone around a living man. Everything against him ; nothing for him ; he felt himself isolated, abandoned, enfeebled, sapped, forgotten. His storehouse empty, his tools broken or defective, he was tormented with hunger and thirst by day, with cold by night, with wounds and tatters, rags covering sores, torn hands, bleeding feet, wasted limbs, pallid cheeks. But there was unquenchable fire in his eye.

Superb fire, will-power made visible ! Such is the eye of man. The eyeball tells how much of the man there is in us. We reveal ourselves by the light under our eyebrows. Petty consciences wink ; grand consciences flash. If there is no spark in the eyeball, there is no thought in the brain, no love in the heart. He who loves, wills, and he who wills, lightens and flashes. Resolution gives fire to the look, — a fire composed of the combustion of timid thoughts.

\* The headstrong are really the sublime. The man who is only brave owes it to impulse; the man who is only valiant merely possesses that temperament; the man who is courageous has only one virtue; the man who is headstrong in the truth is sublime. All the secrets of great souls lie in the one word, *Perseverando*. Perseverance is to courage what the winch is to the lever, a perpetual renewal of the point of support. Let the goal be on earth or in heaven, to reach the goal is everything; in the first case one is Columbus, in the second case, Jesus. Never to disobey the dictates of your conscience, never to allow your will to be disarmed, results in suffering, but in triumph as well. The propensity of morals to fall does not preclude the possibility of soaring. From the fall comes the ascension. Weak souls are disconcerted by specious obstacles; strong souls, never. Perish, they possibly may; conquer, they certainly will. You might give Stephen all sorts of good reasons why he should not let himself be stoned. This contempt for sensible objections gives birth to that sublime victory which is called martyrdom.

All his efforts seemed to tend to the impossible. His success was meagre and slow. He was compelled to expend much labour to accomplish very trivial results. It was this that gave to his struggle such a noble and pathetic character.

That it should have required so many preparations, so much toil, so many cautious experiments, such nights of hardship, and such days of danger merely to set up four beams over a shipwrecked vessel, to divide and isolate the portion that could be saved, and to adjust to that wreck within a wreck four tackle-blocks with their cables was merely due to his solitary position.

But Gilliatt had merely accepted this solitary position. He had deliberately chosen it. Dreading a competitor

because a competitor might have proved a rival, he had asked no assistance. The gigantic undertaking, the risk, the danger, the arduous toil, the possible destruction of the salvor in his work, famine, fever, nakedness, distress, — he had chosen all these for himself! Such was his selfishness.

He was like a man placed in the bell of an air-pump, which is being slowly exhausted of air. His vitality was failing him little by little. He scarcely perceived the fact.

The decline of physical strength does not necessarily impair the will. Faith is only a secondary power; the will is the first. The mountains, which faith is proverbially said to move, are nothing in comparison with what the will can accomplish. All that Gilliatt lost in vigour, he gained in tenacity. The deterioration of the physical man under the depressing influence of the surrounding sea and rock and sky only seemed to re-invigorate his moral nature.

Gilliatt felt no fatigue, or, rather, he would not yield to any. The refusal of the mind to recognize the failings of the body is in itself an immense power.

He saw nothing, except the steps attending the progress of his labours. His object — now seeming so near attainment — wrapped him in perpetual illusions. He endured all this suffering without any other thought than that contained in the word "Forward." His work flew to his head; the strength of the will is intoxicating. This intoxication is called heroism.

He had become a kind of Job, with the ocean as the scene of his sufferings.

But he was a Job wrestling with difficulties, a Job combating and making way against afflictions; a conquering Job; and if such names are not too great to be applied to a poor sailor and fisher of crabs and crayfish, a combination of Job and Prometheus.



## CHAPTER V.

### SUB UMBRA.

SOMETIMES in the night Gilliatt woke and peered into the darkness.

He felt a strange emotion.

As his eyes opened upon the blackness of the night, the situation seemed unspeakably dismal and full of disquietude.

There is such a thing as the pressure of darkness.

A strange roof of shadow; a deep obscurity, which no diver can explore; a light of a strange, subdued, and sombre kind, mingled with that obscurity; floating atoms of rays, like the dust of seeds or of ashes; millions of lamps, but no illumination; a vast sprinkling of fire, of which no man knows the secret; a diffusion of shining points, like a drift of sparks arrested in their course; the disorder of the whirlwind, with the fixedness of death; a mysterious and abysmal depth; an enigma, at once showing and concealing its face; the Infinite in its mask of darkness, — these are the synonyms of night. Its weight lies heavily on the soul of man.

This combination of all mysteries, — the mystery of the Cosmos and the mystery of Fate, — overpowers the human brain.

The pressure of darkness acts in inverse proportion upon different natures. In the presence of night man feels his own incompleteness. He perceives the dark void, and realizes his frailty. The sky is black, the mar:

blind. Face to face with night, man bends, kneels, prostrates himself, crouches on the earth, crawls towards a cave, or seeks for wings. Almost always he shrinks from that vague presence of the Unknown. He asks himself what it is; he trembles and bows the head. Sometimes he desires to go to it.

To go whither?

He can only answer, "There!"

There! But what is it like? and what will be found there?

This curiosity is evidently forbidden to the spirit of man; for all around him the roads which bridge that gulf are demolished or gone. There is no arch to enable him to span the Infinite. But there is a fascination about forbidden knowledge, as in the edge of the abyss. Where the foot cannot tread, the eye may reach; where the eye can penetrate no further, the imagination may soar. There is no man, however feeble or insufficient his resources, who does not make the attempt. According to his nature he questions or recoils before this great mystery. With some it has the effect of repressing, with others it enlarges, the soul. The spectacle is sombre, indefinite.

Is the night calm and cloudless? It is then a mass of shadow. Is it stormy? It is then a sea of cloud. Its limitless depths reveal themselves to us, and yet baffle our gaze; close themselves against research, but remain open to conjecture. Its innumerable dots of light only make the obscurity beyond deeper. Jewels, scintillations, stars; proofs of the existence of unknown universes which bid defiance to man's approach; landmarks of the infinite creation; boundaries there, where there are no bounds; landmarks impossible, and yet real, revealing the immensity of those infinite deeps. One microscopic glittering point; then another; then another; impercep-

tible, yet enormous. Yonder light is a focus; that focus is a star; that star is a sun; that sun is a universe; that universe is nothing. For all numbers are as zero in the presence of the Infinite.

These worlds, which yet are nothing, exist. Through this fact we feel the difference which separates the *being nothing* from the *not to be*.

The inaccessible added to the inexplicable, such are the heavens.

A sublime phenomenon is evolved from this thought, — the development of the soul by awe.

Awe is peculiar to man; the beast knows it not. Intelligence finds in this sublime terror its eclipse and the proof of its existence.

Darkness is unity, hence horror; at the same time it is complex, hence terror. Its unity crushes the spirit, and destroys all inclination to resist. Its complexity makes us look anxiously around on all sides; it seems as if some accident were about to happen. We surrender, yet are on our guard. One is in the presence of Omnipotence, hence submission; and in the presence of the many, hence distrust. The unity of darkness contains a multiple, visible in matter and realizable in thought. Its very silence is only another reason for one to be on the watch.

Night — as the writer has said elsewhere — is the proper, normal state of the special creation to which we belong. Day, brief in duration as in space, is merely proximity to a star.

The wonderful mystery of night is not accomplished without friction, and the friction of such a machine is the contusions of life. This friction of the machine we call Evil. In the darkness we are conscious of this Evil, this covert lie against divine order, this open blasphemy of fact rebelling against the ideal. Evil disturbs the vast Whole of the Cosmos with a strange hundred-headed

teratology. Evil is always present to oppose. It is the hurricane that stops the ship; it is chaos and checks the budding of a world. Good is characterized by unity, Evil by ubiquity; Evil disarranges life; it makes the bird destroy the fly, and the comet destroy the planet. Evil is an erasion in the book of Nature.

The darkness of night makes the brain whirl. One who attempts to sound its depths is submerged, and struggles in vain. No task is so hard as an examination of the land of shadows. It is the study of an effacement.

There is no definite spot where the spirit can rest. There are points of departure, no points of arrival. The decussation of contradictory solutions; all the different diversities of doubt simultaneously presented; the ramifications of phenomena perpetually exfoliating under an indefinite power of growth; an inexplicable promiscuity which makes minerals vegetate, vegetation live, thought ponder, love radiate, and gravitation attract; a simultaneous attack upon all questions deploying in a limitless obscurity; the half-seen sketching the unknown; cosmic simultaneousness in full view, not to the eye but to the mind, in the vast indistinct of space; the invisible become a vision,—such are the night and the shades of darkness.

He knows no details; he bears, to an extent proportionate to his spirit, the monstrous load of the Whole. It was this that drove the Chaldean shepherds to astronomy. Involuntary revelations come from the pores of Nature; an exudation of science is in some way self-produced, and wins the ignorant. Every person who leads a lonely life under this mysterious impregnation, becomes, often unconsciously, a natural philosopher.

The Darkness is indivisible; it is inhabited,—sometimes inhabited without change of place by the Absolute, sometimes inhabited but subject to change of place. To

move therein is alarming. A holy creative power accomplishes its phases therein. Premeditations, powers, self-chosen destinies work out their measureless task there. A terrible and horrible life is in it. There are vast evolutions of stars, the stellar family, the planetary family, the zodiacal star-dust; the *quid divinum* of currents, of influences, of polarization and attraction. There are affinities and antagonisms in it; a stupendous ebb and flow of the universal antithesis; the imponderable at liberty in the midst of centres; the wandering atom, the scattered germ; circles of fecundation, osculations, and repugnancies, unheard-of profusion, distances like dreams; giddy revolutions; worlds plunging into the incalculable; prodigies pursuing each other in the gloom; the pantings of flying spheres and whirling wheels. The learned conjecture, the simple assent and tremble; it is, and it vanishes; it is impregnable, beyond reach, beyond approach. Conviction becomes oppression; some — we know not what — black evidence lies heavy on us; we can grasp nothing; we are crushed by the impalpable.

Everywhere around us we see the incomprehensible, nowhere the intelligible!

And then add the momentous question, Is this Immanence endowed with a soul?

We are in doubt. We look and listen.

Still the sad earth moves and rolls; the flowers are conscious of the mighty movement; the silenia opens at eleven o'clock in the evening, the hemerocallis at five in the morning. Striking regularity.

Each drop of water is a miniature world; the infusoria come to life. Think of the marvellous fecundity of an animalcule! The imperceptible displays its grandeur; the antistrophe of immensity is revealed; a diatome in a single hour produces thirteen hundred millions of diatomes.

Surely every enigma is summed up in this.

The irreducible equation is here. We are constrained to have faith. But to have faith does not suffice to give one tranquillity. Faith has a strange need of forms. Hence religions. Nothing is so unsatisfying as a belief without outlines.

Whatever we think, whatever we wish, whatever may be our repugnance, to look into the darkness is not to look, but to contemplate.

What can be done with these phenomena? How move in the spot where they converge? To dispel this pressure is impossible. Darkness is a silence, but an eloquent silence. One conclusion stands out majestically, — the existence of a God. This belief in God is inherent in man. Syllogisms, quarrels, negations, systems, religions, pass over it without diminishing it. This thought is confirmed by darkness. The marvellous harmony of forces of Nature is manifested by their power to maintain all this obscurity in equilibrium. The universe is suspended in mid-air, yet nothing falls. Incessant, immeasurable change takes place without accident or fracture. Man participates in this transition movement; and the wonderful oscillations to which he is subjected, he calls destiny. Where does destiny begin? Where does Nature end? What is the difference between an event and a season, between a sorrow and a rain-storm, between a virtue and a star? Is not an hour a wave? The machinery in motion continues its passionless revolutions, without any regard to man. The starry heaven is a system of wheels, beams, and counterweights. It is supreme contemplation coupled with supreme meditation, all reality *plus* all abstraction. Nothing beyond; here we are stopped. The darkness reveals not the secret. We are in the train of a complicated mechanism, an integral part of an unknown Whole, and feel the Un-

known within us fraternize mysteriously with an Unknown without us.

It is this which tells us that death is inevitable. What anguish, and at the same time what rapture! To be absorbed in the Infinite, and thereby brought to attribute to one's self a necessary immortality, or— who knows?—a possible eternity! to feel in the immense flood of the deluge of universal life the insubmersible will of the I! To look on the stars and say, "I am a soul like you;" to look into the darkness and say, "I am an abyss like you!"

Such are the thoughts and visions awakened by the night!

All these vague fancies, multiplied and intensified by solitude, weighed upon Gilliatt.

He comprehended them not, but he felt them. His was a powerful though uncultivated intellect, a noble though unsophisticated heart.

## CHAPTER VI.

### GILLIATT PLACES THE SLOOP IN READINESS.

THIS rescue of the machinery of the wreck as meditated by Gilliatt was, as we have already said, like the escape of a criminal from a prison and necessitated all the patience and industry recorded of such achievements,—industry carried to the point of a miracle, patience only to be compared with a long agony. A certain prisoner named Thomas, at the Mont St. Michel, found means of secreting the greater part of a wall in his paillasse. Another at Tulle, in 1820, cut away a quantity of lead from the terrace where the prisoners walked for exercise. With what kind of a knife? No one could guess. With what fire he melted this lead no one has ever discovered; but it is known that he cast it in a mould made of a bit of bread. With this lead and this mould he made a key, and with this key he succeeded in opening a lock of which he had never seen anything but the keyhole. Gilliatt possessed some of this marvellous ingenuity. He had once climbed and descended from the cliff at Boisrosé. He was the Baron Trenck of the wreck, and the Latude of her machinery.

The sea, like a jailer, kept watch over him.

For the rest, mischievous and inclement as the rain had been, he had contrived to derive some benefit from it. He had partially replenished his stock of fresh water; but his thirst was inextinguishable, and he emptied his can as fast as he filled it.



One day — it was on the last day of April or the first of May — everything was in readiness.

The engine-room was as it were enclosed between the eight cables hanging from the tackle-blocks, four on one side, four on the other. The sixteen holes on the deck and under the keel, through which the cables passed, had been hooped around. The planking had been sawed, the timber cut with the hatchet, the iron-work with a file, the sheathing with a chisel. The part of the keel immediately under the machinery was cut so as to descend with it while still supporting it. The whole ponderous mass was held by only a single chain, which was itself only kept in position by a filed notch. At this stage of proceedings, in such a task and so near its completion, haste is prudence.

The water was low, the moment favourable.

Gilliatt had succeeded in removing the axle of the paddle-wheels, the extremities of which might have proved an obstacle and checked the descent. He had contrived to make this heavy portion fast in a vertical position within the engine-room itself.

It was time to bring his work to an end. The workman, as we have said, was not worn out, for his will was strong; but his tools were. The forge was fast becoming useless. The blower had begun to work badly. The little hydraulic fall being of sea-water, saline deposits had incrustated the joints of the apparatus, and now prevented its free action.

Gilliatt visited the creek of "The Man" rock, examined the sloop, and assured himself that everything was in good condition, particularly the four iron rings fixed to starboard and to larboard; then he weighed anchor, and worked the heavy barge-shaped craft with the oars till he brought it alongside the two Douvres.

The defile between the two rocks was wide enough to admit it. There was also depth enough. On the day of his arrival he had satisfied himself that it was possible to push the sloop under the Durande.

The feat, however, was difficult; it required the minute precision of a watchmaker. The operation was all the more delicate from the fact that, in order to accomplish his object, he was compelled to force it in by the stern, rudder first. It was necessary that the mast and the rigging of the sloop should project beyond the wreck in the direction of the sea.

All this made Gilliatt's task very difficult. It was not like entering the creek of "The Man," where it was a mere affair of the tiller. It was necessary to push, drag, row, and take soundings all at once. Gilliatt spent but a quarter of an hour in these manœuvres; but he was successful.

In fifteen or twenty minutes the sloop was fastened under the wreck. It was almost wedged in there. By means of his two anchors he moored the boat at bow and stern. The stronger of the two was placed so as to hold against the strongest wind that blew, which was that from the south-west. Then by the aid of a lever and the capstan, he lowered into the sloop the two cases containing the pieces of the paddle-wheels. These two cases were to serve as ballast.

Relieved of these encumbrances, he fastened the gearing that was to regulate the action of the pulleys to the hook of the chain of the capstan.

In the work that now devolved upon her, the defects of the old sloop became useful qualities. It had no deck; so the cargo could go all the deeper down into the hold. Her mast was far forward, — too far forward indeed for general purposes, — but that only gave more room; and the mast standing thus beyond the bulk of

the wreck, there would be nothing to hinder its disembarkation.

While engaged in these operations, Gilliatt suddenly perceived that the sea was rising. He looked around to see from what quarter the wind was coming.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SUDDEN DANGER.

THE breeze was scarcely perceptible; but what there was came from the west,—a disagreeable habit of the winds during the equinoxes.

The effect of the sea upon the Douvres rocks depended greatly upon the quarter from which the wind came. The waves entered the rocky corridor either from the east or from the west, according to the gale which drove them along before it. Entering from the east, the sea was comparatively gentle; coming from the west, it was always violent. The reason for this was, that the wind from the east blowing from the land had not had time to gather much force; while the westerly winds, coming from the Atlantic, blew unchecked from a vast ocean. Even a very slight breeze, if it came from the west, was serious. It rolled up huge billows in the illimitable expanse and dashed the waves against the narrow defile in greater bulk than could find entrance there.

A sea which rolls into a gulf is always terrible. It is the same with a crowd of people. When the quantity that can enter is less than the quantity that is endeavouring to force its way in, there is a fatal crush in the crowd, a fierce convulsion on the water. As long as the west wind blows, however slight the breeze, the Douvres are subjected to that rude assault twice a day. The sea rises, the tide breasts up, the narrow gorge gives little entrance; the waves, driven violently against it, rebound and roar, and a tremendous surf beats upon both sides of

the passage. Thus the Douvres, during the slightest wind from the west, present the singular spectacle of a comparatively calm sea without, while a storm is raging within. This tumult of waters is much too circumscribed in character to be called a tempest. It is merely a local outbreak among the waves, but a terrible one. As regards the winds from the north and south, they strike the rocks crosswise, and create little surf in the passage. The entrance on the east, it must be remembered, was close to "The Man" rock. The dangerous opening on the west was at the opposite end of the passage, exactly between the two Douvres.

It was at this western entrance that Gilliatt found himself with the wrecked *Durande*, and the sloop made fast beneath it.

A catastrophe seemed inevitable. There was not much wind, but it was sufficient to make mischief.

Before many hours, the swell which was rising would be rushing with full force into the gorge between the Douvres. The first waves were already breaking. This swell, and eddy of the entire Atlantic, would have the boundless sea behind it. There would be no squall; no tempest, but a huge overwhelming wave, which beginning on the coast of America rolls towards the shores of Europe with an impetus gathered in a journey over two thousand leagues. This wave, a gigantic ocean barrier, meeting the gap of the rocks, must be caught between the two Douvres, standing like watch-towers at the entrance of the causeway. Thus swelled by the tide, augmented by resistance, and urged on by the wind, it would hurl itself against the cliffs and rush between the rocky walls, where it would reach the sloop and the *Durande*, and in all probability destroy them.

A protection against this danger was needed. Gilliatt had one.

The problem was to prevent the sea reaching it at one bound; to prevent it from striking, while allowing it to rise; to bar the passage without refusing it admission; to prevent the compression of the water in the gorge, which was the whole danger; to turn an eruption into a flood; to deprive the waves of their violence, and compel the furies to be gentle; it was, in fact, to substitute an obstacle which would appease for an obstacle which would irritate.

Gilliatt with that agility which is so much more potent than mere strength, sprang upon the rock like a chamois among the mountains, or a monkey in the forest; using the smallest projection for his tottering and dizzy strides, leaping into the water, and emerging from it again; swimming among the shoals and clambering upon the rocks, with a rope between his teeth and a mallet in his hand. He detached the cable which held the forward end of the *Durande* to the base of the Little Douvre; fashioned out of some ends of hawsers some rough hinges, with which he affixed this bulwark to the huge nails fixed in the granite like the gates of a dock, turning their sides, as he would turn a rudder, outward to the waves, which pushed one end towards the Great Douvre, while the rope hinges held the other end to the Little Douvre; next, he contrived, by means of the huge nails placed beforehand for the purpose, to fix the same kind of fastenings on the Great Douvre as on the little one, made the huge mass of wood-work fast to the two pillars of the gorge, slung a chain across this barrier like a baldric upon a cuirass, and in less than an hour this barricade against the sea was complete, and the gorge was closed as by a folding-door.

This powerful apparatus, a heavy mass of beams and planks, had with the aid of the water been handled by Gilliatt with all the adroitness of a juggler. It might

almost have been said that the obstruction was completed before the rising sea had time to discover it.

It was one of those occasions on which Jean Bart would have used the famous expression which he applied to the sea every time he narrowly escaped shipwreck. "We have cheated the Englishman;" for it is well known that when that famous admiral meant to speak contemptuously of the ocean he called it "the Englishman."

The entrance to the defile being thus protected, Gilliatt thought of the sloop. He loosened sufficient cable for the two anchors to allow her to rise with the tide, — an operation similar to what the mariners of old called "mouiller avec des embossures." In all this, Gilliatt was not taken the least by surprise; this possibility had been foreseen. A seaman would have perceived it by the two pulleys of the top ropes cut in the form of snatch-blocks, and fixed behind the sloop, through which passed two ropes, the ends of which were slung through the rings of the anchors.

Meanwhile the tide was rising fast; the half flood had arrived, — a moment when the shock of the waves, even in comparatively moderate weather, may become considerable. Exactly what Gilliatt expected came to pass. The waves rolled violently against the barrier, struck it, broke heavily, and passed beneath it. Outside there was a heavy swell; within, the waters were quiet. He had invented a sort of marine Caudine Fork. The sea was conquered.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MOVEMENT RATHER THAN PROGRESS.

THE long dreaded moment had come. The problem now was to get the machinery into the sloop.

Gilliatt remained thoughtful for some moments, supporting the elbow of his left arm in his right hand, and pressing his left hand to his forehead.

Then he climbed upon the wreck. The part of it which contained the engine was to be separated from it, and the other part left.

He severed the four straps which held the four chains that extended from the funnel to the larboard and the starboard sides. The straps being only of rope, his knife served him well enough for this purpose.

The four chains, set free, hung down the sides of the funnel.

From the wreck he climbed up to the apparatus which he had constructed, stamped upon the beams, inspected the tackle-blocks, looked to the pulleys, handled the cables, examined the eking-pieces, assured himself that the untarred hemp was not saturated, found that nothing was wanting and that nothing had given way; then springing from the height of the suspending props on to the deck, he took up his position near the capstan, in that portion of the *Durande* which he intended to leave wedged between the two *Douvres*. This was to be his post during his labours.



Gravely, but calmly, he gave a final glance at the hoisting-tackle, then seized a file and began to sever the chain which held the whole suspended. The rasping of the file was audible amid the roaring of the sea. The chain from the capstan, attached to the regulating gear, was within Gilliatt's reach, quite near his hand.

Suddenly there was a crash. The link which he was filing snapped when only half cut through; the whole apparatus lunged violently. He had barely time to seize the regulating gear.

The severed chain struck against the rock; the eight cables creaked; the huge mass, sawed and cut through, detached itself from the wreck; the bottom of the hull opened, and the iron flooring of the engine-room became visible below the keel.

If he had not seized the regulating-tackle at that instant, it would have fallen. But his powerful hand was there, and the mass descended steadily.

When the brother of Jean Bart, Peter Bart, that powerful and sagacious toper, that poor Dunkirk fisherman, who thee'd and thou'd the Grand Admiral of France, went to the rescue of the galley "Langeron," in distress in the Bay of Ambleuse, in the hope of saving the heavy floating mass in the breakers of that dangerous bay, he rolled up the mainsail, tied it with sea-reeds, and trusted to the ties to break away of themselves, and give the sail to the wind at the right moment. In like manner Gilliatt had trusted to the breaking of the chain; and the same eccentric feat of daring was crowned with the same success.

The tackle, taken in hand by Gilliatt, held out and worked well. Its function, it will be remembered, was to regulate the powers of the apparatus, thus reduced from many to one, by bringing them into united action. This gearing somewhat resembled the bridle of a bow-

line, except that instead of trimming a sail it served to balance a complicated mechanism.

Erect, and with his hand upon the capstan, Gilliatt was able to feel the pulse of the apparatus, so to speak.

It was here that his inventive genius manifested itself.

A remarkable coincidence of forces was the result.

While the machinery of the *Durande*, detached in a mass, was being lowered into the sloop, the sloop slowly rose to receive it. The wreck and the salvage vessel thus assisting each other as it were, saved half the labour of the operation.

The tide swelling between the two *Douvres* raised the sloop and brought it nearer to the *Durande*. The sea was more than conquered,—it was tamed and broken in. It became, in fact, part and parcel of the mechanism.

The rising waters lifted the vessel without any shock, but as gently, and almost as cautiously, as one would handle porcelain.

Gilliatt combined and proportioned the two labours, that of the water and that of the apparatus; and standing steadfast at the capstan, like some grim statue, watched every movement that went on around him, and regulated the slowness of the descent by the slow rise of the sea.

There was no jerk given by the waters, no slip among the tackle. It was a strange combination of all the natural forces. On one side, gravitation lowering the huge bulk, on the other the sea raising the bark. The attraction of heavenly bodies which causes the tide, and the attractive force of the earth, which men call weight, seemed to conspire together to aid Gilliatt in his plans. There was no hesitation, no stoppage in their service; under the dominion of intellect these passive forces became active auxiliaries. From minute to

minute the work advanced; and the distance between the wreck and the sloop slowly diminished. The approach continued in silence, and as if in a sort of terror of the man who stood there. The elements received his orders and obeyed them.

Almost at the precise moment when the tide ceased to rise, the cable ceased to slide. Suddenly, but without any commotion, the pulleys stopped. The huge machine had taken its place in the sloop, as if placed there by a powerful hand. It stood straight, upright, motionless, firm. The iron floor of the engine-room rested its four corners evenly upon the hold.

The work was accomplished.

Gilliatt contemplated it, lost in thought.

He was not the spoiled child of success. He staggered under the weight of his great joy. He felt his limbs give way under him; and as he contemplated his triumph, this man, who had never been dismayed by danger, began to tremble.

He gazed upon the sloop under the wreck, and at the machinery in the sloop. He could hardly believe his own eyes. It might have been supposed that he had never looked forward to that which he had accomplished. A miracle had been wrought by his hands, and he contemplated it in bewilderment.

His reverie lasted but a short time.

Starting like one suddenly awakened from a deep sleep, he seized his saw, cut the eight cables now separated from the sloop, thanks to the rising of the tide, by only about ten feet; sprang aboard, took a coil of rope, made four slings, passed them through the rings prepared beforehand and fastened to both sides of the sloop the four funnel chains which had been still fastened to their places aboard the *Durande* only an hour before.

The funnel being secured, he disengaged the upper

part of the machinery. A portion of the planking of the *Durande* was adhering to it; he struck off the nails and relieved the sloop of this encumbrance of planks and beams, which fell over on to the rocks, — a great assistance in lightening it.

The sloop, however, as has been foreseen, behaved well under the burden of the machinery. It had sunk in the water, but only to a good water-line. Although massive, the engine of the *Durande* was less heavy than the pile of stones and the cannon which he had once brought back from *Herm* in the sloop.

His task was now ended; he had only to depart.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A SLIP BETWEEN CUP AND LIP.

**B**UT all was not yet ended. To re-open the gorge closed by a portion of the Durande's bulwarks, and push out into the open sea, seemed a very easy and simple matter. But on the ocean every minute tells. There was little wind; scarcely a ripple on the open sea. The afternoon was beautiful, and promised a fine night. The sea, indeed, was calm, but the ebb had begun. The moment was favourable for starting. There would be the ebb tide for leaving the Douvres; and the flood would carry him into Guernsey. He could be at St. Sampson's by daybreak.

But an unexpected obstacle presented itself. There was a flaw in his arrangements which had baffled all his foresight.

The machinery was freed, but the chimney was not.

The tide, by raising the sloop towards the wreck suspended in the air, had diminished the dangers of the descent, and abridged the labour. But this diminution of distance had left the top of the funnel entangled in the gaping frame formed by the open hull of the Durande. The funnel was held fast there as between four walls.

The services rendered by the sea had been accompanied by this unfortunate drawback. It seemed as if the waves, constrained to obey, had avenged themselves by a malicious trick.

It is true that what the flood tide had done, the ebb would undo.

About eight feet of the funnel was entangled in the wreck. The water level would fall about twelve feet. Thus the funnel descending with the falling tide would have four feet of room to spare, and could easily clear itself.

But how much time would elapse before that release would be completed? Six hours.

In six hours it would be nearly midnight. How could he attempt to start at such an hour? How could he find his way among all these reefs, so full of danger even by day? How could he risk his vessel in the dead of night in that inextricable labyrinth, that ambushade of shoals.

There was no help for it. He must wait for the morrow. The six hours lost entailed a loss of at least twelve hours.

He could not even hasten matters by opening the mouth of the gorge. His breakwater would be needed against the next tide.

He was compelled to wait. Folding his arms was almost the only thing which he had not done since his arrival on the rocks.

This forced inaction irritated him almost as much as if it had been his own fault. He thought, "What would Déruchette say of me if she saw me here doing nothing?"

And yet this interval for regaining his strength was not unnecessary.

The sloop was now at his service; he determined to spend the night in it.

He mounted once more to fetch his sheepskin from the Great Douvre; descended again; supped off a few limpets and *châtaignes de mer*; drank, being very thirsty, a few draughts of water from his can, which was nearly empty; wrapped himself in the skin, the wool of which

felt very comfortable to him ; stretched himself out like a big watch-dog beside the engine, drew his red cap over his eyes, and slept.

His sleep was profound. It was such sleep as men enjoy after the completion of a herculean task.

## CHAPTER X.

### SEA—WARNINGS.

**I**N the middle of the night he suddenly awoke with a jerk like the recoil of a spring.

He opened his eyes.

The Douvres, towering high above his head, were illumined as if by a reflection from dying embers.

Over all the dark escarpment of the rock there was a light like the reflection of a fire.

Where did this fire come from?

It was from the water.

The appearance of the sea was extraordinary.

The water seemed on fire. As far as the eye could reach, among the reefs and beyond them, the sea was covered with flame. The flame was not red; it had **nothing in common** with the grand living fires of volcanic craters or of great furnaces. There was no sparkling, no glare, no purple edges, no noise. Long trails of pale light simulated upon the water the folds of a winding-sheet. It was the ghost of a great fire, rather than the fire itself.

It was in some degree like the livid glow of unearthly flames lighting the inside of a sepulchre.

A gleaming darkness.

The night itself, dim, vast, and widely diffused, was the fuel of that cold flame. It was a strange illumination issuing out of gloom. Even the shadows formed a part of that phantom fire.



The sailors of the Channel are familiar with these wonderful phosphorescent displays, so full of warning for the navigator. Nowhere are they more startling than in the "Great V," near Isigny.

In this light, surrounding objects lose their reality. A spectral glimmer renders them, as it were, transparent. Rocks become no more than outlines. Cables of anchors look like iron bars heated to a white heat. The nets of the fishermen seem webs of fire beneath the water. The half of the oar above the waves is dark as ebony, the part in the sea like silver. The drops from the blades uplifted from the water fall in starry showers upon the sea. Every boat leaves a furrow behind it like a comet's tail. The sailors seem to be on fire. If you plunge your hand into the water, you withdraw it clothed in flame. The flame is dead, and is not felt. Your arm becomes a firebrand. The foam twinkles. The fish are tongues of flame or fragments of forked lightning, moving in the pallid depths.

The reflection of this brightness had passed through the closed eyelids of Gilliatt aboard the sloop. It was this that had awakened him.

His waking was most opportune.

The ebb tide had run out, and the waters were beginning to rise again. The funnel, which had become disengaged during his sleep, was about to re-enter the yawning gap above it.

It was rising slowly but surely.

A rise of another foot would have entangled it in the wreck again. A rise of one foot is equivalent to half-an-hour's tide. If he intended, therefore, to take advantage of the temporary deliverance once more within his reach, he had just half-an-hour before him.

He leaped to his feet.

Urgent as the situation was, he stood for a few mo-

ments meditating as he contemplated the phosphorescence on the waves.

Gilliatt was familiar with the sea in all its phases. Notwithstanding all her tricks, and often as he had suffered from her terrors, he had long been her companion. That mysterious entity which we call the ocean had nothing in its secret thoughts which he could not divine. Observation, meditation, and solitude, had given him a quick perception of coming changes, of wind or cloud or wave, and had made him weatherwise.

Gilliatt hastened to the top ropes and payed out some cable; then being no longer held fast by the anchors, he seized the boat-hook of the sloop, and pushed her towards the entrance to the gorge some fathoms from the *Durande*, and quite near to the breakwater. Here, as the Guernsey sailors say, it had *du rang*. In less than ten minutes the sloop was withdrawn from beneath the remains of the wreck. There was no further danger of the funnel being caught in a trap. The tide might rise now.

And yet Gilliatt's manner was not that of one about to take his departure.

He stood gazing at the light upon the sea again; but he had no intention of starting. He was thinking how he could fasten the sloop again, and fasten it more securely than ever, though much nearer the mouth of the gorge.

Up to this time he had used the two anchors of the sloop, but had not yet employed the little anchor of the *Durande*, which he had found, as the reader will remember, among the rocks. This anchor had been deposited in readiness for any emergency, in a corner of the sloop, with a quantity of hawsers, and coils of top-ropes, and his cable, all furnished beforehand with large knots, which prevented its dragging. He now dropped this

third anchor, taking care to fasten the cable to a rope, one end of which was slung through the anchor ring, while the other was attached to the windlass of the sloop. In this manner he made a kind of fore-and-aft mooring, much stronger than the moorings with two anchors. All this indicated keen anxiety, and a redoubling of precautions. A sailor would have seen in this operation something similar to an anchorage in bad weather, when there is fear of a current which might carry the vessel to leeward.

The phosphorescence which he had been observing, and upon which his eye was again fixed, was ominous, but at the same time useful. But for it he would have been held fast locked in sleep, and betrayed by the night. The strange appearance upon the sea had awakened him, and made things about him visible.

The light which it shed upon the rocks was, indeed, threatening; but alarming as it appeared to Gilliatt, it had served to show him the dangers of his position, and had rendered it possible for him to extricate the sloop. Now, whenever he was able to set sail, the vessel, with its freight of machinery, would be free.

And yet the idea of departing was further than ever from his mind. The sloop being securely fixed in its new position, he went in quest of the strongest chain which he had in his store-house, and attaching it to the nails driven into the two Douvres, he strengthened on the inside with this chain the rampart of planks and beams, already protected from without by the cross chain. Instead of opening the entrance to the defile, he made the barrier more complete.

The phosphorescence still lighted him, but it was diminishing. Day, however, was beginning to break.

Suddenly he paused to listen.

## CHAPTER XI.

### MURMURS IN THE AIR.

A FEEBLE, indistinct sound seemed to reach his ear from somewhere in the dim distance.

At certain times the depths of ocean give out a murmuring sound.

He listened a second time. The distant noise recommenced. Gilliatt shook his head like one who recognizes at last something familiar to him.

A few minutes later he was at the other end of the opening between the rocks, at the entrance facing the east, which had remained open until then, and with heavy blows of his hammer was driving large nails into the sides of the gully near "The Man" rock, as he had done in the gully at the Douvres.

The crevices of these rocks were prepared and well furnished with timber, almost all of which was heart of oak. The rock on this side being much broken up, there were abundant cracks, and he was able to fix even more nails there than in the base of the two Douvres.

Suddenly, and as if some great breath had passed over it, the luminous appearance on the waters vanished. The light of dawn which was becoming brighter every moment, took its place.

The nails being driven, Gilliatt dragged beams and ropes and chains to the spot, and, without taking his eyes off his work, or permitting his mind to be diverted for a moment, began to construct across the gorge at

"The Man" rock with horizontal beams, made fast by cables, one of those open barriers which science has now adopted under the name of breakwaters.

Those who have witnessed, for example, at La Rocquaine in Guernsey, or at Bourg-d'Eau in France, the effect produced by a few posts fixed in the rock, will understand the efficacy of these simple preparations. This sort of breakwater is a combination of what is known in France as an *épi* with what is known in England as "a dam." Breakwaters are the *chevaux-de-frise* of fortifications against tempests. Man can struggle successfully with the sea only by taking advantage of this principle of dividing its forces.

Meanwhile, the sun had risen, and was shining brightly. The sky was clear, the sea calm.

Gilliatt hastened on with his work. He, too, was calm; but there was anxiety in his haste. He passed with long strides from rock to rock, and returned dragging sometimes a rider, sometimes a binding strake. The utility of this preparation soon became manifest. It was evident that he was about to confront a danger which he had foreseen.

A strong iron bar served him as a lever for moving the beams.

The work was executed so fast that it was a rapid growth rather than a construction. One who has never seen a military pontooner at his work can scarcely form an idea of the rapidity with which this work progressed.

The eastern opening was even narrower than the western. The rocks were only five or six feet apart. The smallness of this opening was a great help. The space to be fortified and closed up being very small, the apparatus would be stronger and more simple. Horizontal beams, therefore, sufficed, the upright ones being useless.

The first cross-pieces of the breakwater being fixed, Gilliatt climbed upon them and listened once more.

The murmurs had become significant.

He continued the construction of his breakwater. He supported it with the two cat-heads of the *Durande*, bound to the frame of beams by cords passed through the three pulley-sheaves, and made the whole fast with chains.

The apparatus was nothing more or less than a colossal hurdle, having beams for rods, and chains in place of wattles.

It seemed woven together, quite as much as built.

He multiplied the fastenings, and added nails where they were needed.

Having obtained a great quantity of bar iron from the wreck, he had been able to make a large number of these heavy nails.

While he worked, he ate a biscuit or two. He was thirsty, but he could not drink, having no more fresh water. He had emptied the can at his meal of the evening before.

He added afterwards four or five more pieces of timber, then climbed again upon the barrier and listened.

The noises from the horizon had ceased; all was still.

The sea was smooth and quiet, deserving all those complimentary phrases which worthy people bestow upon it when well satisfied with a trip. "A mirror," "a pond," "like oil," and so forth. The deep blue of the sky responded to the deep green tint of the ocean. The sapphire and the emerald hues vied with each other. Each was perfect. Not a cloud on high, not a line of foam below. In the midst of all this splendour, the April sun rose magnificently. It was impossible to imagine a lovelier day.

On the edge of the horizon a flock of birds of passage

formed a long dark line against the sky. They were flying towards land as if alarmed.

Gilliatt set to work again to raise the breakwater.

He raised it as high as he could, — as high, indeed, as the curvature of the rocks would permit.

Towards noon the sun seemed to emit more than its usual warmth. Noon is the critical time of the day. Standing upon the powerful frame which he had built up, he paused again to survey the wide expanse.

The sea was more than tranquil. A dull, dead calm reigned. No sail was visible. The sky was everywhere clear; but it had changed from blue to white in colour. The whiteness was peculiar. To the west, and upon the horizon, was a small spot of a sickly hue. The spot remained in the same place, but grew larger by degrees. Near the breakers the waves shuddered, but very gently.

Gilliatt had done well to build his breakwater.

A tempest was at hand.

The elements had determined to give him battle.

# BOOK III.

## THE STRUGGLE.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### EXTREMES MEET.

NOTHING is more dangerous than a late equinox. The appearance of the sea presents a strange phenomenon, resulting from what may be called the arrival of the ocean winds.

In all seasons, but particularly at the epoch of the Syzygies, when least expected, the sea sometimes becomes singularly tranquil. That vast perpetual movement ceases; a sort of drowsiness and languor overspreads it, and it seems weary and about to rest. Every rag of bunting, from the tiny streamer of the fishing-boat to the great flag of ships of war, droops against the mast. The admiral's flag, and Royal and Imperial ensigns sleep alike.

Suddenly all these streamers begin to flutter gently.

If there happen to be clouds, the moment has come for noting the formation of the *cirri*; if the sun is setting, for observing the red tints of the horizon; or if it be night and there is a moon, for looking for the halo.

It is then that the captain or commander of a squadron, if he happen to possess one of those storm glasses, the inventor of which is unknown, watches his instrument carefully, and takes his precautions against the south wind if the clouds look like dissolved sugar, or against the north wind if they exfoliate in crystalliza-



tions like brakes or brambles, or like fir-trees. Then, too, the poor Irish or Breton fisherman, after having consulted some mysterious gnomon engraved by the Romans or by demons upon one of those straight enigmatical stones, which are called in Brittany "Menhir," and in Ireland "Cruach," hauls his boat up on the shore.

Meanwhile, the serenity of sky and ocean continues. The day dawns radiant, and Aurora smiles. It was this which filled the old poets and seers with religious horror, terrified at the thought that men dared to fancy the falsity of the sun. "Solem quis dicere falsum audeat?"

The power to discern latent possibilities in the world of Nature is prevented in man by the fatal opacity of surrounding things. The most terrible and perfidious of her aspects is that which masks the convulsions of the deep.

Hours, and sometimes even days, pass thus. Pilots direct their telescopes here and there. The faces of old seamen always have an expression of severity left upon them by the annoyance of perpetually looking for changes.

Suddenly a great confused murmur is heard. A sort of mysterious dialogue takes place in the air.

Nothing unusual is seen.

The wide expanse is tranquil.

Yet the noises increase. The dialogue becomes more audible.

There is something moving beyond the horizon.

Something terrible. It is the wind.

The wind, or rather that nation of Titans we call the gale,— the unseen mob.

India knew them as the Maruts, Judea as the Kerou-bim, Greece as the Aquilones. They are the invisible winged creatures of the Infinite. Their blasts sweep over the earth.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE OCEAN WINDS.

THEY come from the immeasurable deep. Their wide wings need the breadth of the ocean gulf, the spaciousness of desert solitudes. The Atlantic, the Pacific—those vast blue expanses—are their delight. They hasten thither in flocks. Commander Page witnessed, far out at sea, seven waterspouts at once. They roam there, wild and terrible! The eternal flux and reflux is their work. The extent of their power, the limits of their will, no one knows. They are the Sphinxes of the deep: Gama was their Oedipus. In that dark, ever-moving expanse, they appear with faces of cloud. He who perceives their pale lineaments in that wide arena, the horizon of the sea, feels himself in presence of an unsubduable power. It might be imagined that the proximity of human intelligence disquieted them, and that they revolted against it. The mind of man is invincible, but the elements baffle him. He can do nothing against these ubiquitous powers which no one can bind. The gentle breeze becomes a gale, smites with the force of a war-club, and then becomes gentle again. The winds attack with a terrible crash, and defend themselves by relapsing into nothingness. He who would contend with them must use artifice. Their varying tactics, their swift redoubled blows, confuse one. They fly as often as they attack. They are tenacious and impalpable. Who can circumvent them? The prow of the Argo, cut from an

oak of Dodona's grove, that mysterious pilot of the bark, spoke to them, and they insulted that pilot-goddess. Columbus, beholding their approach towards the "Pinta," mounted upon the poop, and addressed them with the first verses of St. John's Gospel. Surcouf defied them: "Here come the gang," he used to say. Napier greeted them with cannon-balls. They assume the dictatorship of chaos.

Chaos is theirs, in which to wreak their mysterious vengeance; the cave of the winds is more appalling than that of lions. How many corpses lie in its deep recesses, where the howling gusts sweep relentlessly over that obscure and ghastly mass! The winds are heard wheresoever they go, but they give ear to none. Their acts resemble crimes. No one knows upon whom they may hurl their hoary surf; with what ferocity they hang over shipwrecks, looking at times as if they flung their impious foam-flakes in the face of heaven. They are the tyrants of unknown regions. "Luoghi spaventosi," murmured the Venetian mariners.

The fields of space are subjected to their fierce assaults. Strange things happen in those lonely regions. Sometimes a horseman rides through the gloom; sometimes the air is full of a faint rustling as in a forest; again nothing is visible, but the tramp of a cavalcade is heard. The noonday is overcast with sudden night: a tornado passes. Or midnight suddenly becomes bright as day: the polar lights are in the heavens. Whirlwinds pass in opposite directions, and in a sort of hideous dance, a stamping of the storm fiends upon the waters. An overburdened cloud opens and falls to earth. Other clouds, filled with lurid light, flash and roar, then frown again ominously. Emptied of their lightnings, they are but as spent brands. Pent-up rains dissolve in mists. Yonder sea looks like a fiery furnace, into which the rains are fall-

ing; flames seem to issue from the waves. The white gleam of the ocean under the shower is reflected to marvellous distances. The different masses transform themselves into uncouth shapes. Monstrous whirlpools make strange hollows in the sky. The vapours revolve, the waves spin, the giddy Naiads roll. The sea, solid and yielding, moves, but does not change place; all is livid; shrieks as of despair resound through the air.

Great sheaves of shadow and darkness are gathered up in the distant sky. Now and then comes a convulsion. The murmur becomes uproar as the wave becomes surge. The horizon, a confused mass of strata oscillating ceaselessly, mutters in a continual undertone. Strange and abrupt outbursts break the monotony. Cold blasts burst forth, followed by hot blasts. The restlessness of the sea betokens anxious expectation, agony, profound terror. Suddenly the hurricane sweeps down, like a wild beast, to drink of the ocean: a monstrous draught! The sea rises to the invisible mouth; a mound of water is formed; the swell increases, and the waterspout appears: the Pres-ter of the ancients, stalactite above, stalagmite below, a whirling double-inverted cone, the kiss of two mountains, — a mountain of foam ascending, a mountain of vapour descending, — terrible coition of the cloud and the wave. Like the column in Holy Writ, the waterspout is dark by day and luminous by night. In its presence the thunder itself is silent and seems cowed.

The vast commotion of these solitudes has its gamut, a terrible crescendo. There are the gust, the squall, the storm, the gale, the tempest, the whirlwind, and the waterspout, — the seven chords of the wind's lyre, the seven notes of the great deep. The heavens are a huge arena; the sea a vast round; but a breath passes, they have vanished, and all is fury and wild confusion.

Such are these inhospitable realms.

The winds rush, fly, swoop down, die away, commence again, hover about, whistle, roar, and smile; they are frenzied, wanton, unbridled, or sink to ease upon the raging waves. Their howlings have a harmony of their own. They make the entire heavens resound. They blow in the cloud as in a trumpet; they sing through infinite space with the mingled tones of clarions, horns, bugles, and trumpets, — a sort of Promethean fanfare.

Such was the music of ancient Pan. Their harmonies are terrible. They revel in darkness. They drive and disperse great ships. Night and day, in all seasons, from the tropics to the pole, there is no truce; sounding their fatal trumpet through the tangled thickets of clouds and waves, they pursue their grim chase of vessels in distress. They have their packs of bloodhounds, and amuse themselves by setting them to barking at the rocks and billows. They drive the clouds together, and then roughly disperse them. They mould and knead the supple waters as with a million hands.

The water is supple because it is incompressible. It slips away without effort. Borne down on one side, it escapes on the other. It is thus that water becomes waves, and the billows are a token of its liberty.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE MYSTERIOUS SOUNDS EXPLAINED.

THE fiercest descent of the winds upon the earth takes place at the equinoxes. At this period the balance of tropic and pole librates, and the vast atmospheric tides pour their flood upon one hemisphere and their ebb upon another. The signs of Libra and Aquarius have reference to these phenomena.

It is the time of tempests.

The sea awaits their coming in silence.

Sometimes the sky looks sickly. Its face is wan. A thick dark veil obscures it. The mariners observe with uneasiness the threatening aspect of the clouds.

But it is its air of calm contentment which they dread most. A smiling sky in the equinoxes is a tempest in disguise. It was under skies like these that "The Tower of Weeping Women," in Amsterdam, was filled with wives and mothers scanning the far horizon.

When the vernal or autumnal storms loiter by the way, they are only gathering strength, hoarding up their fury for greater destruction. Beware of the gale that has been long delayed. It was Ango who said that "the sea pays old debts handsomely."

When the delay is unusually long, the sea reveals her impatience only by a deeper calm; but the magnetic intensity manifests itself in what might be called a fiery humour in the sea. Fire issues from the waves; electric air, phosphoric water. The sailors feel a strange lassi-

tude. This time is particularly dangerous for iron vessels ; their hulls are then liable to produce variations of the compass, leading them to destruction. The transatlantic steam-vessel "Iowa" perished from this cause.

To those who are familiar with the sea, its aspect at these moments is peculiar. It might be imagined to be both desiring and fearing the approach of the cyclone. Certain unions, though strongly urged by Nature, are attended by this strange compound of terror and desire. The lioness in her tenderest moods flies from the lion. Thus the sea, in the fire of her passion, trembles at the near approach of her union with the tempest. The nuptials are prepared. Like the marriages of the ancient emperors, they are celebrated with immolations. The *fête* is seasoned with disasters.

Meanwhile, from yonder deep, from the great open sea, from the unapproachable latitudes, from the lurid horizon of the watery waste, from the furthestmost limits of ocean, the winds rush in.

Beware ! for this is the famous equinox.

The storm plots all sorts of mischief. In ancient mythology these personalities were recognized taking part in this grand drama of Nature. Eolus plotted with Boreas. The alliance of element with element is necessary ; they divide their task. One has to give impetus to the wave, the cloud, the stream : night too is an auxiliary, and must be employed. There are compasses to be falsified, beacons to be extinguished, lanterns of lighthouses to be masked, stars to be hidden. The sea must lend her aid. Every storm is preceded by a murmur. Beyond the horizon there is a premonitory whispering among the hurricanes.

This is the noise which is heard afar off in the darkness amid the terrible silence of the sea.

It was this significant whispering that Gilliatt had

noticed. The phosphorescence on the water had been the first warning; this murmur the second.

If the demon Legion really exists, he is assuredly no other than the wind.

The entire heavens take part in a tempest: the entire ocean also. All their forces are marshalled for the strife. A contest with a storm is a contest with all the powers of sea and sky.

It was Messier, that great authority among naval men, the thoughtful astronomer of the little lodge at Cluny, who said, "The wind from everywhere is everywhere." He had no faith in the idea of winds imprisoned even in inland seas. With him there were no Mediterranean winds; he declared that he recognized them as they wandered about the earth. He declared that on a certain day and at a certain hour, the Föhn of the Lake of Constance, the ancient Favonius of Lucretius, had traversed the sky of Paris; on another day, the Bora of the Adriatic; on another day, the whirling Notus, which is supposed to be confined in the round of the Cyclades. He indicated their currents. He did not think it impossible that even the Autan, which circulates between Malta and Tunis, and the Autan, which circulates between Corsica and the Balearic Isles, could escape their bounds. He did not admit the theory of winds imprisoned like bears in their dens. It was he, too, who said that, "every rain comes from the tropics, and every flash of lightning from the pole." The wind, in fact, becomes saturated with electricity at the intersection of the colures which marks the extremity of the axis, and with water at the equator, thus bringing moisture from the equatorial line and the electric fluid from the poles.

The wind is ubiquitous.

We certainly do not mean by this that wind zones do not exist. Nothing is better established than the exis-



tence of those continuous air currents ; and aërial navigation by means of wind boats, to which the passion for Greek terminology has given the name of "aëroscafes," may one day succeed in utilizing these rivers of air. The regular course of air streams is an incontestable fact. There are rivers of wind and streams of wind and brooks of wind, although their branches are exactly the opposite of water currents ; for in the air the brooks flow out of the streams, and the streams flow out of the rivers instead of flowing into them. Hence, instead of concentration we have dispersion.

The united action of the winds and the unity of the atmosphere is the natural result of this dispersion. The displacement of one molecule produces the displacement of another. The vast body of air becomes subject to one agitation.

To these profound causes of coalition we must add the irregular surface of the earth, whose mountains furrow the atmosphere, contorting and diverting the winds from their course, and determining the directions of counter currents in infinite radiations.

The phenomenon of the wind is the oscillation of two oceans one against the other ; the ocean of air, superimposed upon the ocean of water, rests upon these currents, and is convulsed with this vast agitation.

The indivisible cannot produce separate action. No partition divides wave from wave. The islands of the Channel feel the influence of the Cape of Good Hope. Navigation is everywhere obliged to contend with the same monster ; the sea is one and the same hydra. The waves cover it as with a fish-skin. The ocean is Ceto,

Upon that unity reposes an infinite variety.

## CHAPTER IV.

### TURBA, TURMA.

ACCORDING to the compass there are thirty-two winds. But these may be subdivided indefinitely. Classed by its direction, the wind is incalculable; classed by its kind, it is infinite. Homer himself would have shrunk from the task of enumerating them.

The polar current encounters the tropical current. Heat and cold are thus combined; the equilibrium is disturbed by a shock; a wave of wind issues forth and is distended, scattered, and broken up in every direction in fierce streams. The dispersion of the gusts shakes the streaming locks of the wind upon the four corners of the horizon.

All the winds that blow are there. The wind of the Gulf Stream, which disgorges the great fogs on Newfoundland; the wind of Peru, in the region of silent heavens, where no man ever heard the thunder roar; the wind of Nova Scotia, where flies the great auk (*Alca impennis*) with his furrowed beak; the whirlwinds of Ferro in the China seas; the wind of Mozambique, which destroys the canoes and junks; the electric wind of Japan, foretold by the gong; the African wind, which blows between Table Mountain and the Devil's Peak, where it gains its liberty; the currents of the equator, which pass over the trade winds, describing a parabola, the summit of which is always to the west; the Plutonian wind, which issues from craters and is the terrible

breath of flames; the singular wind peculiar to the volcano Awa, which forms an olive-hued cloud to the northward; the Java monsoon, against which the people construct those casemates known as hurricane houses; the branching north winds called by the English "Bush winds;" the curved squalls of the Straits of Malacca, observed by Horsburgh; the powerful south-west wind, called "pampero" in Chili, and "rebojo" in Buenos Ayres, which carries the great condor out to sea, and saves him from the pit where the Indian, concealed under a newly stripped bullock-hide, watches for him, lying on his back and bending his great bow with his feet; the chemical wind, which, according to Lemery, produces thunderbolts from the clouds; the Harmattan of the Caffres; the Polar snow-driver, which harnesses itself to the everlasting icebergs; the wind of the Gulf of Bengal, which sweeps over a continent to pillage the triangular town of wooden booths at Nijni-Novgorod, in which the great fair of Asia is held; the wind of the Cordilleras, agitator of great waves and forests; the wind of the Australian Archipelago, where the bee-hunters take the wild hives hidden under the forked branches of the giant eucalyptus; the sirocco, the mistral, the hurricane, the dry winds, the inundating and diluvian winds, the torrid winds, which scatter dust from the plains of Brazil upon the streets of Genoa; those which obey the diurnal rotation, those which revolt against it, and of which Herrera said, "*Malo viento torna contra el sol*;" those winds which hunt in couples, conspiring mischief, the one undoing the work of the other; and those old winds which assailed Columbus on the coast of Veragua, and which for forty days, — from the 21st of October to the 28th of November, 1520, — delayed and nearly frustrated Magellan's approach to the Pacific; and those which dismasted the Armada and confounded Philip II. Others, too, there are, of whose

names there is no end. The winds, for instance, which carry showers of frogs and locusts, and drive before them clouds of living things across the ocean; those which blow in what are called "wind-leaps," and whose function is to destroy ships at sea; those which at a single blast throw the cargo out of trim, and compel the vessel to continue her course half broadside over; the winds which construct the circum-cumuli; the winds which mass together the circum-strata; the dark heavy winds bloated with rain; the winds of hailstorms; the fever winds, whose approach sets the salt springs and sulphur springs of Calabria boiling; those which impart a glittering appearance to the fur of African panthers, prowling among the bushes of Cape Ferro; those which come quivering from the cloud, like the tongue of a trigonocephal, the terrible forked lightning; and those which bring whirlwinds of black snow. Such is the legion of winds.

The Douvres rock heard their distant tramp at the very moment that Gilliatt was constructing his break-water.

As we have said, the wind means a combination of all winds. The entire horde was advancing, — on one side, a legion of demons; on the other, Gilliatt.

## CHAPTER V.

### GILLIATT'S ALTERNATIVES.

THE mysterious forces had chosen their time well. Chance, if chance exists, is sometimes far-seeing.

So long as the sloop was anchored in the little creek of "The Man" rock, and so long as the machinery was imprisoned in the wreck, Gilliatt's position was impregnable. The sloop was safe, the machinery sheltered. The Douvres, which held the hull of the *Durande* fast, condemned it to slow destruction, but protected it against unexpected accidents. At all events, one resource had remained to him. If the engine had been destroyed, Gilliatt would have been safe, for he would still have had the sloop with which to make his escape.

But to wait till the sloop was removed from the anchorage where she was so well protected; to allow it to be placed in the defile of the Douvres; to watch until the sloop, too, was entangled in the rocks; to permit him to complete the salvage, the moving, and the final embarkation of the machinery; to inflict no injury upon the wonderful apparatus by which one man was enabled to put the whole aboard his bark; to further, in fact, the success of his exploits so far, — this was only the trap which the elements had laid for him. Now, for the first time, he began to perceive in all its sinister characteristics the trick which the sea had been meditating so long.

The machinery, the sloop, and their master were all within the gorge now. One blow, and the sloop might

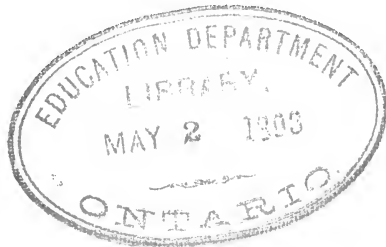
be dashed to pieces on the rock, the machinery destroyed, and Gilliatt drowned.

The situation could not have been more critical.

The Sphinx, which men have pictured as concealing herself in the cloud, seemed to mock him with a dilemma.

“Should he go or stay?”

To go would have been madness; to remain was terrible.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE COMBAT.

**G**ILLIATT climbed to the summit of the Great Douvre.

From there he could command a view of the entire horizon.

The western side was appalling. A wall of cloud spread across it, barring the wide expanse from side to side, and was now ascending slowly from the horizon towards the zenith. This wall, straight, perpendicular, without a single crack or crevice throughout its whole extent, seemed to have been built by the square and measured by the plumb-line. It was cloud in the likeness of granite. Its escarpment, perfectly perpendicular at the southern end, curved a little towards the north, like a bent sheet of iron, presenting the steep slippery face of an inclined plane. The dark wall enlarged and grew; but its entablature remained parallel with the horizon line, which was almost indistinguishable in the gathering darkness. Silently, and in one solid mass, the battlements ascended. No undulation, no wrinkle, no projection changed its shape or relative position in the heavens. The appearance of this slowly ascending immobile mass of cloud was impressive. The sun, overhung by a strange sickly transparent haze, lighted up this outline of the Apocalypse. Already the cloudy bank had blotted out one half the sky. It was like a huge mountain uprising between earth and heaven.

It was night suddenly blotting out midday.

A heat like that from an oven door proceeded from that mysterious mass. The sky, which had changed from blue to white, was now turning from white to a slaty grey. The sea beneath was leaden-hued and dull. There was not a breath, not a wave, not a sound. As far as eye could reach, the ocean was deserted. Not a sail was visible in any direction. The birds had disappeared. Some deed of frightful treachery seemed impending.

The wall of cloud grew visibly larger.

This moving mountain of vapour, which was approaching the Douvres, was one of those clouds which might be justly called war clouds. Grim and sinister of aspect, it seemed to threaten with destruction anything and everything that stood in its way.

Its approach was terrible.

Gilliatt observed it closely, muttering to himself, "I am thirsty enough, but you will give me plenty to drink."

He stood there motionless a few moments, with his eye fixed upon the cloud bank, as if mentally taking a sounding of the tempest.

His cap was in his jacket pocket; he took it out and placed it on his head. Then he fetched from the cave, which had so long served him as a sleeping-room, a few articles which he had kept there in reserve; he put on his overalls, and attired himself in his waterproof overcoat, like a knight who puts on his armour at the moment of battle. He had no shoes; but his naked feet had become hardened to the rocks.

This preparation for the storm being completed, he looked down upon his breakwater, grasped the knotted cord hurriedly, descended from the plateau of the Douvre, stepped on to the rocks below, and hastened to his storehouse. A few minutes later he was again at work. The vast silent cloud might have heard the strokes of his



hammer. With the nails, ropes, and beams which still remained, he constructed a second frame for the eastern gully, which he succeeded in fastening ten or twelve feet from the other.

The silence was still unbroken. The blades of grass between the crevices in the rocks did not move.

The sun suddenly disappeared. Gilliatt looked up.

The rising cloud had just reached it. It was like the blotting out of day, succeeded by a pale hazy reflection.

The immense wall of cloud had changed in appearance. It no longer retained its unity. It curved on reaching the zenith, where it spread out horizontally over the rest of the heavens.

The tempest formation was now distinctly visible, like the strata in the side of a deep trench. It was possible to distinguish the layers of the rain from the beds of hail. There was no lightning, but a horrible, diffused glare,—for the idea of horror may be attached to light. The breathing of the storm was audible; the silence was broken by an obscure palpitation. Gilliatt silently watched the gigantic masses of vapour grouping themselves overhead. On the horizon brooded a band of mist of ashen hue; in the zenith, another band of lead colour. Pale, ragged fragments of cloud drooped from the great mass above upon the mist below. The pile of cloud which formed the background was wan, dull, gloomy, indescribable. A thin, whitish transverse cloud, coming no one could tell whither, cut the high dark wall obliquely from north to south. One of the extremities of this cloud trailed along the surface of the sea. At the point where it touched the water, a dense red vapour was visible in the midst of the darkness. Below it, smaller clouds, quite black and very low, were flying as if bewildered, or as if moved by opposite currents of air. The immense cloud beyond increased from all points at once,

heightened the eclipse, and continued to spread its sombre pall over the firmament. In the east, behind Gilliatt, there was only one clear bit of sky, and that was rapidly becoming overcast. Without a breath of wind in the air, a strange flock of grey downy particles seemed to pass; they were fine and scattered, as if some gigantic bird had been plucked of its plumage behind the bank of cloud. A dark compact roof had gradually formed, which touched the sea on the verge of the horizon, and became merged into it. The beholder had a vague sense of something advancing steadily towards him. It was vast, heavy, ominous. Suddenly an immense peal of thunder shook the air.

Gilliatt himself felt the shock. Thunder belongs to dreamland, and the rude reality in the midst of that visionary region has something terrific in it. The listener might fancy that he hears something falling in the chamber of giants.

No electric flash accompanied the report. It was a blind peal. The silence was profound again. There was an interval, as when combatants take their places. Then appeared slowly, one after the other, great shapless flashes; these flashes were silent. The wall of cloud was now a vast cavern, with fantastic roofs and arches. Outlines of giant forms were traceable among them; monstrous heads were vaguely shadowed forth; necks seemed to stretch out; elephants bearing turrets, seen for a moment, vanished. A column of vapour, straight, round, and dark, and surmounted by a white mist, simulated the form of a colossal steam-vessel ingulfed, hissing, and smoking beneath the waves. Trailing clouds undulated like folds of immense flags. In the centre, under a thick purple pall, a nucleus of dense fog hung motionless, inert, unpenetrated by the electric fires, — a sort of hideous foetus in the bosom of the tempest.

Suddenly Gilliatt felt a breath move his hair. Two or three large spots of rain fell heavily around him on the rock. Then there was a second thunder-clap. The wind was rising.

The darkness was at its height. The first peal of thunder had shaken the sea; the second rent the wall of cloud from top to bottom; a breach was visible; the pent-up deluge rushed towards it; the rent became like a gulf filled with rain. The outpouring of the tempest had begun.

The moment was terrible.

Rain, wind, lightnings, thunder, waves swirling upwards to the clouds, foam, hoarse noises, and whistling sounds mingled together like monsters suddenly unloosed.

For a solitary man, imprisoned with an overloaded vessel, between two dangerous rocks in mid-ocean, no crisis could have been more menacing. The danger of the tide, over which he had triumphed, was nothing compared with the danger of the tempest.

Surrounded on all sides by perils, Gilliatt, at the last moment, and before the crowning peril, resorted to an ingenious stratagem. He had secured his base of operations in the enemies' territory; had pressed the rock into his service. The *Douvres*, originally his enemy, had become his second in the impending duel. Out of that sepulchre he had constructed a fortress. He had intrenched himself among these formidable sea ruins. He was blockaded, but well defended. He had, so to speak, placed his back to the wall, and now stood face to face with the hurricane. He had barricaded the narrow strait, that highway of the waves. This, indeed, was the only possible course. It seemed as if the ocean, like other despots, might be brought to reason by the aid of barricades. The sloop might be considered secure on

three sides. Closely wedged between the two inner walls of the rock, and made fast by three anchors, she was also sheltered on the north by the Little Douvre, and on the south by the Great Douvre, — terrible escarpments, more accustomed to wreck vessels than to save them. On the western side she was protected by the frame of timbers made fast and nailed to the rocks, — a tried barrier which had withstood the rude flood tide of the sea; a veritable citadel-gate, having for its sides two huge columns of rock, — the two Douvres themselves. Nothing was to be feared from that side. It was on the eastern side only that there was danger.

On that side there was no protection but the breakwater. A breakwater is an apparatus for dividing and distributing the waves. It requires at least two frames. Gilliatt had only had time to construct one. He was compelled to build the second in the very face of the tempest.

Fortunately the wind came from the north-west. The wind is not always adroit in its attacks. The north-west wind, which is the ancient "galerno," had very little effect upon the Douvres. It assailed the rocks on their flank, and drove the waves against neither of the two gorges; so that instead of rushing into the defile, they merely dashed themselves against a wall.

It was more than probable that there would be a sudden change, however. If it should veer to the eastward before the second frame could be constructed, the peril would be great. The irruption of the sea into the gorge would be complete, and all would probably be lost.

All the while the storm was increasing in fury. In a tempest, blow hastily follows blow. That is its strength; but it is also its weakness. Its very fury gives human intelligence an opportunity to discover its weak points. Man defends himself, but under what overwhelming difficulties! No respite, no interruption, no truce, no

pause for taking breath. There seems to be unspeakable cowardice in that prodigality of inexhaustible resources.

All the tumult of the wide expanse rushed towards the Douvres. Voices were heard in the darkness. What could they be? At times shouts were heard, as if some one was uttering words of command. There were wild clamours, strange trepidation, and then that majestic roar which mariners call the "cry of ocean." The flying eddies of wind whistled, while curling the waves and flinging them like giant quoits, cast by invisible hands against the rocks. The surf dashed over the rocks. There were torrents above, dashing foam below. Then the roar redoubled. No uproar of men or beasts could give one any idea of the wild din which mingled with the incessant breaking of the surf. The clouds cannonaded, the hailstones poured down in volleys, the surf mounted to the assault. As far as the eye could reach, the sea was white; ten leagues of yeasty water filled the horizon. Doors of fire were opened, clouds seemed burned by clouds, and something like smoke rose above a nebulous red mass, resembling burning embers. Floating conflagrations rushed together and amalgamated, each changing the shape of the other. A huge arsenal seemed to be emptied from the middle of the dark roof, hurling downward pell-mell, waterspouts, hail, torrents, purple fire, phosphoric gleams, darkness, and lightnings.

Meanwhile Gilliatt seemed to pay no attention to the storm. His head was bent over his work. The second frame-work was rapidly nearing completion. To every clap of thunder he replied with a blow of his hammer, making a cadence which was audible even amidst that tumult. He was bareheaded, for a gust of wind had carried away his cap.

He suffered from a burning thirst. Little pools of rain had formed in the rocks around him. From time

to time he took some water in the hollow of his hand and drank. Then, without even looking upward to observe the storm, he applied himself anew to his task.

Everything might depend upon a single moment. He knew the fate that awaited him if his breakwater was not completed in time. What was the use of wasting a moment in watching for the approach of death?

The turmoil around him was like that of a vast bubbling caldron. Crashing and uproar resounded everywhere. Sometimes the lightning seemed to descend a sort of ladder. The electric flame played incessantly on projections of the rock, where there were probably metallic veins. Hailstones of enormous size fell. Gilliatt was compelled to shake the folds of his overcoat, for even the pockets of it became filled with hail.

The storm had now rotated to the west, and was expending its fury upon the barricades of the two Douvres. But Gilliatt had faith in his breakwaters, and with reason. These barricades, made of a large portion of the fore-part of the *Durande*, stood the shock of the waves easily. Elasticity is a powerful resistant. The experiments of Stephenson establish the fact that a raft of timber, joined and chained together in a certain fashion, will form a more powerful obstacle against the waves, which are themselves elastic, than a breakwater of solid masonry. The barriers of the Douvres fulfilled these conditions. They were, moreover, so ingeniously hung that the action of the waves only fastened them more securely to the rocks. To demolish them it would have been necessary to overthrow the Douvres themselves. The surf, in fact, was only able to hurl a few flakes of foam on the sloop. On that side, thanks to the barricade, the tempest had to content itself with harmless insult. Gilliatt turned his back upon the

scene. He heard it vent its futile rage upon the rocks behind him, with the utmost tranquillity of mind.

The angry ocean deluged the rocks, dashed over them, penetrated the net-work of internal fissures, and emerged again from the granitic masses through the narrow chinks, forming a kind of inexhaustible fountain playing peacefully in the midst of the deluge. Here and there a silvery waterfall fell gracefully from these openings into the sea.

The second frame for the eastern barrier was completed. A few more knots of rope and ends of chains and this new rampart would be ready to play its part in barring out the storm.

Suddenly there was a strange brightness; the rain ceased; the clouds rolled asunder; the wind had just shifted; a sort of high, dark window opened in the zenith, and the lightning died out. The end seemed to have come, but it was only the beginning.

The change of wind was from the north-west to the north-east.

The storm was preparing to burst forth again with a new legion of hurricanes. The north was about to mount to the assault. Sailors call this dreaded moment of transition the "return storm." The southern wind brings most rain, the north wind most lightning.

The attack, coming now from the east, was directed against the weak point of the position.

This time Gilliatt paused in his work and looked around him.

He stood erect, upon a projection of rock behind the second barrier, which was now nearly finished. If the first frame was carried away, it would necessarily demolish the second, which was not yet completed, and crush him. Gilliatt, in the place that he had chosen, must in that case be destroyed before seeing the sloop, the machinery, and all his work shattered and swallowed

up in the gulf, — such was the possibility which awaited him. He accepted it unflinchingly.

In the event of the wreck of all his hopes, it would certainly be his desire to die at once, — to die first, as he would have expressed it; for he had come to regard the machinery as a living being. He pushed aside his hair, which had been blown into his eyes by the wind, grasped his trusty mallet, drew himself up in a defiant attitude, and awaited the shock.

He was not kept long in suspense.

A flash of lightning gave the signal; the livid opening in the zenith closed; a fierce torrent of rain fell; then all became dark, save where the lightnings burst forth once more. The attack had recommenced in earnest.

A heavy swell, visible from time to time in the glare of the lightning, was rolling in the east beyond "The Man" rock. It resembled a huge wall of glass. It was green, without a fleck of foam, and stretched across the whole wide expanse. It was fast advancing towards the breakwater, increasing in volume as it approached. It was a strange sort of gigantic cylinder rolling along the ocean. The thunder kept up a continuous rumbling.

The huge wave struck "The Man" rock, broke in twain, and passed on. The broken wave, rejoined, formed a mountain of water, and instead of advancing in a parallel line as before, came down perpendicularly upon the breakwater. It was a wave assuming the form of a beam.

This battering-ram hurled itself upon the breakwater.

The shock was terrific: the whole wave became a roaring avalanche.

It is impossible for those who have not witnessed them to imagine these foaming avalanches which the sea precipitates, and under which it ingulfs for the moment rocks more than a hundred feet in height, — such, for



example, as the Great Anderlo at Guernsey, and the Pinnacle at Jersey. At St. Mary of Madagascar it sometimes passes completely over Tintingue Point.

For several minutes the water covered everything. Nothing was visible except the furious sea, — one vast expanse of foam, white winding-sheet blowing in the draught of a sepulchre; nothing was heard but the roaring storm working devastation around.

When the foam subsided, Gilliatt was still standing at his post.

The barrier had stood firm. Not a chain was broken, not a nail displaced. It had exhibited under the ordeal the two best qualities of a breakwater; it had proved flexible as a wicker hurdle and firm as a wall. The surf falling upon it had dissolved into a shower of spray.

A river of foam rushing along the zig-zags of the defile subsided as it approached the sloop.

The man who had put this curb upon the fury of the ocean took no rest.

The storm fortunately vented its fury elsewhere for a moment. The fierce attack of the waves was renewed upon the wall of rock. There was a respite, and Gilliatt took advantage of it to complete the inner barrier.

The day went down upon his labours. The hurricane continued its assault upon the flank of the rocks with a mournful solemnity. The stores of fire and water in the sky poured forth incessantly without any apparent diminution. The undulations of the wind above and below were like the movements of a dragon.

Nightfall brought no deeper darkness. The change was hardly noticeable, for the darkness was never complete. Tempests, alternately darkening and illumining by their lightnings, are merely intervals of the visible and invisible. One moment all is pale glare, then all is darkness. Spectral shapes suddenly issue forth, and return as suddenly into the gloom.

A phosphoric zone, tinged with the hue of the aurora borealis, rose like ghastly flames from behind the dense clouds, giving everything a wan aspect, and making the rain-drifts luminous.

This uncertain light aided Gilliatt, and directed him in his operations. Once he even turned to the lightning and cried, "Give me a light!" By its glare he was able to raise the forward barrier. The breakwater was now almost complete. As he was engaged in making a powerful cable fast to the last beam, the wind struck him full in the face. This fact caused him to raise his head. The wind had shifted abruptly to the north-east. The assault upon the eastern end of the gorge had begun again. Gilliatt cast his eyes over the horizon. Another great wall of water was approaching.

The wave broke with a great shock; a second followed; then another and still another; then five or six almost together; then a last shock of tremendous force.

This last wave, which was an accumulation of many waves, bore a singular resemblance to a living thing. It would not have been difficult to imagine in the midst of that swelling mass the shapes of fins and gills. It fell heavily and broke upon the barriers. Its almost animal form was shattered in the recoil. It looked as if some immense sea-monster were being crushed to death upon that block of rocks and timbers. The swell rushed through, subsiding but devastating as it went. The huge wave seemed to bite and cling to its victim as it died. The rock shook to its base. A savage howling mingled with the roar; the foam flew high in the air like the spouting of a leviathan.

The subsidence showed the extent of the surf's ravages. This last assault had not been altogether ineffectual. The breakwater had suffered considerably this time. A long and heavy beam, torn from the first barrier, had been swept over the second, and hurled violently upon the

projecting rock on which Gilliatt had been standing only a moment before. Fortunately he had not returned there. Had he done so, his death would have been inevitable.

There was a remarkable circumstance connected with the fall of this beam, which by preventing the timber from rebounding, saved Gilliatt from even greater dangers. It even proved useful to him, as will be seen, in another way.

Between the projecting rock and the inner wall of the gorge there was an opening something like the notch made by an axe, or wedge. One of the ends of the timber hurled into the air by the waves had stuck fast in this notch in falling. The gap had become enlarged.

Gilliatt was struck with an idea. It was that of bearing heavily on the other extremity.

The beam caught by one end in the nook, which it had widened, projected from it as straight as an outstretched arm. This arm was parallel with the anterior wall of the defile, and the disengaged end extended about eighteen or twenty inches beyond the point of support.

Gilliatt raised himself by means of his hands, feet, and knees to the escarpment, and then turning his back upon it pressed both his shoulders against the enormous lever. The beam was long, which increased its power. The rock was already loosened; but he was compelled to renew his efforts again and again. Great drops of sweat streamed from his forehead. The fourth attempt exhausted all his strength. There was a cracking noise; the gap spreading in the shape of a fissure, opened its vast jaws, and the heavy mass fell into the narrow space below with a sound like the reverberation of the distant thunder.

The mass fell straight, and without breaking, resting in its bed like a menhir precipitated intact.

The beam which had served as a lever went down with the rock, and Gilliatt, staggering forward as it gave way, narrowly escaped falling.

The bed of the pass at this part was full of huge round stones, and there was very little water. The monolith lying in the boiling foam, the flakes of which reached Gilliatt where he stood, stretched from side to side of the great parallel rocks of the defile, and formed a transversal wall, a sort of bridge between the two escarpments. Its two ends touched the rocks. It had been a little too long to lie flat, but its summit of soft rock was shattered by the fall. The result of this fall was a singular sort of *cul-de-sac*, which may still be seen. The water behind this stony barrier is almost always tranquil.

This was an even more invincible rampart than the forward timbers of the *Durande* fastened between the two *Douvres*.

The addition of this new barrier proved most opportune.

The assaults of the sea continued. The obstinacy of the waves is always increased by an obstacle. The first frame began to show signs of breaking up. One breach, however small, in a breakwater, is always serious. It inevitably enlarges; and there is no way of repairing it, for the sea would sweep away the workmen.

A flash which lighted up the rocks revealed to Gilliatt the nature of the mischief,—the beams broken down, the ends of rope and fragments of chain swinging in the winds, and a rent in the centre of the apparatus. The second frame was intact.

Though the block of stone overturned by Gilliatt in the gorge behind the breakwater was the strongest possible barrier, it had one defect. It was too low. The surge could not destroy, but might sweep over it.

It was useless to think of building it higher. Nothing but masses of rock would be of any service upon a stone

barrier ; but how could such masses be detached ; or, if detached, how could they be moved, or raised, or piled, or fixed ? Timbers may be added, but rocks cannot.

Gilliatt was not Enceladus.

The extremely limited height of this rocky isthmus rendered him anxious.

The effects of this fault were not long in showing themselves. The assaults upon the breakwater were incessant ; the heavy seas seemed not merely to rage, but to attack with a firm determination to destroy it. A sort of trampling noise was heard upon the jolted frame-work.

Suddenly the end of a binding strake, detached from the dislocated frame, was swept over the second barrier and across the transversal rock, falling in the gorge, where the water seized and carried it into the sinuosities of the pass. Gilliatt lost sight of it. It seemed probable that it would do some injury to the sloop. Fortunately the water in the passage, being shut in on all sides, was very little affected by the commotion without. The waves there were comparatively small, and the shock was not likely to be very severe. Besides, he had very little time to spare for reflection upon this mishap. Every variety of danger was threatening him at once ; the tempest was concentrated upon the most vulnerable point ; destruction was imminent.

The darkness was profound for a moment : the lightning ceased, — a bit of sinister connivance. The cloud and the sea became one ; there was a dull peal of thunder.

This was followed by a terrible outburst.

The frame which formed the front of the barriers was swept away. The fragments of beams were visible in the rolling waters. The sea was using the first breakwater as an engine for making a breach in the second.

Gilliatt experienced the feeling of a general who sees his advance guard driven in.

The second construction of beams resisted the shock. The apparatus was powerfully secured and buttressed. But the broken frame was heavy, and was completely at the mercy of the waves, which were incessantly hurling it forward and withdrawing it. The ropes and chains which remained unsevered prevented it from breaking up entirely, and the substantial qualities with which Gilliatt had endowed it made it all the more effective as a weapon of destruction. Instead of a buckler, it had become a mace. Besides this, it was now full of irregularities, bits of timbers projected on every side; and it was, as it were, covered with teeth and spikes. No sort of weapon could have been more effective, or better fitted for the handling of the tempest.

It was the projectile, while the sea played the part of the catapult.

The blows succeeded each other with dismal regularity. Gilliatt, standing thoughtful and anxious behind that barricaded portal, listened to death knocking loudly for admittance.

He reflected with bitterness that, but for the fatal entanglement of the funnel of the *Durande* in the wreck, he would have been at that very moment safe in port in Guernsey, with the sloop out of danger and the machinery saved.

The dreaded moment arrived. The destruction was complete. There was a sound like a death-rattle. The entire frame of the breakwater, both barriers, crushed and mingled inextricably, came rushing like chaos upon a mountain upon the stone barricade, where it stopped. Here the fragments lay together, — a mass of beams penetrable by the waves, but still breaking their force. The conquered barrier struggled nobly against destruc-

tion. The waves had shattered it, and in their turn were shattered against it. Though overthrown, it still remained tolerably effective. The rock which barred its passage, an immovable obstacle, held it fast. The passage, as we have said before, was very narrow at the point where the victorious whirlwind had driven and piled up the shattered breakwater. The very violence of the assault, by heaping up the mass and driving the broken ends one within the other, had helped to make the pile firm. It was destroyed, but immovable. Only a few pieces of timber had been swept away and dispersed by the waves. One passed through the air very near to Gilliatt. He felt the counter current upon his forehead.

Some of the immense waves which rise in great tempests with imperturbable regularity, swept over the ruins of the breakwater. They rushed into the gorge, and in spite of the many angles in the passage, set the waters in commotion. The waves began to roll ominously through the gorge.

Was there any means of preventing this agitation from extending as far as the sloop? It would not require long for the blasts of wind to create a tempest through all the windings of the pass. A few heavy seas would be sufficient to stave in the sloop and scatter her burden.

Gilliatt shuddered at the thought.

But he was not disconcerted. No peril could daunt his soul.

The hurricane had now discovered the best plan of attack, and was rushing fiercely between the two walls of the strait.

Suddenly a crash was heard, resounding and prolonging itself through the defile some distance behind him, — a crash more terrible than any he had yet heard.

It came from the direction of the sloop.  
Something disastrous was happening there.  
Gilliatt hastened towards it.

He could not see the sloop from where he was standing on account of the sharp turns in the pass. At the last turn he stopped and waited for the lightning.

The first flash revealed the state of affairs.

The rush of the sea through the eastern entrance had encountered a blast of wind from the other end. A disaster was imminent.

The sloop had received no apparent damage; anchored as she was, the storm had little power over her, but the remains of the *Durande* were in jeopardy.

The wreck presented considerable surface to the storm, while the breach which Gilliatt had made, and through which the machinery had been removed, rendered the hull still weaker. The keelson was cut, the vertebral column of the skeleton was broken.

The hurricane came down upon it.

This was all that was needed to complete its destruction. The planking of the deck bent like an open book. The dismemberment had begun. It was this noise which had reached Gilliatt's ears in the midst of the tempest.

The disaster which presented itself as he approached seemed almost irremediable.

The square opening which he had cut in the keel had become a gaping wound. The wind had converted the smooth-cut hole into a ragged fracture. This transverse breach separated the wreck in two parts. The after-part, nearest to the sloop, remained firmly wedged in its bed of rocks. The forward portion, which faced him, was hanging. A fracture, while it holds, is a sort of hinge. The whole mass oscillated with a doleful sound, as the wind moved it. Fortunately the sloop was no longer under it.



But this swinging movement shook the other portion of the hull, still wedged and immovable as it was between the two Douvres. From shaking to loosening completely is but a step. Under the fierce assaults of the gale, the dislocated part might suddenly carry away the other portion, which almost touched the sloop. In that case, the whole wreck, together with the sloop and the engine, would be swept into the sea and swallowed up.

This catastrophe seemed almost inevitable.

Could it be prevented, and how?

Gilliatt was one of those who are accustomed to snatch the means of safety out of danger itself. He set his wits to work for a moment.

Then he hastened to his arsenal and brought his axe.

The mallet had served him well. It was now the axe's turn.

He climbed upon the wreck, got a footing on that part of the flooring which had not given way, and leaning over the gorge between the Douvres, he began to cut away the broken joists and planking which supported the hanging portion of the hull.

His object was to effect the separation of the two parts of the wreck, to disencumber the half which remained firm, to throw overboard what the waves had seized, and thus divide the prey with the storm. The hanging portion of the wreck, borne down by the wind and by its own weight, adhered at only one or two points. The entire wreck resembled a folding-screen, one leaf of which, half hanging, beat against the other. Only five or six pieces of flooring, bent and cracked, but not broken, still held. Their fractures creaked and enlarged at every gust, and the axe, so to speak, had merely to assist the gale in its work. This more than half-severed condition,

while it increased the facility of the work, also rendered it much more dangerous. The whole might give way under him at any moment.

The tempest had reached its height. The convulsions of the sea extended to the heavens. Hitherto the storm had been supreme; it had seemed to work its own imperious will, to give the impulse, to drive the waves to frenzy, while still preserving a sort of grim composure. Below was fury; above, anger. The heavens are the breath, the ocean only the foam, hence the supremacy of the wind. But the intoxication of its own power had confused it. It had become a mere whirlwind; it was a blindness bordering on madness. There are times when tempests become frenzied, when the heavens are seized with a sort of delirium, when the firmament raves and hurls its lightnings blindly. Nothing could be more appalling. It is a frightful moment. The trembling of the rock was at its height. Every storm has its mysterious course; but at such times it loses its way. It is the most dangerous moment of the tempest. "At such times," says Thomas Fuller, "the wind becomes a furious maniac." It is at this period that that continuous discharge of electricity takes place which Piddington calls "the cascade of lightning." It is at this time, too, that in the blackest spot in the clouds, no one knows why, unless it be to observe the universal terror, a circle of blue light appears, which the Spanish sailors of ancient times called the eye of the tempest, — "el ojo de la tempestad." That terrible eye now looked down on Gilliatt.

Gilliatt was surveying the heavens in his turn. He raised his head defiantly now. After every stroke of his axe he stood erect and gazed upwards, almost haughtily. He was, or seemed to be, too near destruction not to feel self-sustained. Would he yield to despair? No! In the presence of the wildest fury of

ocean he was watchful as well as bold. He planted his feet only where the wreck was firm. He ventured his life, and yet was careful; for his determination, too, had reached its highest point. His strength had grown tenfold greater. He had become excited by his own intrepidity. The strokes of his axe were like blows of defiance. He seemed to have gained in directness what the tempest had lost. A pathetic struggle! On the one hand an indefatigable will; on the other, inexhaustible power. It was a contest with the elements for the prize at his feet. The clouds took the shape of Gorgon masks in the immensity of the heavens; every possible form of terror appeared; the rain came from the sea, the surf from the cloud; phantoms of the wind bent down; meteoric faces revealed themselves and were again eclipsed, leaving the darkness still more intense; then nothing was visible but the torrents raging on all sides,—a boiling sea; cumuli heavy with hail, ashen-hued, ragged-edged, seemed seized with a sort of whirling frenzy; strange rattlings filled the air; the inverse currents of electricity observed by Volta darted their sudden flashes from cloud to cloud. The prolongation of the lightning was terrible; the flashes passed close to Gilliatt. The very ocean seemed appalled. Gilliatt moved to and fro on the tottering wreck, though the deck trembled under his feet, striking, cutting, hacking with the axe in his hand, his features pallid in the gleam of the lightning, his long hair streaming, his feet naked, his face covered with the foam of the sea, but still grand amid the wild tumult of the storm.

Against the fury of the elements man has no weapon but his own powers of invention. Gilliatt owed his eventual triumph to his ingenuity. His object was to make all the dislocated portions of the wreck fall together. For this reason he cut away the broken portions

without entirely separating them, leaving some parts on which they still swung. Suddenly he stopped, holding his axe in the air. The operation was complete. The entire dislocated portion fell with a crash.

The mass rolled down between the two Douvres, just below Gilliatt, who stood upon the wreck, leaning over and watching the fall. It fell perpendicularly into the water, struck the rocks, and stopped in the defile before it touched the bottom. Enough remained out of the water to project more than twelve feet above the waves. The vertical mass formed a wall between the two Douvres. Like the rock overturned crosswise higher up the defile, it allowed only a slight stream of foam to pass through at its two extremities, and thus a fifth barricade against the tempest was improvised by Gilliatt.

The hurricane itself, in its blind fury, had assisted in the construction of this last barrier.

It was fortunate that the close proximity of the two walls had prevented the mass of wreck from falling to the bottom. This circumstance gave the barricade greater height; the water, besides, could flow under the obstacle, which diminished the power of the waves. That which passes below does not leap over. This is in part the secret of the floating breakwater.

Henceforth, let the storm rage as it would, there was nothing to fear for the sloop or the machinery. The water around them could not become much agitated again. Between the barrier of the Douvres, which covered them on the west, and the barricade which protected them from the east, no heavy sea or wind could reach them.

Gilliatt had wrested success out of the very catastrophe itself. The storm had been his co-labourer in the work.

This done, he took a little water in the palm of his

hand from one of the rain-pools, and drank; and then, looking upward at the storm, said with a smile, "Bungler!"

Human intelligence combating with brute force experiences an ironical joy in demonstrating the stupidity of its antagonist, and in compelling it to aid the very victims of its fury, and Gilliatt felt something of that memorable desire to insult his invisible enemy which is as old as the heroes of the Iliad.

He descended to the sloop and examined it by the glare of the lightning. The relief which he had been able to afford his distressed bark was well-timed. She had been much shaken during the last hour, and had begun to give way. A hasty glance revealed no serious injury. Nevertheless, he was certain that the vessel had been subjected to a violent strain. As soon as the waves subsided, the hull had righted itself; the anchors had held fast; as for the machinery, the four chains had supported it admirably.

While Gilliatt was completing this survey, something white passed before his eyes and vanished in the gloom. It was a sea-mew.

No sight is more welcome in tempestuous weather. When the birds reappear, the storm is departing.

The thunder re-doubled, — another good sign.

The violent efforts of the storm had broken its force. All mariners know that the last ordeal is severe, but short. A marked increase of violence in a thunder-storm is a forerunner of the end.

The rain stopped suddenly. Then there was only a surly rumbling in the heavens. The storm ceased with the suddenness of a plank falling to the ground. The immense mass of clouds became disorganized.

A strip of clear sky appeared between them. Gilliatt was astonished; it was broad daylight.

The tempest had lasted nearly twenty hours.

The wind which had brought the storm carried it away; the broken clouds were soon flying in confusion across the sky. From one end of the line to the other, there was a retreating movement; a dull muttering was heard. This gradually became fainter and fainter; a few last drops of rain fell, then all those dark masses of cloud charged with thunder departed like a multitude of chariots.

Suddenly the wide expanse of sky became blue.

Then, for the first time, Gilliatt discovered that he was terribly weary. Sleep swoops down upon the exhausted frame like a bird upon its prey. Sinking down on the deck of the sloop, he fell into a heavy slumber.

Stretched out at full length, he remained there perfectly motionless for several hours, scarcely distinguishable from the joists and beams among which he lay.

## BOOK IV.

### PIT-FALLS IN THE WAY.

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#### CHAPTER I.

HE WHO IS HUNGRY IS NOT ALONE.

WHEN he awoke he was very hungry.

The sea was growing calmer. But there was still a heavy swell, which made his departure impossible, — at least, for the present. The day, too, was far advanced. For the sloop with its burden to reach Guernsey before midnight, it would be necessary to start in the morning.

Although sorely pressed by hunger, Gilliatt began by stripping himself, — the only means of getting warm. His clothes were saturated, but the rain had washed out the sea-water, which made it possible to dry them.

He kept on nothing but his trousers, which he rolled up nearly to his knees.

His overcoat, jacket, overalls, and sheepskin he spread out and fastened down with large round stones here and there.

Then he thought of eating.

He had recourse to his knife, which he was careful to keep always in a good condition, and detached from the rocks a few limpets, similar in kind to the *clonisses* of the Mediterranean. It is a well-known fact that these can

be eaten raw : but after such arduous and prolonged toil, the ration was but a meagre one. His biscuit was gone ; but he now had an abundance of water.

He took advantage of the receding tide to wander over the rocks in search of crayfish. There was enough rock exposed now for him to feel tolerably sure of success.

But he had forgotten that he could do nothing with these without fire to cook them. If he had taken the trouble to go to his storehouse, he would have found it inundated. His wood and coal were drenched, and of his store of tow, which served him for tinder, there was not a fibre which was not saturated. No means of lighting a fire remained.

His blower, too, was completely ruined. The screen of the hearth of his forge was broken down ; the storm had sacked and devastated his workshop. With the tools and apparatus which had escaped the general wreck, he might still have done a little carpentry work ; but he could not have accomplished any of the labours of the smith. Gilliatt, however, never thought of his workshop for a moment.

Drawn in another direction by the pangs of hunger, he pursued his search for food without much reflection. He wandered, not in the gorge, but outside among the smaller rocks where the Durande, ten weeks before, had first struck upon the sunken reef.

For the search that Gilliatt was prosecuting, this part was more favourable than the interior. At low water the crabs are accustomed to crawl out into the air. They seem to like to warm themselves in the sun, where they swarm sometimes to the disgust of loiterers, who see in these creatures, with their awkward sidelong gait, climbing clumsily from crack to crack upon the rocks, a species of sea vermin.



For two months Gilliatt had lived almost entirely upon these creatures.

This time, however, the crayfish and crabs were both wanting. The tempest had driven them into their solitary retreats, and they had not yet mustered up courage to venture abroad. Gilliatt held his open knife in his hand, and from time to time scraped a cockle from under the bunches of seaweed, which he ate as he walked on.

He could not have been far from the very spot where Sieur Clubin had perished.

As Gilliatt was trying to make up his mind to be content with the sea-urchins and the *châtaignes de mer*, a little clattering noise at his feet aroused his attention. A large crab, startled by his approach, had just dropped into a pool. The water was shallow, and he did not lose sight of it.

He chased the crab along the base of the rock; but the crab moved fast, and at last it suddenly disappeared.

It had buried itself in some crevice under the rock.

Gilliatt clutched the projections of the rock, and leaned over to look where it shelved away under the water.

As he suspected, there was an opening in which the creature had evidently taken refuge. It was more than a crevice; it was a kind of porch.

The water beneath it was not deep, and the bottom, covered with large pebbles, was plainly visible. The stones were green and clothed with *confervæ*, indicating that they were never dry. They looked like the tops of a number of infants' heads, covered with a kind of green hair.

Holding his knife between his teeth, Gilliatt descended, by the aid of his feet and hands, from the upper part of the escarpment, and leaped into the water. It reached almost to his shoulders.

He made his way through the porch, and found himself in a blind passage, with a roof shaped like a rude

arch over his head. The walls were polished and slippery. The crab was nowhere visible.

As Gilliatt advanced the light grew fainter, so that he began to lose the power to distinguish objects.

When he had gone about fifteen yards the vaulted roof overhead ended. He had penetrated beyond the low passage. There was more space here, and consequently more daylight. The pupils of his eyes, moreover, had dilated, and he could see pretty clearly. The discovery he made amazed him.

He had found his way again into the singular cavern which he had visited the month before.

The only difference was that he had entered by way of the sea.

It was through the submarine arch, that he had remarked before, that he had just entered. At certain low tides it was accessible.

His eyes became more accustomed to the place. His vision became clearer and clearer. He was astonished. He found himself again in that extraordinary palace of shadows; saw again before his eyes the vaulted roof, those fantastic columns, those purple, blood-like stains, the vegetation rich with gems, and at the farther end, the crypt or sanctuary, and that huge stone which so resembled an altar.

He took little notice of these details, but they were so strongly impressed upon his mind that he saw that the place was unchanged.

He observed before him, at a considerable height in the wall, the crevice through which he had penetrated the first time, and which, from the point where he now stood, seemed inaccessible.

Nearer the moulded arch, he noticed those low, dark grottoes, those caves within caves, which he had already observed from a distance. He was now much nearer to

them. The entrance to the nearest was out of the water, and easily approached.

Nearer still than this recess he noticed, above the level of the water, and within reach of his hand, a horizontal fissure. It seemed to him probable that the crab had taken refuge there, and he plunged his hand in as far as he was able, and groped about in that dusky aperture.

Suddenly he felt himself seized by the arm. A strange, indescribable horror thrilled him.

Some living thing, thin, rough, flat, cold, and slimy had twisted itself round his naked arm, in the dark depth below. It crept upward towards his chest. Its pressure was like a tightening cord, its steady persistence like that of a screw. In another instant the same mysterious spiral form had wound around his wrist and elbow, and had reached his shoulder. A sharp point penetrated beneath the armpit.

Gilliatt recoiled, but he had scarcely power to move! He was, as it were, nailed to the place. With his left hand, which was disengaged, he seized his knife, which he still held between his teeth, and with that hand gripping the knife, he supported himself against the rocks, while he made a desperate effort to withdraw his arm; but he only succeeded in disturbing his persecutor, which wound itself still tighter. It was supple as leather, strong as steel, cold as night.

A second form, sharp, elongated, and narrow, issued from the crevice like a tongue out of monstrous jaws.

It seemed to lick his naked body; then suddenly stretching out, it became longer and thinner, as it crept over his skin, and wound itself around him. At the same time a terrible sensation of pain, utterly unlike any he had ever known, made all his muscles contract. It seemed as if innumerable suckers had fastened themselves in his flesh and were about to drink his blood.

A third long undulating shape issued from the hole in the rock, seemed to feel its way around his body to lash itself around his ribs like a cord, and fix itself there.

Intense agony is dumb. Gilliatt uttered no cry. There was sufficient light for him to see the repulsive forms which had wound themselves about him.

A fourth ligature, — but this one swift as an arrow, — darted towards his stomach, and wound around him there.

It was impossible to sever or tear away the slimy bands which were twisted tightly around his body, and which were adhering to it at a number of points. Each of these points was the focus of frightful and singular pangs. It seemed as if innumerable small mouths were devouring him at the same time.

A fifth long, slimy, ribbon-shaped strip issued from the hole. It passed over the others, and wound itself tightly around his chest. The compression increased his sufferings. He could scarcely breathe.

These living thongs were pointed at their extremities, but broadened like the blade of a sword towards its hilt. All five evidently belonged to the same centre. They crept and glided about him; he felt the strange points of pressure, which seemed to him like so many mouths, change their position from time to time.

Suddenly a large, round, flattened, glutinous mass issued from beneath the crevice. It was the centre; the five thongs were attached to it like spokes to the hub of a wheel. On the opposite side of this disgusting monster appeared the beginning of three other similar tentacles, the ends of which remained under the rock. In the middle of this slimy mass were two eyes.

These eyes were fixed on Gilliatt.

He recognized the Devil Fish.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE MONSTER.

**I**T is difficult for those who have not seen it to believe in the existence of the devil-fish.

Compared with this creature, the ancient hydras are insignificant.

At times we are tempted to imagine that the shadowy forms which haunt our dreams may encounter in the realm of the Possible attractive forces which have the power to create living beings out of these visions of our slumbers. The Unknown is cognizant of these strange visions, and concocts monsters out of them.

Orpheus, Homer, and Hesiod created only fabulous monsters. Providence created the devil-fish.

When God chooses, he excels in creating what is execrable. The wherefore of this perplexes and affrights the devout thinker.

If terror were the object of its creation, nothing more perfect than the devil-fish could be imagined.

The whale is enormous in bulk, the devil-fish is comparatively small; the jararaca makes a hissing noise, the devil-fish is mute; the rhinoceros has a horn, the devil-fish has none; the scorpion has a dart, the devil-fish has no dart; the shark has sharp fins, the devil-fish has no fins; the vesperilio-bat has wings with claws, the devil-fish has no wings; the porcupine has his spines, the devil-fish has no spines; the sword-fish has his sword, the devil-fish has none; the torpedo has its electric spark, the devil-fish has none; the toad has its poison, the devil-

fish has none ; the viper has its venom, the devil-fish has no venom ; the lion has its claws, the devil-fish has no claws ; the griffon has its beak, the devil-fish has no beak ; the crocodile has its jaws, the devil-fish has no jaws.

The devil-fish has no muscular organization, no menacing cry, no breastplate, no horn, no dart, no claw, no tail with which to hold or bruise ; no cutting fins, or wings with nails, no prickles, no sword, no electric discharge, no poison, no claws, no beak, no jaws. Yet he is of all creatures the most formidably armed.

What, then, is the devil-fish ? It is a huge cupping-glass.

The swimmer who, attracted by the beauty of the spot, ventures among reefs far out at sea, where still waters hide the wonders of the deep, or in the hollows of unfrequented rocks, or in unknown caverns abounding in marine plants, testacea, and crustacea, under the deep portals of the ocean, runs the risk of meeting it. If that fate should be yours, be not curious, but fly. The intruder enters there dazzled, but quits the spot in terror.

This frightful monster which is so often encountered amid the rocks in the open sea, is of a greyish colour, about five feet long, and about the thickness of a man's arm. It is ragged in outline, and in shape strongly resembles a closed umbrella, without a handle. This irregular mass advances slowly towards you. Suddenly it opens, and eight radii issue abruptly from around a face with two eyes. These radii are alive ; their undulation is like lambent flames ; they resemble, when opened, the spokes of a wheel measuring four or five feet in diameter.

This monster winds itself around its victim, covering and entangling him in its long folds. Underneath it is yellow ; above, it is of a dull greyish hue. It is spider-

like in form, but its tints are those of the chameleon. When irritated it becomes violent. Its most horrible characteristic is its softness.

Its folds strangle; its contact paralyzes.

It has the aspect of gangrened or scabrous flesh. It is a monstrous embodiment of disease.

It clings closely to its prey, and cannot be torn away, — a fact which is due to its power of exhausting air. The eight antennæ, large at their roots, diminish gradually, and end in needle-like points. Underneath each of these feelers are two rows of suckers, decreasing in size, the largest ones near the head, the smallest at the extremities. Each row contains twenty-five of these. There are, therefore, fifty suckers to each feeler, and the creature possesses four hundred in all. These suckers act like cupping-glasses.

They are cartilaginous substances, cylindrical, horny, and livid. Upon the large species they diminish gradually from the diameter of a five-franc piece to the size of a split pea. These small tubes can be thrust out and withdrawn by the animal at will. They are capable of piercing to a depth of more than an inch.

This sucking apparatus has all the regularity and delicacy of a key-board. It projects one moment and disappears the next. The most perfect sensitiveness cannot equal the contractibility of these suckers; always proportioned to the internal movement of the animal, and its exterior circumstances. The monster is endowed with the qualities of the sensitive plant.

This animal is the same as those which mariners call poulps; which science designates cephalopods, and which ancient legends call krakens. It is the English sailors who call them "devil-fish," and sometimes bloodsuckers. In the Channel Islands they are called *pieuvres*.

They are rare in Guernsey, and very small in Jersey;

but near the island of Sark they are numerous as well as very large.

An engraving in Sonnini's edition of Buffon represents a cephalopod crushing a frigate. Denis Montfort, in fact, considers the polypus, or octopod, of high latitudes, strong enough to destroy a ship. Bory Saint Vincent doubts this; but he shows that in our latitude they will attack men. Near Brecq-Hou, in Sark, they show a cave where a devil-fish seized and drowned a lobster-man a few years ago. Péron and Lamarck are mistaken in their belief that the polypus having no fins cannot swim. The writer of these lines once saw with his own eyes a *pieuvre* pursuing a bather among the rocks called the Boutiques, in Sark. When captured and killed, this specimen was found to be four English feet broad, and it possessed four hundred suckers. The monster thrust them out convulsively in the agony of death.

According to Denis Montfort, one of those observers whose marvellous intuition degrades or elevates them to the level of magicians, the polypus is almost endowed with the passions of man: it has its hatreds. In fact, in the animal world to be hideous is to hate.

Hideousness has to contend against the natural law of elimination, which necessarily renders it hostile.

While swimming, the devil-fish remains, so to speak, in its sheath. It swims with all its parts drawn close together. It might be likened to a sleeve sewed up with a closed fist within. This protuberance, which is the head, pushes the water aside and advances with an undulatory movement. The two eyes, though large, are indistinct, being the colour of the water.

When it is lying in ambush, or seeking its prey, it retires into itself as it were, becomes smaller and condenses itself. It is then scarcely distinguishable in the



dim, submarine light. It looks like a mere ripple in the water. It resembles anything except a living creature.

The devil-fish is crafty. When one is least expecting it, it suddenly opens.

A glutinous mass, endowed with a malevolent will, what could be more horrible.

It is in the most beautiful azure depths of limpid water that this hideous, voracious sea-monster delights.

It always conceals itself, — a fact which increases its terrible associations. When they are seen, it is almost invariably after they have captured their victim.

At night, however, and particularly in the breeding season, it becomes phosphorescent. These horrible creatures have their passions, their submarine nuptials. Then it adorns itself, glows, and illumines; and from some rock it can sometimes be discerned in the deep obscurity of the waves below, expanding with a pale irradiation, — a spectral sun.

The devil-fish not only swims, but crawls. It is part fish, part reptile. It crawls upon the bed of the sea. At such times, it makes use of its eight feelers, and creeps along after the fashion of a swiftly moving caterpillar.

It has no blood, no bones, no flesh. It is soft and flabby; a skin with nothing inside. Its eight tentacles may be turned inside out like the fingers of a glove.

It has a single orifice in the centre of its radii, which appears at first to be neither the vent nor the mouth. It is in fact both. The orifice performs a double function.

The entire creature is cold.

The jelly-fish of the Mediterranean is repulsive. Contact with that animated gelatinous substance, in which the hands sink, and at which the nails tear ineffectually; which can be rent in twain without killing it, and which can be plucked off without entirely removing it, that soft and yet tenacious creature which slips

through the fingers, — is disgusting ; but no horror can equal the sudden apparition of the devil-fish, that Medusa with its eight serpents.

No grasp is like the sudden strain of the cephalopod.

It is with the sucking apparatus that it attacks. The victim is oppressed by a vacuum drawing at numberless points ; it is not a clawing or a biting, but an indescribable scarification. A tearing of the flesh is terrible, but less terrible than a sucking of the blood. Claws are harmless in comparison with the terrible action of these natural cupping-glasses. The claws of the wild beast enter your flesh ; but with the cephalopod, it is you who enter the creature that attacks you.

The muscles swell, the fibres of the body are contorted, the skin cracks under the loathsome oppression, the blood spurts out and mingles horribly with the lymph of the monster, which clings to its victim by innumerable hideous mouths. The hydra incorporates itself with the man ; the man becomes one with the hydra. The spectre lies upon you : the tiger can only devour you ; the horrible devil-fish sucks your life-blood away. He draws you to and into himself ; while bound down, glued fast, powerless, you feel yourself gradually emptied into this horrible pouch, which is the monster itself.

To be eaten alive is terrible ; to be absorbed alive is horrible beyond expression.

Science, in accordance with its usual excessive caution, even in the face of facts at first rejects these strange animals as fabulous ; then she decides to observe them ; then she dissects, classifies, catalogues, and labels them ; then procures specimens, and exhibits them in glass cases in museums. They enter then into her nomenclature ; are designated mollusks, invertebrata, radiata : she determines their position in the animal world a little above the calamaries, a little below the cuttle-fish ; she finds

an analogous creature for these hydras of the sea in fresh water called the argyronectes: she divides them into large, medium, and small kinds; she more readily admits the existence of the small than of the large species, which is, however, the tendency of science in all countries, for she is rather microscopic than telescopic by nature. Classifying them according to their formation, she calls them cephalopods; then counts their antennæ, and calls them octopods. This done, she leaves them. Where science drops them, philosophy takes them up.

Philosophy, in her turn, studies these creatures. She goes farther and yet not so far. She does not dissect, she meditates. Where the scalpel has laboured, she plunges the hypothesis. She seeks the final cause. Eternal perplexity of the thinker. These creatures disturb his ideas of the Creator. They are hideous surprises. They are the death's-head at the feast of contemplation. The philosopher determines their characteristics in dread. They are the concrete forms of evil. What attitude can he assume in regard to this treachery of creation against herself? To whom can he look for the solution of this enigma?

The Possible is a terrible matrix. Monsters are mysteries in a concrete form. Portions of shade issue from the mass, and something within detaches itself, rolls, floats, condenses, borrows elements from the ambient darkness, becomes subject to unknown polarizations, assumes a kind of life, furnishes itself with some unimagined form from the obscurity, and with some terrible spirit from the miasma, and wanders ghostlike among living things. It is as if night itself assumed the forms of animals. But for what good? with what object? Thus we come again to the eternal question.

These animals are as much phantoms as monsters.

Their existence is proved and yet improbable. It is their fate to exist in spite of *a priori* reasonings. They are the amphibia of the shore which separates life from death. Their unreality makes their existence puzzling. They touch the frontier of man's domain and people the region of chimeras. We deny the possibility of the vampire, and the devil-fish appears to disconcert us. Their swarming is a certainty which disconcerts our confidence. Optimism, which is nevertheless in the right, becomes silenced in their presence. They form the visible extremity of the dark circles. They mark the transition of our reality into another. They seem to belong to that commencement of terrible life, which the dreamer sees confusedly through the loop-hole of the night.

This multiplication of monsters, first in the Invisible, then in the Possible, has been suspected, perhaps perceived by magi and philosophers in their austere ecstasies and profound contemplations. Hence the conjecture of the material hell. The demon is simply the invisible tiger. The wild beast which devours souls has been presented to the eyes of human beings by Saint John, and by Dante in his vision of hell.

If, in truth, the invisible circles of creation continue indefinitely, if after one there is yet another, and so on and on in illimitable progression; if that chain, which we for our part are resolved to doubt, really exists, the devil-fish at one end proves Satan at the other.

It is certain that the wrong-doer at one end proves wrong-doing at the other.

Every malignant creature, like every perverted intelligence, is a sphinx.

A terrible sphinx propounding a terrible riddle, — the riddle of the existence of Evil.

It is this perfection of evil which has sometimes

sufficed to incline powerful intellects to a belief in the duality of the Deity, towards that terrible bifrons of the Manichæans.

A piece of silk stolen during the last war from the palace of the Emperor of China represents a shark eating a crocodile, who is eating a serpent, who is devouring an eagle, who is preying on a swallow, who in his turn is eating a caterpillar.

All Nature, which is under our observation, is thus alternately devouring and devoured. The prey prey upon each other.

Learned men, however, who are also philosophers, and therefore optimists in their view of creation, find or think they find, an explanation. Among others, Bonnet of Geneva, that mysterious, exact thinker, who was opposed to Buffon, as in later times Geoffroy St. Hillaire has been to Cuvier, was struck with the idea of the final object. His notions may be summed up thus: universal death necessitates universal sepulture; the devourers are the sextons of the system of Nature.

Every created thing eventually enters into and forms a part of some other created thing. To decay is to nourish. Such is the terrible law from which not even man is exempt.

In our world of twilight this fatal order of things produces monsters. You ask for what purpose. We find the solution here.

But *is* this the solution? Is this the answer to our questionings? And if so, why not some different order of things? Thus the question returns.

We live: so be it. But let us try to believe that death means progress. Let us aspire to an existence in which these mysteries shall be made clear.

Let us obey the conscience which guides us thither.

For let us never forget that the best is only attained through the better.

## CHAPTER III.

### ANOTHER KIND OF SEA-COMBAT.

SUCH was the creature in whose power Gilliatt had fallen.

The monster was the mysterious inmate of the grotto; the terrible genius of the place; a kind of marine demon.

The splendours of the cavern existed for it alone.

The shadowy creature, dimly discerned by Gilliatt beneath the rippling surface of the dark water on the occasion of his first visit, was the monster. This grotto was its home. When he entered the cave a second time in pursuit of the crab, and saw a crevice in which he supposed the crab had taken refuge, the *pieuvre* was there lying in wait for prey.

No bird would brood, no egg would burst to life, no flower would dare to open, no breast to give milk, no heart to love, no spirit to soar, under the influence of that impersonation of evil watching with sinister patience in the dim light.

Gilliatt had thrust his arm deep into the opening; the monster had snapped at it.

It held him fast, as the spider holds the fly.

He was in the water up to his belt; his naked feet clutching the slippery roundness of the huge stones at the bottom; his right arm bound and rendered powerless by the flat coils of the long tentacles of the creature, and his body almost hidden under the folds and cross folds of this horrible bandage.



*Shrimp in the Catches of the Devil-Fish.*

Etched by A. Mongin. — From Drawing

by J. Bonjol-Flameng.







Of the eight arms of the devil-fish, three adhered to the rock, while five encircled Gilliatt. In this way, clinging to the granite on one side, and to its human prey on the other, it chained him to the rock. Two hundred and fifty suckers were upon him, tormenting him with agony and loathing. He was grasped by gigantic hands, each finger of which was nearly a yard long, and furnished inside with living blisters eating into the flesh.

As we have said, it is impossible to tear one's self from the clutches of the devil-fish. The attempt only results in a firmer grasp. The monster clings with more determined force. Its efforts increase with those of his victim; every struggle produces a tightening of its ligatures.

Gilliatt had but one resource, — his knife.

His left hand only was free; but the reader knows with what power he could use it. It might have been said that he had two right hands.

His open knife was in his hand.

The antennæ of the devil-fish cannot be cut; it is a leathery substance upon which a knife makes no impression; it slips under the blade; its position in attack too is such that to sever it would be to wound the victim's own flesh.

The creature is formidable, but there is a way of resisting it. The fishermen of Sark know it, and so does any one who has seen them execute certain abrupt movements in the sea. Porpoises know it, too; they have a way of biting the cuttle-fish which decapitates it. Hence the frequent sight on the sea of headless pen-fish, polypuses, and cuttle-fish.

In fact, its only vulnerable part is its head.

Gilliatt was not ignorant of this fact.

He had never seen a devil-fish of this size. His first

encounter was with one of the largest species. Any other man would have been overwhelmed with terror.

With the devil-fish, as with a furious bull, there is a certain instant in the conflict which must be seized. It is the instant when the bull lowers his neck; it is the instant when the devil-fish advances its head. The movement is rapid. One who loses that moment is irrevocably doomed.

The events we have described occupied only a few seconds. Gilliatt, however, felt the increasing power of the monster's innumerable suckers.

The monster is cunning; it tries first to stupefy its prey. It seizes and then pauses awhile.

Gilliatt grasped his knife; the sucking increased.

He looked at the monster, which seemed to return the look.

Suddenly it loosened from the rock its sixth antenna, and darting it at him, seized him by the left arm.

At the same moment, it advanced its head with a quick movement. In one second more its mouth would have fastened on his breast. Bleeding in the sides, and with his two arms entangled, he would have been a dead man.

But Gilliatt was watchful.

He avoided the antenna, and at the very instant the monster darted forward to fasten on his breast, he struck it with the knife clinched in his left hand.

There were two convulsive movements in opposite directions,— that of the devil-fish, and that of its prey.

The movements were as rapid as a double flash of lightning.

Gilliatt had plunged the blade of his knife into the flat, slimy substance, and with a rapid movement, like the flourish of a whiplash in the air, had described a

circle round the two eyes, and wrenched off the head as a man would draw a tooth.

The struggle was ended. The slimy bands relaxed. The air-pump being broken, the vacuum was destroyed. The four hundred suckers, deprived of their sustaining power, dropped at once from the man and the rock. The mass sank to the bottom of the water.

Breathless with the struggle, Gilliatt could dimly discern on the stones at his feet two shapeless, slimy heaps, the head on one side, the rest of the monster on the other.

Nevertheless, fearing a convulsive return of the death agony, he recoiled to be out of the reach of the dreaded tentacles.

But the monster was quite dead.

Gilliatt closed his knife.

## CHAPTER IV.

NOTHING IS HIDDEN, NOTHING LOST.

IT was time that he killed the devil-fish. He was almost suffocated. His right arm and his chest were purple. Hundreds of small swellings were visible upon them; the blood flowed from them here and there. The remedy for these wounds is sea-water. Gilliatt plunged into it, rubbing himself vigorously at the same time with the palms of his hands. The swellings disappeared under the friction.

By stepping farther into the waters he had, without perceiving it, approached to the sort of recess already noticed by him near the crevice where he had been attacked by the devil-fish.

This recess stretched obliquely under the great walls of the cavern, and was dry. The large pebbles which had become heaped up there had raised the bottom above the level of ordinary tides. The entrance was a rather large elliptical arch; a man could enter it by stooping. The green light of the submarine grotto penetrated and faintly illumined it.

While hastily rubbing his skin, Gilliatt raised his eyes mechanically.

He was able to see far into the tiny grotto.

He shuddered, for he fancied he perceived, at the farther depth of the dusky recess, a face wreathed with a ghastly smile.

Gilliatt had never heard the word "hallucination," but he was familiar with the idea. Those mysterious

encounters with the invisible, which we call hallucinations in order to spare ourselves the trouble of explaining them, are a part of Nature. Whether they be illusions or realities, visions are an unquestionable fact. One who has the gift is sure to see them. Gilliatt, as we have said, was a dreamer. He had at times the power of a seer. It was not in vain that he had spent his life in musing among solitary places.

He imagined himself the dupe of one of those mirages which he had more than once beheld in his dreamy moods.

The opening was shaped something like a lime-burner's kiln. It was a low niche with projections like basket-handles. The sharp groins contracted gradually as far as the extremity of the crypt, where the heaps of round stones and the rocky roof joined.

Gilliatt entered, and lowering his head, advanced towards the object in the distance.

There was indeed something smiling at him.

It was a death's-head. There was not only the head, but the entire skeleton.

A complete human skeleton was lying in the cave.

Under such circumstances a bold man will continue his researches.

Gilliatt glanced around him. He was surrounded by a multitude of crabs. The multitude did not stir. They were but empty shells.

These groups were scattered here and there among the masses of pebbles, forming all sorts of odd figures on the floor of the cave.

Gilliatt, having his eyes fixed elsewhere, had walked over them without perceiving them.

At the farther end of the crypt, where he had now penetrated, there was a still larger pile of remains. It was a confused mass of legs, antennæ, and mandibles. Claws stood wide open; bony shells lay quiet under

their bristling horns; some reversed showed their livid hollows. The heap was like a *mêlée* of besiegers who had fallen, and lay massed together entangled like so much brush-wood.

The skeleton was partly buried in this heap.

Under this confused mass of scales and tentacles, the eye could distinguish the cranium, the vertebræ, the thigh bones, the tibias, and the long-jointed finger bones with their nails. The frame formed by the ribs was filled with crabs. A heart had once beat there. The green mould of the sea had settled round the sockets of the eyes. Limpets had left their slime upon the bony nostrils. Within this rocky cave there was neither sea-gull, nor weed, nor a breath of air. All was still. The teeth grinned hideously.

The gloomy side of laughter is that strange mockery of its expression which is peculiar to a human skull.

This marvellous palace of the deep, inlaid and incrusted with all the gems of the sea, had at last revealed its secret. It was a savage haunt; the devil-fish inhabited it; it was also a tomb, in which the body of a man reposed.

The skeleton and the creatures around it seemed to oscillate slightly by reason of the reflections from the water which trembled upon the roof and wall. The multitude of crabs looked as if they were finishing their repast. These crustacea seemed to be devouring the carcass.

Gilliatt had the storehouse of the devil-fish before his eyes.

It was a dismal sight. The crabs had devoured the man; the devil-fish had devoured the crabs.

There were no remains of clothing visible anywhere. The man must have been seized naked.

Gilliatt began to remove the shells from the skeleton.



Who was this man? The body looked as if it had been prepared for an anatomical study. All the flesh was stripped off; not a muscle remained; but not a bone was missing. If Gilliatt had been skilled in physiology he could have demonstrated the fact. The periosteæ, denuded of their covering, were as white and smooth as if they had been polished. But for some green mould from sea-mosses here and there, they would have been like ivory. The cartilaginous divisions were delicately inlaid and arranged. The tomb sometimes produces this dismal mosaic work.

The body was, as it were, buried under the heap of dead crabs. Gilliatt disinterred it.

Suddenly he stooped, and examined it more closely.

He had perceived around the vertebral column a sort of belt.

It was a leathern girdle, which had evidently been worn buckled around the waist of the man when alive.

The leather was moist; the buckle rusty.

Gilliatt pulled the girdle; the vertebræ of the skeleton resisted, and he was compelled to break through them in order to remove it. A crust of small shells had begun to form upon it.

He felt it, and discovered a hard substance inside. It was useless to endeavour to unfasten the buckle, so he cut the leather with his knife.

The girdle contained a small iron box and several pieces of gold. Gilliatt counted twenty guineas.

The iron box was a sailor's tobacco-box, that opened and shut with a spring. It was very tight and rusty. The spring being completely oxidized would not work.

Once more the knife served Gilliatt in a difficulty. A pressure with the point of the blade caused the lid to fly up.

The box was open.

There was nothing inside but some pieces of paper.

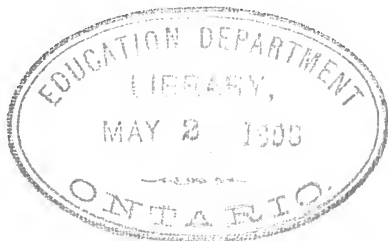
These were damp, but uninjured. The box, hermetically sealed, had preserved them. Gilliatt unfolded them.

They were three bank-notes of one thousand pounds sterling each, making in all seventy-five thousand francs.

Gilliatt folded them up again, replaced them in the box, taking advantage of the space which remained to add the twenty guineas; and then re-closed the box as well as he could.

Next he examined the belt.

The leather, which had originally been smooth outside, was rough within. Upon this tawny ground some letters had been traced in thick, black ink. Gilliatt deciphered them, and read the words "Sieur Clubin."



## CHAPTER V.

### THE FATAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIX INCHES AND TWO FEET.

GILLIATT replaced the box in the girdle, and crammed the girdle in his trouser's pocket.

He left the skeleton among the crabs, with the remains of the devil-fish beside it.

While he had been occupied with the devil-fish and the skeleton, the rising tide had submerged the entrance to the cave. He was only able to leave it by diving under the arched entrance. He got through without any difficulty; for he knew the ground well, and was a proficient in such manœuvres.

It is easy to understand the drama that had taken place there the ten weeks before. One monster had seized another monster, the devil-fish had captured Clubin.

These two embodiments of treachery had met in the inexorable darkness. There had been an encounter at the bottom of the sea between these two compounds of cruelty and watchfulness; the monster had destroyed the man: a terrible fulfilment of justice.

The crab feeds on carrion, the devil-fish on crabs. The devil-fish seizes anything within its reach,—be it otter, dog, or man,—sucks the blood, and leaves the body at the bottom of the sea. The crabs are the scavengers of the deep. Putrefying flesh attracts them; they crowd round it, devour the body, and are in their turn con-

sumed by the devil-fish. Dead creatures disappear in the crab, the crab disappears in the *pieuvre*. This is the law which we have already pointed out.

The devil-fish had laid hold of Clubin and drowned him. Some wave had carried his body into the recess at the farther end of this cave, where Gilliatt had discovered it.

He returned searching among the rocks for sea-urchins, and limpets, as he went. He had no desire for crabs; to have eaten them now would have seemed to him like feeding upon human flesh.

There was nothing now to prevent his departure. Heavy tempests are always followed by a calm, which sometimes lasts several days. There was, therefore, no danger to be apprehended from the sea. Gilliatt had resolved to leave the rocks on the following day. It was important, on account of the tide, to keep the barrier between the two Douvres during the night, but he intended to remove it at daybreak, to push the sloop out to sea, and set sail for St. Sampson. The light breeze which was blowing came from the south-west, which was precisely the wind he needed.

It was in the first quarter of the moon, in the month of May; and the days were long.

When Gilliatt, having finished his wanderings among the rocks, and appeased his appetite to some extent, returned to the passage between the two Douvres, where he had left the sloop, the sun had set, the twilight was increased by the pale light which comes from a crescent moon; the tide had attained its highest point and was beginning to ebb. The funnel standing upright above the sloop had been covered by the foam during the tempest with a coating of salt which glittered in the light of the moon.

This circumstance reminded Gilliatt that the storm

had inundated the sloop, both with surf and with rain, and that if he meant to start in the morning, it would be necessary to bale it out.

Before leaving to go in quest of crabs, he had ascertained that there were about six inches of water in the hold. The scoop which he used for the purpose would, he thought, be sufficient for throwing the water overboard.

On arriving at the barrier, Gilliatt was horrified to perceive that there were nearly two feet of water in the sloop. A terrible discovery! The vessel had sprung a leak.

The water had been gaining gradually during his absence. Heavily loaded as the sloop was, two feet of water was a perilous addition. A little more, and she must inevitably founder. If he had returned but an hour later, he would probably have found nothing above water but the funnel and the mast.

There was not a minute to lose. It was absolutely necessary to find the leak, stop it, and then empty the vessel, or at all events, lighten it. The pumps of the *Durande* had been lost in the break-up of the wreck.

To find the leak was the most urgent.

Gilliatt set to work immediately, and without even giving himself time to dress. He shivered; but he was no longer conscious of either hunger or cold.

The water continued to gain in his vessel. Fortunately there was no wind. The slightest swell would have been fatal.

The moon went down.

Bent low, and covered with water higher than his waist, he groped about for a long time.

At last he discovered the leak.

At the critical moment when the sloop swerved, during the gale, the strong bark had bumped violently

upon the rocks. One of the projections of the Little Douvre had made a fracture in the starboard side of the hull.

The leak, unfortunately, was near the joint of the two riders, a fact which in the confusion caused by the hurricane had prevented him perceiving it during his hasty survey in the height of the storm.

The fracture was alarming on account of its size; but fortunately, although the vessel was sunk lower than usual by the weight of the water, it was still above the ordinary water-line.

At the time when the accident occurred, the waves had rolled heavily into the defile, and had flooded the vessel through the breach, so she had sunk a few inches under the additional weight. Even after the subsidence of the water, the weight had kept the hole still below the surface. Hence the imminence of the danger.

The depth of water had increased from two to twenty inches. But if he could succeed in stopping the leak, he could bail out the sloop; the hole once stanchied, the vessel would rise to its usual water-line, the fracture would be above water, and in this position the repair would be easy, or at least possible. His carpenter's tools, as we have already said, were still in fair condition.

But meanwhile what uncertainty must he not endure! What perils, what chances of accidents! He heard the water rising inexorably. One shock, and all would be lost! Perhaps his endeavours would prove futile even now!

He reproached himself bitterly. He said to himself that he ought to have discovered the damage immediately. The six inches of water in the hold ought to have suggested it to him. He had been stupid enough to attribute these six inches of water to the rain and

surf. He was angry with himself for having slept and eaten; he blamed himself even for his weariness, and almost for the storm and the intense darkness of the night. It all seemed to have been his fault.

These bitter self-reproaches filled his mind while engaged in his labour, but they did not prevent him from giving close attention to his work.

The leak had been discovered; that was the first step: to stanch it was the second. That was all it was possible to do for the present. Carpentering cannot be carried on under water.

It was a favourable circumstance that the breach in the hull was in the place between the two chains which held the funnel fast on the starboard side. The material used in stopping the leak could be secured by these chains.

Meanwhile the water was gaining. It was now between two and three feet deep.

It reached above Gilliatt's knees.

## CHAPTER VI.

### DE PROFUNDIS AD ALTUM.

GILLIATT had among his store of surplus rigging for the sloop a large tarpaulin, provided with long lanyards at the four corners.

He took this tarpaulin, made fast two corners of it by the lanyards to the two rings of the funnel chains on the same side as the leak, and threw it over the gunwale. The tarpaulin hung like a sheet between the Little Douvre and the bark, and sunk in the water. The pressure of the water as it endeavoured to enter the hold, kept the tarpaulin close to the hull. The heavier the pressure the closer the sail adhered. The water kept it directly over the fracture. The wound in the bark was stanchd.

The tarred canvas formed a barrier between the interior of the hold and the waves outside. Not a drop of water entered.

The leak was covered, but it was not stopped. It was a respite only.

Gilliatt took the scoop and began to bale out the sloop. It was time that she were lightened. The labour warmed him a little, but his weariness was extreme. He was forced to acknowledge to himself that he could not complete the work of emptying the hold. He had scarcely eaten anything, and he had the humiliation of feeling himself exhausted.

He measured the progress of his work by the sinking of the level of water below his knees. The fall was slow.



Moreover, the leakage was only interrupted; the evil was moderated, not repaired. The tarpaulin pushed into the gap began to bulge inside, looking as if a fist were under the canvas, endeavouring to force it through. The canvas, strong and pitchy, resisted; but the swelling and the tension increased. It was by no means certain that it would not give way. The swelling might become a rent at any moment. The entrance of the water would then begin again.

In such a case, as the crews of vessels in distress know very well, there is no other remedy than stuffing. The sailors take everything in the shape of rags they can lay hands upon, — everything, in fact, which they can make of “service;” and with this they push the bulging sail-cloth as far as they can into the hole.

But unfortunately all the rags and tow which Gilliatt had stored up had been used in his operations, or carried away by the storm.

If necessary, he might possibly have been able to find some remains by searching among the rocks. The sloop was sufficiently lightened for him to leave it with safety for a quarter of an hour; but how could he make this search without a light? The darkness was complete. There was no longer any moon, — nothing but the starry sky. He had no dry tow to serve as a match, no tallow to make a candle, no fire to light one, no lantern to shelter it from the wind. In the sloop and among the rocks everything was blurred and indistinct. He could hear the water lapping against the injured hull, but he could not even see the crack. It was with his hands that he had ascertained the bulging of the tarpaulin. In the darkness it was impossible to make any effectual search for rags of canvas or pieces of tow scattered over the rocks. Who could find these waifs and strays without being able to see his path? Gilliatt looked sorrow-

fully at the sky : " All those stars," he thought, " and yet no light !"

The water in the hold having diminished, the pressure from without increased. The bulging of the canvas became greater and was constantly increasing, like a frightful abscess about to burst. The situation, which had been improved for a short time, began to be threatening.

Some means of stopping it effectually was absolutely necessary. He had nothing left but his clothes, which he had spread out to dry upon the projecting rocks of the Little Douvre.

He hastened to fetch them, and hung them on the gunwale of the sloop.

Then he took his tarpaulin overcoat, and kneeling in the water thrust it into the hole, and swelling the sail outward, emptied it of water. To the tarpaulin coat he added the sheepskin, then his Guernsey shirt, and then his jacket. The hole held them all and more. He had nothing left but his sailor's trousers, which he took off, and pushed in with the other articles. This increased and strengthened the stuffing.

The stopper was made, and it seemed to be sufficient.

These clothes passed partly through the gap, the sail-cloth outside enveloping them. The sea in its efforts to enter, pressed against the obstacle, spread it over the gap, and blocked it. It was a sort of exterior compression.

Inside, only the centre of the bulge having been driven out, there remained all around the gap and the stuffing just thrust through, a sort of circular pad formed by the tarpaulin, which was rendered still firmer by the irregularities of the break in which it had become entangled.

The leak was stanchèd, but nothing could be more precarious. Those sharp splinters which held the tar-

paulin might pierce it, thus making other holes by which the water would enter; while he would not even perceive it in the darkness. There was little probability that the stuffing would last until daylight. Gilliatt's anxiety changed in form; but he felt it increase all the more rapidly in proportion as he found his strength failing him.

He had again set to work to bale out the hold, but his arms, in spite of all his efforts, could scarcely lift a scoopful of water. He was naked and shivering.

He felt as if the end was at hand.

One possible chance flashed across his mind. There might be a sail in sight. Some fishing-boat might come to his assistance. The moment had arrived when a helpmate was absolutely necessary. With a man and a lantern, all might yet be saved. If there were two persons, they might easily bale the vessel. As the leak was stanchd temporarily, as soon as the vessel could be relieved of her burden, she would rise to her usual level. The leak would then be above the surface of the water, so repairs would be practicable, and he would be able to replace the rags with a piece of plank. If not, it would be necessary to wait till daylight,—to wait the whole night long; a delay which might prove ruinous. Gilliatt was in a fever of haste.

If by chance some ship's lantern should be in sight, Gilliatt would be able to signal it from the top of the Great Douvre. The weather was calm; there was no wind or rolling sea; there was a possibility of the figure of a man being observed moving against the background of the starry sky. A captain of a ship, or even the master of a fishing-boat, would not be in the vicinity of the Douvres at night without directing his glass upon the rock, by way of precaution.

Gilliatt hoped that some one might notice him.

He climbed upon the wreck, grasped the knotted rope, and climbed to the top of the Great Douvre.

Not a sail was visible in the horizon, nor a single ship's lantern. The wide expanse, as far as eye could reach, was deserted.

No assistance was possible, and no resistance was possible.

Gilliatt felt himself without resources, — a feeling which he had not experienced until then.

A grim fatality was now his master. In spite of all his labour, all his success, all his courage, he and his bark, with its precious burden, were about to become the plaything of the waves. He had no other means of continuing the struggle. How could he prevent the tide from returning, the water from rising, the darkness from continuing? The stuffing he had made was his sole dependence. He had exhausted and stripped himself in constructing and completing it; he could neither strengthen nor add to it. The stop-gap was such that it must remain as it was, and any further efforts would be useless. How would this inert obstacle work? It was this obstacle, not Gilliatt, that would have to sustain the combat now. The mere pressure of a wave would suffice to re-open the fracture. It was simply a question of a little more or less pressure.

Henceforth Gilliatt could neither aid his auxiliary, nor hinder his adversary. He was now a mere spectator of this struggle, though it was one of life or death for him. He, who had maintained the struggle with such rare skill and intelligence, was at the last moment compelled to resign all to a mere blind resistance.

No trial, no terror that he had yet undergone, could be compared with this.

From the time he had first taken up his abode upon the Douvres, he had found himself environed, and as it

were possessed by solitude. This solitude more than surrounded, it enveloped him. A thousand dangers had menaced him. The wind was always there, ready to buffet him; the sea, ready to roar. There was no stopping that terrible mouth, the wind; no imprisoning that dread monster, the sea.

And yet he had striven undaunted. He, a solitary man, had fought hand to hand with the ocean, had wrestled even with the tempest.

There was no form of misery with which he had not become familiar. He had been compelled to work without tools, to move vast burdens without aid, to solve problems without science, to eat and drink without provisions of any kind; to find shelter and sleep.

Upon that solitary rock, a dreary couch, he had been subjected by turns to all the varied and cruel tortures of Nature, who is oftentimes a kind mother, but quite as often a pitiless destroyer.

He had conquered his isolation, conquered hunger, conquered thirst, conquered cold, conquered fever, conquered labour, conquered sleep. He had encountered a mighty coalition of obstacles formed to bar his progress. After his privations, there were the elements to contend with; after the sea, the tempest; after the tempest, the devil-fish; after the monster, the spectre.

Ah, the dismal irony of the *dénouement*. Upon this rock, whence he had thought to depart triumphant, the spectre of Clubin had arisen to mock him with a hideous smile.

The spectre had cause to sneer, for Gilliatt, too, was ruined. He, too, like Clubin, was in the clutches of death.

Winter, famine, fatigue, the dismemberment of the wreck, the removal of the machinery, the equinoctial gale, the thunder, the sea-monster, were all as nothing compared with this small fracture in a vessel's side.

One could fight against cold, with fire; against hunger, with the shell-fish on the rocks; against thirst, with the rain; against the difficulties of his great task, with industry and energy; against the sea and the storm, with the breakwater; against the devil-fish, with a trusty knife; but against the terrible leak he had no weapon.

The hurricane had left him this grim farewell, this last retort, this traitorous thrust, this treacherous side blow of a vanquished foe. In its flight the tempest had turned and shot this parting arrow behind it.

It was possible to contend with the tempest, but how could he hope to wrestle with the insidious enemy who now attacked him?

If the leak re-opened, nothing could prevent the sloop from foundering. It would be like the bursting of the ligature of the artery; and once under the water with its heavy burden, no power could raise it. Was his noble struggle, and two months of herculean labour, to end in naught? To begin again would be impossible. He had neither forge nor materials. By dawn, in all probability, he would see his work swallowed up completely and irrevocably in the gulf.

How terrible, to feel that sombre power beneath him! to see the ocean snatching his prize from his hands.

His bark engulfed, there was nothing left for him but to perish of cold and hunger, like the poor shipwrecked sailor on "The Man" rock.

For two long months this desperate struggle had been going on between the wide expanse of ocean, the waves, the winds, and the lightnings, on one hand, and a man on the other. On one hand the sea, on the other a human mind; on one hand the infinite, on the other a mere atom.

The battle had been fierce, and behold the abortive issue of those prodigies of valour.

Must this unparalleled heroism end in utter powerlessness, this formidable struggle end in impotent despair?

Gilliatt gazed wildly about him.

He had no clothing. He stood naked in the midst of that immensity.

Then, overwhelmed by a consciousness of an unknown but infinite power, bewildered by this relentless persecution, confronted by the shadows of night and impenetrable darkness, in the midst of the murmuring waves, the tossing foam, the roaring surf, beneath the mighty firmament studded with glittering constellations, and with the great unfathomable deep around him, he sank down, gave up the struggle, and throwing himself upon the rock with his face turned upward to the stars, completely humbled, he lifted his clasped hands to heaven, and cried aloud: "Have mercy!"

Crushed to earth by that immensity, he prayed.

He was there alone, in the darkness, upon the rock, in the open sea, stricken down with exhaustion like one smitten by lightning, naked like the gladiator in the arena, save that for an arena he had the vast horizon, instead of wild beasts, the shadows of darkness, instead of the faces of the crowd, the eyes of the great Unknown, instead of the Vestals, the stars, instead of Cæsar, God!

His whole being seemed to dissolve in cold, fatigue, powerlessness, prayer, and darkness, and his eyes closed.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE APPEAL IS HEARD.

SEVERAL hours passed.  
The sun rose in a cloudless sky.

Its first ray shone upon a motionless form on the Great Douvre. It was Gilliatt.

He was still lying stretched out upon the rock.

He was naked, cold, and stiff; but he did not shiver. His closed eyelids were wan. It would have been difficult for a beholder to determine whether the form before him was not a corpse.

The sun seemed to be gazing down upon him.

If he were not dead, he was so near death that a single cold blast would have sufficed to extinguish life.

The wind began to blow, warm and animating, — the revivifying breath of spring.

Meanwhile the sun mounted higher in the clear, blue sky; its light became warmth. It enveloped the slumbering form.

But Gilliatt did not move. If he breathed at all, it was only with that feeble respiration which would scarcely sully the surface of a mirror.

The sun continued its ascent; its rays striking less and less obliquely upon the naked man. The gentle breeze which had been merely tepid, became hot.

The rigid and naked body still remained perfectly motionless, but the skin was less livid in hue.

The sun, approaching the zenith, shone almost perpendicularly upon the plateau of the Douvres. A flood of



light descended from the heavens ; the reflection from the glassy sea increased its splendour ; the rock itself imbibed the hot rays and warmed the sleeper.

A sigh heaved his breast.

He lived.

The sun continued its kindly offices. The wind, which was already the breath of summer and of noon, approached him like loving lips that breathed softly upon him.

Gilliatt moved.

The sea was perfectly calm. Its murmur was like the droning of a nurse beside a sleeping infant. The rock seemed cradled in the waves.

The sea-birds, who knew that recumbent form, fluttered around it, — not with their former wild astonishment, but with a sort of fraternal tenderness. They uttered plaintive cries : they seemed to be calling to him.

A sea-mew, who no doubt knew him, was tame enough to approach him. It began to caw gently, as if talking to him.

The sleeper seemed not to hear. The bird hopped upon his shoulder, and pecked his lips softly.

Gilliatt opened his eyes.

The birds, content and shy, dispersed, chattering wildly.

Gilliatt arose, stretched himself like a roused lion, ran to the edge of the platform, and looked down into the gulf between the two Douvres.

The sloop was there, intact ; the stopper had not failed him ; the sea had probably disturbed it but little.

All was well.

His weariness was forgotten. His strength had returned. His swoon had ended in a refreshing sleep.

He descended and baled out the sloop, thus raising the leak above the water-line, dressed himself, ate, drank some water, and gave thanks.

The gap in the side of the vessel, examined in broad

daylight, was found to require more labour than he had thought. It was a serious fracture. The entire day would be consumed in repairing it.

At daybreak the next morning, after removing the barrier and re-opening the entrance to the gorge, dressed in the tattered clothing which had served to stop the leak, with Clubin's belt containing the seventy-five thousand francs, around his waist, standing erect in the sloop, now thoroughly repaired, beside the machinery he had rescued, with a favourable breeze and a calm sea, Gilliatt pushed off from the Douvres.

He headed the sloop straight for Guernsey.

Had any one chanced to be on the Douvres at the moment of the sloop's departure, he would have heard Gilliatt singing, in an undertone, the air of "Bonnie Dundee."

PART III.  
DÉRUCHETTE.

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BOOK I.  
NIGHT AND THE MOON.

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CHAPTER I.

THE HARBOUR BELL.

THE St. Sampson of the present day is almost a city; the St. Sampson of forty years ago was little more than a village.

When the winter was ended and spring had come, the inhabitants were not long out of bed after sundown. St. Sampson was an ancient parish which had long been accustomed to the sound of the curfew-bell, and which had a traditional habit of blowing out the candle at an early hour. The people there went to bed and got up with the sun. These old Norman villages are wonderfully successful with poultry.

The people of St. Sampson, except a few rich families among the townsfolk, are also a population of quarrymen and carpenters. The port is a great port for repairs. The quarrying of stone and the fashioning of timber go on all day long; here stands a labourer with his pickaxe, there a workman with his mallet. At night they are

ready to drop with fatigue, and sleep like lead. Heavy labour brings heavy slumbers.

One evening, in the early part of the month of May, after watching the crescent moon for some instants through the trees, and listening to the step of Déruchette walking alone in the cool air in the garden of the Bravées, Mess Lethierry had returned to his room overlooking the harbour, and had retired to rest. Douce and Grace were already in bed. The entire household was asleep with the exception of Déruchette. The doors and shutters were everywhere closed. The streets were silent and deserted. Some few lights, like winking eyes about to close in rest, showed here and there in windows in the roofs, indicating that the domestics were going to bed. Nine had already struck in the old Romanesque belfry, wreathed in ivy, which shares with the church of St. Brelade at Jersey the peculiarity of having for its date four ones (IIII), used to signify the year eleven hundred and eleven.

The popularity of Mess Lethierry at St. Sampson had been founded on his success. His success at an end, his popularity departed. One might almost imagine that ill-fortune is contagious, and that the unsuccessful have a plague, so rapidly are they put in quarantine. The young men of well-to-do families avoided Déruchette. The isolation around the Bravées was so complete that its inmates had not even heard the news of the great local event which had that day set all St. Sampson in a ferment. The rector of the parish, the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray, had become rich. His uncle, the noted Dean of St. Asaph, had just died in London. The news had been brought by the mail sloop, the "Cashmere," arrived from England that very morning, and the mast of which could be seen in the harbour of St. Peter's Port. The "Cashmere" was to sail for Southampton at noon on the mor-

row, and would, so rumour said, convey the reverend gentleman, who had been suddenly summoned to England, to be present at the official opening of the will, not to speak of other urgent matters connected with an important inheritance. All day long St. Sampson had been conversing excitedly upon this subject. The "Cashmere," the Rev. Ebenezer, his deceased uncle, his wealth, his speedy departure, his possible preferment in the future, had formed the foundation of this perpetual buzzing. One solitary house, still uninformed on these matters, had remained unperturbed. This was the Bravées.

Mess Lethierry had thrown himself in his hammock all dressed as he was.

Since the accident to the Durande, his hammock had been his only consolation. Every prisoner has the privilege of stretching himself out on his pallet, and Mess Lethierry was the prisoner of grief. To go to bed was a truce, a gain in breathing time, a suspension of thought. He neither slept nor watched. Strictly speaking, for two months and a half, or ever since his misfortune had befallen him, Mess Lethierry had been in a sort of a dream. He had not yet regained possession of his faculties. He was in that cloudy and confused condition of mind with which those who have undergone overwhelming afflictions are familiar. His reflections were not thought, his sleep was not repose. He was not awake by day or asleep by night. He was up, and then went to rest, — that was all. When he was in his hammock forgetfulness came to him. He called that sleeping. Chimeras floated about him, and within him. A nocturnal cloud, full of confused faces, flitted through his brain. Sometimes it was the Emperor Napoleon dictating to him the story of his life; sometimes there were several *Déruchettes*; strange birds peopled the trees; the streets of Lons-le-Saulnier turned into serpents. Such

nightmares as these were brief respites in his despair. He spent his nights in dreaming, and his days in reverie.

Sometimes he remained all the afternoon at the window of his room, which overlooked the harbour, with his head drooping, his elbows on the sill, his ears resting on his fists, his back turned to the whole world, his eyes fixed on the old massive iron ring fastened in the wall of the house, only a few feet from his window, where he used to moor the *Durande*. He was looking at the rust which gathered on the ring.

He was reduced to the mere mechanical habit of living.

The bravest men, when deprived of their most cherished hope, often come to this. His life had become a void. Life is a voyage; the idea is the itinerary. The plan of their course gone, they stop. The object is lost, the strength of purpose gone. Fate has a secret discretionary power. It is able to touch even our mental being with its rod. Despair is destitution of the soul. Only the greatest minds can resist it.

Mess Lethierry was always meditating, — if absorption can be called meditation, — in the depths of a sort of cloudy abyss. Broken words like these sometimes escaped him. "There is nothing left for me now, but to ask for leave to go."

There was a certain contradiction in that nature, complex as the sea, of which Mess Lethierry was, so to speak, the product. Mess Lethierry's grief did not seek relief in prayer.

To be powerless is almost a comfort under some circumstances. In the presence of those two relentless powers — destiny and Nature — it is by his very powerlessness that man has been led to seek support in prayer

Man seeks relief from his terror; his anxiety bids him kneel.

Prayer, that wondrous power peculiar to the soul, is addressed to the magnanimity of the Invisible; it gazes into mystery with the very eyes of the grave, and before this potent fixity of regard and supplication, we feel a possible disarmament of the Unknown.

The mere possibility of such a thing is a consolation.

But Mess Lethierry prayed not.

In the days when he was happy, God had been a palpable presence to him. Lethierry addressed him almost familiarly, pledged his word to him, seemed at times to hold close intercourse with him. But in the hour of his misfortune, the idea of God had become eclipsed in his mind, — a phenomenon which is not infrequent. This almost invariably happens when the mind has created for itself a deity invested with human attributes.

In his present frame of mind there was but one thing of which Lethierry was clearly cognizant, — the smile of Déruchette. Everything else was dim and shadowy.

For some time, apparently on account of the loss of the Durande, and of the blow which it had been to them, this pleasant smile had been rare. She seemed always thoughtful. Her bird-like playfulness, her child-like ways, were gone. She was never seen now in the morning, at the sound of the cannon which announced day-break, saluting the rising sun with "Boom! Daylight! Come in, please!" At times her expression was very serious, — an unusual thing for that sweet nature. She sometimes made an effort, however, to laugh before Mess Lethierry, and to divert him; but her cheerfulness diminished from day to day, — grew dim like the wing of an empaled butterfly. Either through sorrow for her uncle's sorrow, — for there are griefs which are the reflections of other griefs, — or for some other reason, she about this time became very religiously inclined. In the time of the old rector, M. Jaquemin Hérode, she scarcely went to

church, as we have already said, four times a year ; now, on the contrary, she was assiduous in her attendance at church. She missed no service, either Sunday or Thursday. Pious souls in the parish noted this fact with great satisfaction. It is a great blessing when a girl who runs so many risks in the world turns her thoughts towards God.

It at least enables the poor parents to feel easy on the subject of love-making.

In the evening, whenever the weather permitted, she walked for an hour or two in the garden of the Bravées. She was almost as quiet there as Mess Lethierry, and almost always alone. Déruchette went to bed last. This, however, did not prevent Douce and Grace from watching her a little, with that instinct for spying which is common to servants. Spying is such a relaxation after household work.

As for Mess Lethierry, in the abstracted state of his mind, these little changes in Déruchette's habits escaped him. Moreover, his nature had little in common with the duenna. He had not even remarked her regular attendance at church. Tenacious of his prejudices against the clergy and their sermons, he would scarcely have approved such close attendances at the parish church.

Not that his own moral condition was not undergoing change however. Sorrow often undergoes a marked change in its form.

Robust natures, as we have said, are sometimes almost overwhelmed by sudden great misfortunes ; but not quite. Manly characters, such as Lethierry's, experience a reaction in a given time. Sorrow has many different stages. From utter despair we rise to dejection ; from dejection to grief ; from grief to melancholy. Melancholy is a twilight state ; suffering melts into it and becomes a gloomy joy.



Melancholy is the pleasure of being sad.

Such moods were not for Lethierry. Neither the nature of his temperament nor the character of his misfortune suited those delicate shades. But at the time of which we speak his apathy had begun to wear off a little, leaving him no less sad, however. He was just as inactive, and quite as dull; but he was no longer overwhelmed. A certain perception of events and circumstances was returning to him, and he began to experience something that might be called a return to reality.

Thus by day in the great lower room, though he did not listen to the words of those about him, he heard them. Grace came one morning, quite exultant, to tell Déruchette that he had undone the cover of a newspaper.

This half acceptance of realities is in itself a good symptom, — a token of convalescence. Great afflictions produce a stupor; it is by such little acts that men return to their former selves. This improvement, however, is at first only an aggravation of the evil. The dreamy condition of mind in which the sufferer has lived, served, while it lasted, to blunt his grief. His sight before was dim. He felt little. Now his view is clear, nothing escapes him; and his wounds re-open. Every detail that he notices serves to remind him of his sorrow. He lives over everything again in memory; every recollection is a pang. All kinds of bitter aftertastes lurk in that return to life. He is better, and yet worse. Such was the condition of Lethierry. In returning to consciousness, his sufferings had become more keen.

It was a sudden shock that first recalled him to a sense of reality.

One afternoon, between the 15th and 20th of April, a double-knock at the door of the great lower room of the Bravées had signalled the arrival of the postman. Douce had opened the door; there was a letter.

The letter came from beyond the sea ; it was addressed to Mess Lethierry, and bore the postmark "Lisbon."

Douce had taken the letter to Mess Lethierry, who was in his room. He took it, placed it mechanically on the table, and did not look at it.

The letter remained an entire week upon the table without being opened.

It happened, however, one morning that Douce said to Mess Lethierry :—

"Shall I brush the dust off your letter, sir?"

Lethierry seemed to arouse from his lethargy.

"Ay, ay! You are right," he said; and he opened the letter, and read as follows :—

AT SEA, 10th March.

*To Mess Lethierry of St. Sampson :—*

You will be gratified to receive news of me. I am aboard the "Tamaulipas," bound for the port of "No-return." Among the crew is a sailor named Ahier-Tostevin, from Guernsey, who will return, and will have some facts to communicate to you. I take the opportunity of our speaking a vessel, the "Hernan Cortes," bound for Lisbon, to forward you this letter.

You will be astonished to learn that I am an honest man.

As honest as Sieur Clubin.

I am almost sure that you know of certain recent events ere this; nevertheless, it is, perhaps, not altogether superfluous to send you a full account of them.

To proceed:

I have returned your money.

Some years ago, I borrowed from you, under rather unfortunate circumstances, the sum of fifty thousand francs. Before leaving St. Malo lately, I paid into the hands of your confidential man of business, Sieur Clubin, on your account, three bank-notes of one thousand pounds each; making together seventy-five thousand francs. You will no doubt find this reimbursement sufficient.

Sieur Clubin acted for you, and received your money, in a remarkably energetic manner; indeed, he seemed to me singularly zealous. This is, indeed, my reason for apprising you of the facts.

Your other confidential man of business,

RANTAINE.

*Postscript.* — Sieur Clubin was in possession of a revolver, which may explain to your satisfaction the fact of my having no receipt.

One who has touched a torpedo, or a Leyden-jar fully charged, may form some idea of the effect the reading of this letter produced on Mess Lethierry.

This common-place looking missive to which he had at first paid so little attention, contained a veritable thunderbolt.

He recognized the writing and the signature. As for the facts to which the letter referred, he did not understand them in the least. But the excitement of the event soon set his mind to working again.

The most potent part of the shock he had received lay in the mystery of the seventy-five thousand francs intrusted by Rantaine to Clubin. This was an enigma which taxed Lethierry's brain to the uttermost. Conjecture is a healthy occupation for the mind. Reason is awakened; logic is called into play.

For some time past public opinion in Guernsey had been undergoing a reaction on the subject of Clubin, — the man who had enjoyed such a high reputation for honour for so many years, the man so unanimously regarded with esteem. People had begun to question and to doubt; there were wagers for and against. Some new light had been thrown on the question in singular ways. The character of Clubin began to become clearer, — that is to say, he began to appear blacker in the eyes of the world.

A judicial inquiry had taken place at St. Malo, for the purpose of ascertaining what had become of coast-guardsmen No. 619. Legal perspicacity had got upon a false scent, — a thing which frequently happens. It had started with the hypothesis that the man had been enticed away by Zuela, and had shipped aboard the “Tamaulipas” for Chili. This ingenious supposition led to a considerable amount of wasted conjecture. The short-sighted authorities had failed to take any note of Rantaine; but as the inquiry progressed, other clues were developed and the affair became complicated. Clubin, too, became mixed up with the enigma. A coincidence, perhaps a direct connection, had been found between the departure of the “Tamaulipas” and the loss of the *Durande*. At the wine-shop near the Dinan Gate, where Clubin thought himself entirely unknown, he had been recognized. The keeper of the wine-shop said that Clubin had bought a bottle of brandy that night. For whom? The gunsmith of St. Vincent Street, too, had talked: Clubin had purchased a revolver of him. For what purpose? The landlord of the Auberge Jean had talked: Clubin had absented himself in an inexplicable manner. Captain Gertrais-Gaboureau had talked: Clubin had determined to start, although he had been warned, and knew that he might expect a great fog. The crew of the *Durande* had talked. In fact, the collection of freight had been strangely neglected, and the cargo badly stowed, — a neglect easy to comprehend, if the captain had determined to wreck the ship. The Guernsey passenger, too, had talked: Clubin had evidently believed that he had run upon the Hanways. The Torteval people had talked: Clubin had visited that neighbourhood a few days before the loss of the *Durande*, and had been seen walking in the direction of Pleinmont, near the Hanways. He had a travelling-bag with him. “He had set out with it, and come back with-

out it." The birds'-nesters had talked; their story might be connected with Clubin's disappearance, — that is, if the lads' supposed ghosts were in reality smugglers. Finally, the haunted house of Pleinmont itself had spoken. Persons who were determined to get information had climbed up and entered the windows, and had found inside, what? The very travelling-bag which had been seen in Sieur Clubin's possession. The authorities of the *Douzaine* of Torteval had taken possession of the bag and had opened it. It was found to contain provisions, a telescope, a chronometer, a man's clothing, and linen marked with Clubin's initials. All this, according to the gossips of St. Malo and Guernsey, began to look more and more like a case of fraud. Obscure hints were brought together; there seemed to have been a singular disregard of advice on Clubin's part; a willingness to encounter the dangers of the fog; a suspected negligence in the stowage of the cargo. Then there was the mysterious bottle of brandy; a drunken helmsman; a substitution of the captain for the helmsman; a management of the rudder, that was, to say the least, very unskilful. The heroism of remaining behind upon the wreck began to look like knavery. Besides, Clubin had evidently been deceived as to the rock he was on. If he had really intended to wreck the vessel, it was easy to understand the choice of the Hanways, as the shore could easily be reached by swimming, and he could conceal himself in the haunted house while awaiting an opportunity for flight. The travelling-bag, that suspicious preparation, completed the proof. By what link this affair became connected with the affair of the disappearance of the coast-guardsmen nobody knew. People imagined some connection, and that was all. They had a glimpse in their minds of look-out-man, No. 619, alongside of the mysterious Clubin, — quite a tragic drama. Perhaps

Clubin was not an actor in it, but his presence was visible in the side scenes.

The supposition of a wilful destruction of the *Durande* did not explain everything however. There was a revolver in the story, with no part as yet assigned to it. The revolver was probably connected with the other affair.

The scent of the public is keen and true. Its instinct excels in these piecemeal discoveries of truth. Still, amid these facts, which seemed to point pretty clearly to a case of barratry, there were many uncertainties.

Everything was consistent, everything coherent; but a reason was lacking.

People do not wreck vessels merely for the pleasure of wrecking them. Men do not run all these risks of fog, rocks, swimming, concealment, and flight without an object. What could have been Clubin's object?

The act seemed evident, but the motive was puzzling.

Hence a doubt in many minds. Where there is no motive, it is natural to infer that there was no act.

The missing link was important. The letter from Rantaine seemed to supply it.

This letter furnished a motive for Clubin's supposed crime: seventy-five thousand francs to be appropriated.

Rantaine was the *Deus ex machina*. He had descended from the clouds with a lantern in his hand. His letter threw a light upon the affair. It explained everything, and even promised a witness in the person of Ahier-Tostevin.

The part the revolver had played in the affair was now apparent.

Rantaine's letter explained the mystery.

There could be no possible palliation of Clubin's crime. He had premeditated the shipwreck; the preparations discovered in the haunted house were conclusive proofs

of that. Even supposing him innocent, and admitting the wreck to have been accidental, would he not, at the last moment, when he determined to sacrifice himself with the vessel, have intrusted the seventy-five thousand francs to the men who escaped in the long-boat? The evidence was remarkably complete. But what had become of Clubin? He had doubtless become a victim of his blunder. He had probably perished upon the Douvres.

These numerous surmises, which really were not far from the truth, had been engrossing Mess Lethierry's mind for several days. The letter from Rantaine had done him the service of setting him to thinking. At first he was overwhelmed with surprise; then he made an effort to reflect. He made another effort more difficult still,—that of inquiry. He was induced to listen, and even engage in conversation. At the end of a week, he had become, to a certain degree, himself again; his thoughts had regained their coherence, and he was almost restored. He had emerged from his confused and troubled state.

Even if Mess Lethierry had ever entertained any hope of recovering his money, Rantaine's letter destroyed all chance of that.

It added to the catastrophe of the Durande this new loss of seventy-five thousand francs. It put him in possession of that amount just so far as to make him sensible of its loss. The letter revealed the full extent of his ruin.

After this, he experienced a new and poignant misery. When he began to take an interest in his household, to try and determine what it was to be in the future, and how he was to set things in order,—matters of which he had taken no heed for two months past,—these trifling cares wounded him like a thousand tiny pin-points, worse in the aggregate than the old despair. A sorrow is

doubly burdensome which has to be endured in each particular, and while one is disputing inch by inch with fate for ground already lost. Ruin is endurable in the mass, but not in the dust and fragments of the fallen edifice. The great fact may overwhelm, but the details torture.

Humiliation tends to aggravate the blow. A second catastrophe follows the first, with even more repulsive features. You descend one degree nearer to annihilation. The winding-sheet becomes changed to sordid rags.

No thought is more bitter than that of one's gradual fall from a social position.

To be ruined does not seem to be such a terrible thing. A violent shock, a cruel turn of fortune's wheel, an overwhelming catastrophe, — be it so. We submit, and all is over. You are ruined; you are dead. No; you are still living. On the morrow you know it only too well. How? By a thousand pin-pricks. Yonder passer-by omits to bow to you; the tradesmen's bills rain down upon you; and yonder stands one of your enemies, smiling malevolently. Perhaps he is really thinking of Arnal's last pun; but it is all the same to you. The pun would not have seemed so inimitable to him but for your ruin. You read your own sudden insignificance even in looks of indifference. Friends who used to dine at your table become of the opinion that three courses were an extravagance. Your faults are patent to the eyes of everybody; ingratitude having nothing more to expect, proclaims itself openly; every idiot predicted your misfortunes. The malicious tear you to pieces; those who are even more malicious profess to pity you. And then come a hundred paltry details. Nausea succeeds to grief. You have been wont to indulge in wine; you must now drink cider. Two servants, — two! Why, one will be too many. It will be necessary to discharge



this one, and get rid of that one. Flowers in your garden are superfluous; you should plant it with potatoes. You used to make presents of your fruits to friends; you must send them to market hereafter. As to the poor, it will be absurd to think of giving anything to them. Are you not poor yourself? And then there is the painful question of dress. To have to deny your wife a ribbon, what torture! To have to refuse a dress to one who has made you a gift of her beauty; to haggle over such matters, like a miser! Perhaps she will say to you, "What! rob my garden of its flowers, and now refuse me one for my bonnet!" Ah me! to have to condemn her to shabby dresses. The family table is silent. You fancy that those seated around it think harshly of you. Beloved faces have become clouded. This is what is meant by falling fortunes. It is to die daily. To be struck down is like a blast from a furnace; to decay like this is like being burned by inches.

An overwhelming blow is a sort of Waterloo, a slow decay, a St. Helena. Destiny, in the guise of Wellington, still has some dignity; but how sordid it appears in the shape of Hudson Lowe. Fate then becomes a paltry huckster. We find the man of Campo Formio quarrelling about a pair of stockings; we see that dwarfing of Napoleon which degrades England even more.

Waterloo and St. Helena! Reduced to humbler proportions, every ruined man has passed through those two phases.

On the evening which we have mentioned, and which was one of the first evenings in May, Lethierry, leaving Déruchette to walk alone by moonlight in the garden, had gone to bed more depressed than ever.

All these sordid and repulsive details connected with pecuniary misfortunes; all these petty cares, which are at first merely tiresome, but subsequently harassing, were

revolving in his mind. A dull load of misery! Mess Lethierry felt that his fall was irremediable. What could he do? What would become of them? What privations would he be compelled to impose on Déruchette? Whom should he discharge, — Douce or Grace? Would they have to sell the Bravées? Would they not be compelled to leave the island? To be nothing where he had been everything, — it was a terrible fall indeed!

And to know that the good old times had gone forever! To recall those journeys to and fro, uniting France with these numerous islands; the Tuesday's departure, the Friday's return, the crowd on the quay, the large cargoes, the industry, the prosperity, that proud direct navigation, that machinery embodying the will of man, that all-powerful boiler! The steamboat is really only the compass perfected, inasmuch as the needle indicates the direct course, and the steam-vessel follows it. One suggests, the other executes. Where was she now, his Durande, that mistress of the seas, that queen who had made him a king? To have been so long the leading man on the island, a successful man too, a man who had revolutionized navigation; and then to have to give up everything, — to abdicate! To cease to exist, to become a by-word, a laughing stock! To become a thing of the past, after having so long represented the future. To be degraded to an object of pity to fools, to witness the triumph of routine, obstinacy, conservatism, selfishness, ignorance! To see the old barbarous sailing cutters crawling to and fro upon the sea; to see old prejudices revive again; to have wasted a whole lifetime; to have been a shining light, and then suffer this eclipse. Ah, what a fine sight it was upon the waves, that noble funnel, that huge cylinder, that pillar with its column of smoke, — a column grander than that on the Place Vendôme; for on that there was only a figure of a man, while

on this stood Progress. The ocean was subdued; it was certainty upon the open sea. And had all this been witnessed in that little island, in that little harbour, in that little town of St. Sampson? Yes; it had been witnessed. And could it be, that having seen it, it had all vanished to be seen no more?

This series of regrets tortured Lethierry. There is such a thing as a mental sobbing. Never, perhaps, had he felt his misfortunes more acutely. A sort of numbness follows this acute suffering. Under this burden of sorrow, he gradually sank into a doze.

For about two hours he remained in this state, feverish, sleeping a little, dreaming a good deal. Such torpor is accompanied with a feverish action of the brain, which is inexpressibly wearisome. Towards the middle of the night, a little before or a little after midnight, he shook off his lethargy, aroused himself, and opened his eyes. His window was directly in front of his hammock. He saw something extraordinary.

A form stood in front of his window,—a marvellous form. It was the funnel of a steam-vessel.

Mess Lethierry started, and sat upright in bed. The hammock oscillated like a bough in a tempest. Lethierry stared. A vision filled the window-frame. There was the harbour flooded with moonlight, and in the glitter, close to his house, stood out, tall and round and black, a magnificent object.

The funnel of a steamboat!

Lethierry sprang out of his hammock, ran to the window, lifted the sash, leaned out, and recognized it.

It was the smoke-pipe of the Durande he saw. It stood in the old place.

Four chains supported it, made fast to the bulwarks of a vessel, the irregular outlines of which he could dimly distinguish beneath the funnel.

Lethierry recoiled, turned his back to the window, and dropped in a sitting posture into his hammock again.

Then he returned, and once again beheld the vision.

An instant afterwards, or in about the time occupied by a flash of lightning, he was out on the quay, with a lantern in his hand.

A large sloop laden with some big unwieldy object, out of which rose the smoke-stack he had seen from the window of the Bravées, was made fast to the mooring-ring of the Durande. The bows of the sloop extended beyond the corner of the house, and were level with the quay.

There was no one aboard.

The vessel was of a peculiar shape. Any Guernsey man would have recognized it. It was the old Dutch sloop.

Lethierry jumped aboard, and ran forward to the mass which he saw beyond the mast.

The boiler was there, entire, complete, intact, standing square and firm upon its cast-iron flooring. Not a rivet was missing; the axle of the paddle-wheels had been lifted and made fast near the boiler; the pump was in place; nothing was lacking.

Lethierry examined the machinery.

The lantern and the moon helped him in his scrutiny.

He went over every part of the machinery.

He noted the two cases on the sides of the vessel. He examined the axle of the wheels.

He went into the little cabin; it was empty.

He returned to the engine, and felt it, looked into the boiler, and knelt down to examine it inside.

He placed his lantern inside the furnace, where the light, illuminating all the machinery, produced almost the illusion of an engine-room with its fire.

Then he burst into a wild laugh, sprang to his feet, and

with his eye fixed on the engine, and his arms outstretched towards the funnel, he cried aloud, "Help, help!"

The harbour bell was on the quay, a few yards away. He ran to it, seized the rope, and began to pull it violently.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE HARBOUR BELL AGAIN.

GILLIATT, after a passage that was uneventful but rather slow on account of the heavy cargo he had aboard, reached St. Sampson after dark, and at nearer ten than nine o'clock.

He had calculated the time. The half-flood had arrived. There was plenty of water, and the moon was shining; so he was able to enter the port without difficulty.

The little harbour was silent. A few vessels were moored there, with their sails brailed up to the yards, the yards on the caps, and without lanterns. At the far end a few others were visible, high and dry in the carenage, where they were undergoing repairs, — large hulls dismasted and stripped, with their planking open at various parts, and looking like huge dead beetles lying on their backs with their legs in the air.

As soon as he had passed the mouth of the harbour, Gilliatt examined the port and the quay. There was no light to be seen either at the Bravées or elsewhere. The place was deserted, save, perhaps, by some one going to or returning from the parsonage; nor was it possible to be sure of this even; for the night blurred every outline, and the moonlight always gives to objects a vague appearance. The distance added to the indistinctness. The parsonage at that time was situated on the other side of the harbour, where a shipyard now stands.

Gilliatt approached the Bravées quietly, and made the sloop fast to the ring of the *Durande*, under Mess

Lethierry's window. Then he leaped over the bulwarks to the shore.

Leaving the sloop behind him at the quay, he turned the corner of the house, passed up a little narrow street, then along another, did not even notice the pathway which branched off leading to the Bû de la Rue, and in a few minutes found himself at that corner of the wall where in June there were wild mallows with pink flowers, as well as holly, ivy, and nettles. Many a time seated on a stone, behind the bushes, on summer days, he had watched here for hours, even for whole months through a gap in the wall the garden of the Bravées and the two windows of a little room seen through the branches of the trees. The stone was there still, and the bushes, the low place in the wall, and the garden, as quiet and dark as ever. Like an animal returning to its lair, gliding rather than walking, he made his way in. Once seated there, he made no sound, but looked around, and beheld again the garden, the pathways, the flowerbeds, the house, the two windows of the chamber. The moon flooded the scene with her silvery light. Gilliatt scarcely dared to breathe, and did all he could to prevent it.

He seemed to be gazing on a vision of paradise, and was afraid that it would vanish. It seemed almost impossible that these things could be really before his eyes; and if they were, it could only be with that imminent danger of melting into air which belongs to things divine. A breath, and the vision would fade away. He shuddered at the thought.

Before him, not far off, on the side of one of the paths in the garden, was a wooden bench painted green. The reader will remember this seat.

Gilliatt looked up at the two windows. He thought of the slumber of one who was possibly in that room. Be-

hind that wall she was no doubt sleeping. He wished himself elsewhere, yet would sooner have died than go away. He pictured her lying there, her bosom rising softly with her gentle breathing. It was she, — that beauteous vision, that creature of spotless purity whose image haunted him day and night. She was there! He thought of her so far removed, and yet so near as to be almost within reach of his ecstasy. He thought of that fair being so long and ardently desired, so distant, so impalpable, with closed eyelids, and face resting on her hand; of the mystery of sleep in its relations with that pure spirit, of what dreams might come to one who was herself a dream. He dared not think beyond, and yet he did. He ventured on those familiarities which a lover's fancy prompts; the thought of how much of the woman there might be in this angelic being disturbed his thoughts. The darkness of night emboldens timid imaginations to take these furtive glances. He was vexed within himself, feeling on reflection as if it were profanity to think of her so boldly; yet still constrained, in spite of himself, he tremblingly gazed into the invisible. He shuddered almost with a sense of pain as he pictured her room, a skirt hanging on a chair, a mantle fallen on the carpet, a belt unbuckled, a handkerchief. He imagined her corset with its lacing trailing on the ground, her stockings, her little shoes. His soul was among the stars.

The stars are made for the human heart of a poor man like Gilliatt no less than for that of the rich and great. There is a certain degree of passion by which every man becomes enveloped in a celestial light. With a rough and primitive nature, this truth is even more applicable. An uncultivated mind is especially susceptible to such fancies.

Delight is a fulness which overflows like any other.



To see those windows was almost too much happiness for Gilliatt.

Suddenly, he beheld the object of his thoughts before him.

From the branches of a clump of bushes, already densely covered with foliage, issued with spectral slowness a celestial figure, a divine face.

Gilliatt felt his strength failing him. It was Déruchette.

Déruchette approached, then paused, walked back a few yards, stopped again, then returned and seated herself upon the wooden bench. The moon shone brightly through the branches, a few clouds floated among the pale stars; the sea murmured to the shadows in an undertone, the town was sleeping, a thin haze was rising from the horizon, the melancholy was profound. Déruchette inclined her head, with those thoughtful eyes which gaze intently yet see nothing. She had nothing on her head but a little cap which showed the beginning of her hair upon her delicate neck. As she sat twisting one of the ribbon strings of her cap mechanically around her finger the half light made her hands seem like those of a statue; her dress was of one of those shades that look white at night: the trees stirred as if they felt the enchantment which she shed around her. The tip of one foot was visible. Her lowered eyelids had that vague contraction which suggests a tear checked in its course, or a thought suppressed. There was a charming indecision in the movements of her arms, which had no support to lean on; a sort of floating grace mingled with every posture; the folds of her dress were exquisite; her face, which might inspire adoration, was meditative, like portraits of the Virgin. It was terrible to think how near she was: Gilliatt could hear her breathe.

A nightingale was singing in the distance. The soft

whispering of the breezes among the branches only seemed to intensify the silence of the night. Déruchette, beautiful, divine, looked in the dim light like a creation from those rays and from the perfumes in the air. That wide-spread enchantment seemed to concentrate and embody itself mysteriously in her; she became its living manifestation. She seemed the out-blossoming of all that shadow and silence.

But the shadow and silence which floated so lightly about her weighed heavily on Gilliatt. He was bewildered; what he experienced is not to be told in words. Emotion is always new, and the word is always enough. Hence the impossibility of expressing it. Joy is sometimes overwhelming. To see Déruchette, to see her herself, to see her dress, her cap, her ribbon, which she twined around her finger, — was it possible to imagine it? Was it possible to be thus near her; to hear her breathe? She breathed! then the stars might breathe also. Gilliatt felt a thrill through him. He was the most miserable and yet the happiest of men. He knew not what to do. His delirious joy at seeing her annihilated him. Was it indeed Déruchette there, and he so near? His thoughts, bewildered and yet intent, were fascinated by that figure as by a dazzling jewel. He gazed upon her neck — her hair. He did not even say to himself that all this would soon belong to him, that before long, — to-morrow, perhaps, — he would have the right to take off that cap, to unknot that ribbon. He was not guilty of the audacity of even thinking of such a thing. Touching in fancy is almost like touching with the hand. Love was to Gilliatt like honey to the bear, — an exquisite dream. He thought confusedly; he knew not what possessed him. The nightingale sang on. He felt as if he were breathing his very life out.

The idea of rising, of jumping over the wall, of speak-

ing to Déruchette, never once occurred to him. If it had, he would have turned and fled. If anything resembling a thought had begun to dawn in his mind, it was this: that Déruchette was there, that he asked nothing more, and that eternity had begun.

A noise aroused them both, her from her reverie, him from his ecstasy.

Some one was walking in the garden though it was impossible to see who was approaching on account of the trees. It was certainly the footstep of a man they heard.

Déruchette raised her eyes.

The sound came nearer, then ceased. The person walking had stopped. He must have been quite near. The path beside which the bench stood, wound between two clumps of trees. The stranger was there in the alley between the trees, a few yards from the seat.

Accident had so placed the branches that Déruchette could see the new-comer, but Gilliatt could not.

The moon cast on the ground beyond the trees a shadow which reached to the garden seat.

Gilliatt could see this shadow.

He looked at Déruchette.

She was quite pale; her mouth was partly open, as with a suppressed cry of surprise. She half arose from the bench, and sank back on it again. There was in her attitude a sort of fascination mingled with a desire to fly. Her surprise was enchantment mingled with timidity. She had a smile on her lips, with a fulness like tears in her eyes. She seemed transfigured by that presence, as if the being whom she saw before her did not belong to earth. The reflection of an angel was in her look.

The stranger, who was to Gilliatt only a shadow, spoke. A voice issued from the trees, softer than the voice of a woman, though it was the voice of a man. Gilliatt heard these words:—

“I see you, mademoiselle, every Sunday and every Thursday. They tell me that you were not in the habit of coming so often formerly. I beg your pardon for repeating the remark. I have never spoken to you; it was my duty. I speak to you to-day, for it is still my duty. It is right that I speak to you first. The “Cashmere,” sails to-morrow. This is why I have come. You walk every evening in your garden. It would be wrong of me to know your habits so well, if I had not the thought that I have. Mademoiselle, you are poor; since this morning I have become rich. Will you have me for your husband?”

Déruchette clasped her two hands imploringly, and gazed at the speaker, silent, with fixed eyes, and trembling from head to foot.

The voice continued, —

“I love you. God does not wish man to silence the voice of his heart. He has promised him eternity with the intention that he should not be alone. There is but one woman on earth for me. It is you. I think of you as of a prayer. My faith is in God, and my hope is in you. You are my life, and already my supreme happiness.”

“Sir,” said Déruchette, “there is no one in the house to answer!”

The voice rose again: —

“Yes, I have encouraged this dream. Heaven has not forbidden us to dream. You are like an angel in my eyes. I love you deeply, mademoiselle. To me you are holy innocence personified. I know it is an hour when your household have retired to rest, but I could not choose my time. Do you remember that passage of the Bible which some one read before us; it was the twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis. I have thought of it often since. M. Hérode said to me, ‘You must have a rich wife.’

I replied, 'No, I want a poor wife.' I say this to you, mademoiselle, without venturing to approach you; I will step even farther back if it be your wish that my shadow should not touch your feet. Your will is my law. You will come to me if such is your will. I love and wait. You are the living form of a benediction."

"I did not know, sir, that any one noticed me on Sundays and Thursdays," stammered Déruchette.

The voice continued, —

"We are powerless against it. The whole Law is love. Marriage is Canaan; you are to me the promised land of beauty."

Déruchette replied, "I do not mean to do wrong any more than persons who are much more strict."

The voice continued, —

"God manifests his will in the flowers, in the light of dawn, and in the gentle springtime; love, too, is of his ordaining. You are beautiful in this holy shadow of night. This garden has been tended by you; in its perfumes there is something of your breath. The affinities of our souls do not depend on us. They cannot be counted with our sins. You were there, that was all. I was there, that was all. I did nothing but feel that I loved you. Sometimes my eyes rested upon you. I was wrong, but what could I do? It was through looking at you that it all happened. I could not restrain my gaze. There are mysterious impulses which are beyond our control. The heart is the noblest of all temples. To have your presence in my home, — that is the terrestrial paradise for which I long. Say, will you be mine? As long as I was poor, I spoke not. I know your age. You are twenty-one; I am twenty-six. I go to-morrow; if you refuse me, I return no more. Oh, be my betrothed; will you not? More than once have my eyes, in spite of myself, addressed that question to you. I

love you; answer me. I will speak to your uncle as soon as he is able to receive me; but I turn first to you. To Rebecca I plead for Rebecca, — unless you love me not.”

Déruchette hung her head, and murmured, —  
“Oh, I adore him!”

The words were spoken in a voice so low that only Gilliatt heard them.

She remained with her head lowered, as if by shading her face she hoped to conceal her thoughts.

There was a pause. Not a leaf stirred. It was one of those solemn and peaceful moments when inanimate objects appear to share the slumber of living creatures, and night seems to be listening to the beating of Nature’s heart. In the midst of that retirement, like a harmony making the silence more complete, rose the wild murmur of the sea.

The voice was heard again.

“Mademoiselle!”

Déruchette started.

Again the voice spoke.

“You are silent.”

“What would you have me say?”

“I wait for your reply.”

“God has heard it,” said Déruchette.

Then the voice became almost sonorous, and at the same time softer than before, and these words issued from the leaves as from a burning bush: —

“You are my betrothed. Then come to me. Let the blue sky, with all its stars, witness this taking of my soul to thine; and let our first embrace be mingled with that firmament.”

Déruchette arose and remained an instant motionless, looking straight before her, doubtless into another’s eyes; then, with slow steps, with head erect, her arms droop-

ing, but with the fingers of her hands wide apart, like one who leans on some unseen support, she moved towards the trees, and out of sight.

A moment afterwards, instead of one shadow upon the gravelled walk, there were two; then they intermingled. Gilliatt saw at his feet the embrace of those two shadows.

There are moments when we are entirely unconscious of the flight of time. These two enraptured lovers, who were ignorant of the presence of a witness, and saw him not; this witness of their joy who could not see them, but who knew of their presence, — how long did they remain in this sort of trance? It would be impossible to say. Suddenly a noise burst forth at a distance. A voice was heard crying "Help!" and the harbour bell began to ring. It is probable that in their celestial transports of delight they heard no echo of the tumult.

The bell continued to ring. Any one who sought Gilliatt then at the corner of the wall would have failed to find him.

BOOK II.  
GRATITUDE AND DESPOTISM.

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CHAPTER I.

JOY MINGLED WITH ANGUISH.

MESS LETHIERRY pulled the bell furiously, then stopped abruptly. A man had just turned the corner of the quay. It was Gilliatt.

Lethierry ran towards him, or rather flung himself upon him, seized his hand, and looked him in the face for a moment without uttering a word. It was the silence of an explosion struggling to find a vent.

Then pulling and shaking and hugging him with all his might, he compelled him to enter the lower room of the Bravées, pushed back with his heel the door which had remained half opened, sat down, or sank into a chair beside a great table lighted by the moon, the reflection of which seemed to impart a strange pallor to Gilliatt's face, and with a voice of mingled laughter and tears, cried:—

“Ah, my son! my player of the bagpipe! I knew that it was you. The sloop, *parbleu!* Tell me the story. You went there, then. Why, they would have burned you a hundred years ago! It is magic! There is n't a screw missing. I have looked at everything already, examined everything, and handled everything. I



guessed that the paddles were in the two cases. And here you are once more! I looked in the little cabin for you. I rang the bell. I wanted to see you. I said to myself, 'Where is he?' I could wait no longer. You must admit that wonderful things do come to pass. You have brought me back to life again. *Tonnerre!* you are an angel! Yes, yes; it is my engine! Nobody will believe it; people will see it, and say, 'It can't be true.' Not a tap, not a pin is missing. The feed-pipe has not budged an inch. It is incredible that there should have been no more damage. We have only to put on a little oil. But how did you accomplish it? To think that the *Durande* will be moving again. The axle of the wheels must have been taken to pieces by some watchmaker. Give me your word of honour that I am not crazy."

He sprang to his feet, breathed a moment, and continued:—

"Swear it, I say! What a change. I had to pinch myself to be certain I was not dreaming. You are my child, you are my son, you are my Providence! Brave lad! to go and fetch my good old engine! And in the open sea, among those awful rocks! I have seen some strange things in my life, but nothing to equal this. I have known Parisians who were positive demons, but I'd defy them to have done this. It beats the Bastille. I have seen *gauchos* ploughing in the *Pampas*, with a crooked branch of a tree for a plough and a bundle of thorn-bushes for a harrow, dragged by a leathern strap; they get harvests of wheat that way, with grains as big as hazel-nuts. But that is a trifle compared with your feats. You have performed a miracle,—a real one. Ah, *gredin!* let me hug you. How they will gossip in St. Sampson. I shall set to work at once to rebuild the boat. It is astonishing that the crank is all right. Gentlemen, he has been to the *Douvres*: I say, to the *Douvres!* He

went alone to the Douvres! I defy you to find a worse spot. Do you know, have they told you, that it's proved that Clubin sent the Durande to the bottom to swindle me out of money which had been intrusted to him for me. He made Tangrouille drunk. It's a long story. I'll tell you all about his piratical tricks, some day. I, stupid idiot, had confidence in Clubin. But he trapped himself, the villain, for he could n't have got away. There is a God above, my boy! We'll begin to re-build the Durande at once, Gilliatt. We'll have her twenty feet longer. They build them longer now than they did. I'll buy the wood from Dantzic and Bremen. Now I have got the machinery, they will give me credit again. They'll have confidence now."

Mess Lethierry stopped, turned his eyes devoutly heavenward, and muttered, "Yes, there is a power on high!"

Then he placed the middle finger of his right hand between his two eyebrows, and tapped with his nail there, — an action which indicates an important project passing through the mind, and continued: —

"Nevertheless, to begin again, on a grand scale, a little ready money would have been useful. Ah, if I only had my three bank-notes, — the seventy-five thousand francs that scoundrel Rantaine returned, and that villain Clubin stole."

Gilliatt silently felt in his pocket, and drew out something which he placed before Mess Lethierry. It was the leather belt that he had brought back. He opened it, and spread it out on the table; on the inside the word "Clubin" could be deciphered even in the light of the moon. He then took out of the pocket of the belt a box, and out of the box three pieces of paper, which he unfolded and handed to Lethierry.

Lethierry examined them. It was light enough to see

the figure "1000," and the word "*thousand*" was also perfectly visible. Mess Lethierry took the three notes, laid them on the table one after the other, looked at them, looked at Gilliatt, stood for a moment dumb; and then began again, like an eruption after an explosion:—

"These too! You are a marvel. My bank-notes! all three—of a thousand pounds each. My seventy-five thousand francs. Why, you must have gone down to the infernal regions. It is Clubin's belt. *Pardieu!* I can read his vile name. Gilliatt has brought back engine and money too. There will be something to put in the papers now. I will buy some timber of the finest quality. I guess how it was; you found his miserable carcass mouldering away in some corner. We'll have some Dantzic pine and Bremen oak; we'll have a first-rate planking,—oak within and pine without. In old times they did n't build so well, but their work lasted longer; the wood was better seasoned, because they did not build so much. We'll build the hull of elm perhaps. Elm is good for the parts in the water. To be sometimes dry, and sometimes wet, rots the timbers; elm needs to be always wet; it's a wood that feeds upon water. What a splendid *Durande* we'll build. The lawyers will not trouble me again. I shall want no more credit. I have some money of my own. Did anybody ever see a man like Gilliatt? I was struck all of a heap,—I was a dead man! He comes and sets me up again as firm as ever! And all the while I never once thought about him,—he had gone clean out of my mind; but I recollect everything now. Poor lad! Ah, by the way, you know you are to marry *Déruchette*."

Gilliatt leaned back against the wall, like one who staggers, and said in a tone that was very low but distinct:—

"No."

Mess Lethierry started.

"How, no!"

"I do not love her," Gilliatt replied.

Mess Lethierry went to the window, opened and re-closed it, picked up the three bank-notes, folded them, placed the iron box on top of them, scratched his head, seized Clubin's belt, flung it violently against the wall, and exclaimed:—

"You must be mad!"

He thrust his fists into his pockets, and exclaimed:

"You don't love Déruchette? What! was it at me, then, that you used to play the bagpipe?"

Gilliatt, still supporting himself by the wall, turned as pale as death. As he became paler, Lethierry became redder.

"Here's an idiot for you! He does n't love Déruchette. Very good; make up your mind to love her, for she shall never marry any one but you. A devilish pretty story that; and you think that I believe you! If there is anything really the matter with you, send for a doctor; but don't talk nonsense. You can't have had time to quarrel, or get out of temper with her. It is true that lovers are great fools sometimes. Come now, what are your reasons? If you have any, tell me. People don't make such geese of themselves without some reason. But I have a piece of cotton in my ears; perhaps I didn't understand. Repeat what you said."

Gilliatt replied, —

"I said, No!"

"You said, No. He sticks to it, the lunatic! You must be crazy. You said, No. Here's a stupidity beyond anything ever heard of. Why, people have had their heads shaved for much less than that. What! you don't like Déruchette? Oh, then, it was out of affection for the old man that you did all these things? It was for

the sake of papa that you went to the Douvres, that you endured cold and heat, and almost died of hunger and thirst, and ate limpets off the rocks, and had the fog, the rain, and the wind for your bedroom, and brought me back my machinery, just as you might bring a pretty woman her little canary that had escaped from its cage. And that tempest we had three days ago. Do you think I don't remember that? You must have had a fine time of it! It was in the midst of all this misery, alongside of my old craft, that you shaped, and cut, and turned, and twisted, and dragged about, and filed, and sawed, and carpentered, and schemed, and performed more miracles there by yourself than all the saints in paradise. Ah, you annoyed me enough once with your bagpipe. They call it a *biniau* in Brittany. Always the same tune, too, silly fellow. And yet you don't love Déruchette? I don't know what is the matter with you. I recollect it all now. I was there in the corner; Déruchette said, 'He shall be my husband;' and so you shall. You don't love her! Either you must be mad, or else I am mad. And you stand there, and won't say a word. I tell you you are not at liberty to do all the things you have done, and then say, 'I don't love Déruchette.' People don't do other people services in order to put them in a passion. Well; if you don't marry her, she shall remain single all her life. In the first place, I need you. You must be the captain of the *Durande*. Do you imagine I mean to part with you like this? No, no, my brave boy; I won't let you off! I have got you now; I'm not even going to listen to you. Where can I find a sailor like you? You are the man I want. But why don't you speak?"

Meanwhile the harbour bell had aroused the household and the neighbourhood. Douce and Grace had risen, and now entered the lower room, silent and astonished. Grace had a candle in her hand. A group of neighbours, towns-

people, sailors, and labourers, who had rushed out of their houses, were outside on the quay, gazing in wonder at the funnel of the *Durande* and the sloop. Some, hearing Lethierry's voice in the lower room, began to slip in through the half-open door. Between the faces of two worthy old women appeared that of *Sieur Landoys*, who seemed to have a happy faculty of always being where he wanted to be.

Men feel a satisfaction in having witnesses of their joy. The sort of scattered support which a crowd gives, pleases them at such times; they seem to draw new life from it. *Mess Lethierry* suddenly perceived that there were people around him; and he welcomed the audience at once.

"So you are here, my friends! I am very glad to see you. You know the news? That man has been there, and brought it back. How d'ye do, *Sieur Landoys*? When I woke up just now, the first thing I spied was the smoke-stack. It was under my window. There's not a nail missing. They rave about *Napoleon's* exploits; but I think more of this than of the battle of *Austerlitz*. You have just left your beds, my good friends. The *Durande* caught you napping. While you are putting on your night-caps and blowing out your candles there are others working like heroes. We are a set of cowards and do-nothings; we sit at home rubbing our rheumatic limbs; but happily that does not prevent there being some men of another stamp. The man of the *Bû de la Rue* has arrived from the *Douvres*. He has fished up the *Durande* from the bottom of the sea; and fished up my money out of *Clubin's* pocket, from a still greater depth. But how did you contrive to do it? All the powers of darkness were against you, the wind and the sea, the sea and the wind. It must be true that you are a magician. Those who say so are not so stupid after all. The Du-

rande is back again. The tempests may rage now; this cuts the ground from under their feet. My friends, I can inform you that there was no shipwreck after all. I have examined all the machinery. It is as good as new, — perfect. The valves move as easily as rollers. You would think they were made yesterday. You know that the waste water is carried away by a pipe inside another pipe, through which the water passes to the boilers; this is to economize heat. Well; the two pipes are there just as good as new. So is the entire engine, in fact. She is all there, paddle-wheels and all. Ah, he shall marry her!”

“Marry the engine?” asked *Sieur Landoys*.

“No, the girl; yes, the engine, — both of them. He shall be my double son-in-law. He shall be her captain. Good-day, Captain *Gilliatt*; for there will soon be a captain of the *Durande*. We are going to do a thundering business again. There will be trade and passengers and big cargoes of oxen and sheep. I would n’t exchange *St. Sampson* for London now. And there stands the author of all this good fortune. It is a strange adventure, I can tell you. You will read about it on Saturday in old *Mauger’s ‘Gazette.’* What’s the meaning of these *louis-d’ors* here?”

For *Mess Lethierry* had just noticed that there was some gold in the box that lay on the notes. He seized it, opened and emptied it into the palm of his hand, and put the handful of guineas on the table.

“For the poor, *Sieur Landoys*. Give those sovereigns to the constable of *St. Sampson* from me. You recollect *Rantaine’s* letter. I showed it to you. Very well; I’ve got the bank-notes. Now we can buy some oak and fir, and go to carpentering. Look you! Do you remember the gale three days ago, — that hurricane of wind and rain? *Gilliatt* endured all that out on the *Douvres*. That did n’t prevent his taking the wreck to pieces, as I

might take my watch. Thanks to him, I am on my legs again. Old 'Lethierry's galley' is going to run again, ladies and gentlemen. A nut-shell with a couple of wheels and a funnel. I always had that idea. I used to say to myself, I will certainly do it some day. That was a long time ago. The idea came in my head one day in Paris, at the coffee-house on the corner of the Rue Christine and the Rue Dauphine, while I was reading a paper that contained an account of the new invention. Do you know that Gilliatt would think nothing of putting that engine at Marly in his pocket and walking off with it? He is wrought-iron, that man; tempered steel; a sailor that can't be beat, an excellent smith, an extraordinary fellow, much cleverer than the Prince of Hohenlohe. He is what I call a man of brain. We are children in comparison with him. We may think ourselves sea-wolves, but there is the sea-lion! Hurrah for Gilliatt! I do not know how he managed it. He certainly must be the very devil! And how can I do otherwise than give him *Déruchette*?"

*Déruchette* had been in the room several minutes. She had not spoken or moved since she entered. She had glided in like a shadow and sat down almost unperceived just back of where Mess Lethierry was standing, loquacious, excited, joyful, gesticulating wildly, and talking in a loud voice. A little while afterwards another silent apparition entered. A man attired in black, with a white cravat, holding his hat in his hand, appeared in the doorway. There were now several candles in the group, which had gradually increased in number. These lights were near the man attired in black. His profile and youthful and pleasing complexion showed itself against the dark background with the clearness of an engraving on a medal. He leaned his shoulder against the frame of the door, and held his left hand to his forehead, — an attitude of unstudied grace, which made his



brow look even broader than it really was by reason of the smallness of his hand. There was an expression of anguish in his contracted lips, as he looked on and listened with profound attention. The by-standers recognizing M. Caudray, the rector of the parish, had stepped back to allow him to pass; but he remained upon the threshold. There was hesitation in his posture, but decision in his eyes, which now and then met those of Déruchette. With regard to Gilliatt, whether by chance or design, he was in shadow, and could not be seen distinctly.

At first Mess Lethierry did not observe Caudray, but he saw Déruchette. He went to her and kissed her affectionately on the forehead, pointing at the same time towards the dark corner where Gilliatt was standing.

“Déruchette,” he said, “we are rich again; and there is your future husband.”

Déruchette raised her head, and looked towards the dusky corner, in evident bewilderment.

“The marriage will take place immediately, to-morrow, if possible,” Mess Lethierry continued. “We will have a special license; the formalities here are not very troublesome; the dean can do what he pleases; people are married before they have time to turn round. It is not as it is in France, where you must have bans, and publications, and delays, and all that fuss. You will be able to boast of being the wife of a brave man. No one can say he is not. I thought so from the day when I saw him come back from Herm with the little cannon. But now he comes back from the Douvres with his fortune and mine, and the fortune of this country. A man of whom the world will have plenty to say some day. You said you would marry him, and you shall marry him; and you will have little children, and I will be a grandfather, and you will have the good fortune to be the wife

of a noble fellow, who can work and who can be of use to his fellow-men, — a surprising fellow, worth a hundred others; a man who can rescue other people's inventions, a providence! At all events, you will not have married, like so many other silly girls about here, a soldier or a priest, — that is, a man who kills or a man who lies. But what are you doing there, Gilliatt? Nobody can see you. Douce, Grace, everybody, bring a light, I say. Show up my son-in-law for me. I betroth you to each other, my children; here stands your husband, and here is my son, — Gilliatt of the Bû de la Rue, this noble fellow, this splendid sailor. I will have no other son-in-law, and you no other husband; I pledge my word to that once more in God's name. Ah, you are here, Monsieur the Curé. You must marry these young people for me."

Lethierry's eye had just lighted on Caudray.

Douce and Grace had done as they were directed. Two candles placed on a neighbouring table illumined Gilliatt from head to foot.

"There's a fine fellow for you," said Mess Lethierry.

Gilliatt's appearance was appalling.

He was in the same condition in which he had that morning set sail from the rocks, — in rags, his bare elbows showing through his sleeves, his beard long, his hair rough and wild, his eyes bloodshot, his skin peeling, his hands covered with wounds, his feet naked. Some of the blisters left by the devil-fish were still visible upon his arms.

Lethierry gazed at him admiringly, nevertheless.

"This is my son-in-law," he said. "See how he has struggled with the sea. He's in rags, but what shoulders and hands! There's a fine fellow for you!"

Grace ran to Déruchette and supported her head. She had fainted.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE LEATHER TRUNK.

BY daybreak all St. Sampson was up and out and the people of St. Peter's Port began to flock there. The resurrection of the *Durande* caused a commotion in the island equal to that caused by the miracle of Salette in the south of France. There was a crowd on the quay staring at the funnel standing erect in the sloop. They were anxious to see and handle the machinery; but Lethierry, after making a new and triumphant survey of the whole by daylight, had placed two sailors aboard with instructions to prevent any one from approaching it. The smoke-stack, however, furnished sufficient food for contemplation. The crowd gaped with astonishment. They talked of nothing but Gilliatt. They remarked on his nickname of "Wicked Gilliatt;" and their admiring comments generally ended with the remark, "It is not pleasant to have people on the island who can do things like that."

Mess Lethierry was seen from outside the house, seated at a table before the window, writing, with one eye on the paper and another on the sloop. He was so completely absorbed that he had only stopped once to call Douce and ask after *Déruchette*. "Mademoiselle has risen, and has gone out," Douce replied. "She is wise to go out for a little air," answered Lethierry. "She was a little faint last night, owing to the heat. There was a crowd in the room. This, and her surprise and joy, and the windows

being all closed, overcame her. She will have a husband to be proud of." Then he resumed his writing. He had already finished and sealed two letters, addressed to the most important ship-builders at Bremen. He soon finished a third.

A sound upon the quay caused him to look up. He leaned out of the window, and saw coming up the path which led from the Bû de la Rue, a boy pushing a wheelbarrow. The lad was going towards St. Peter's Port. In the barrow was a portmanteau of brown leather, studded with brass nails.

"Where are you going, my lad?" shouted Mess Lethierry.

The boy stopped, and replied,—

"To the 'Cashmere.'"

"What for?"

"To take this trunk aboard."

"Very good; you can take these three letters too."

Mess Lethierry opened his table drawer, took out a piece of string, tied the three letters which he had just written together, and threw the packet to the boy, who caught it between his hands.

"Tell the captain of the 'Cashmere' they are my letters, and to take good care of them. They are for Germany,—Bremen *via* London."

"I can't speak to the captain, Mess Lethierry."

"Why not?"

"The 'Cashmere' is not at the quay."

"Ah!"

"She is in the roads."

"Ay, true; on account of the tide."

"I can only speak to the man who takes the things aboard."

"You will tell him, then, to attend to the letters."

"Very well, Mess Lethierry."

"At what time does the 'Cashmere' sail?"

"At twelve."

"The tide will be coming in then."

"But the wind is favourable," answered the lad.

"Boy," said Mess Lethierry, pointing with his forefinger to the engine in the sloop, "do you see that? There is something that laughs at winds and tides."

The boy put the letters in his pocket, picked up his barrow again, and went on towards the town. Mess Lethierry called "Douce! Grace!"

Grace opened the door a little way.

"What is it, Mess?"

"Come in and wait a moment."

Mess Lethierry took a sheet of paper, and began to write. If Grace, standing behind him, had been curious, and had leaned forward to see what he was writing, she might have read as follows:—

"I have written to Bremen for the lumber. I have appointments all the morning with carpenters for the estimate. The rebuilding will go on fast. You must go to the Deanery for a licence yourself. It is my wish that the marriage should take place as soon as possible, — immediately would be better. I am busy about the Durande. Do you busy yourself about Déruchette."

He dated it, and signed "Lethierry." He did not take the trouble to seal it, but merely folded it, and handed it to Grace, saying, —

"Take that to Gilliatt."

"To the Bû de la Rue?"

"To the Bû de la Rue."

## BOOK III.

### THE DEPARTURE OF THE CASHMERE.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE HAVELET NEAR THE CHURCH.

WHEN there is a crowd at St. Sampson, St. Peter's Port is deserted. An object of curiosity at any given place is like an air-pump. News travels fast in small places. Going to see the funnel of the Durande under Mess Lethierry's window had been, since sunrise, the business of the Guernsey folks. Every other event was eclipsed by this. The death of the dean of St. Asaph was forgotten, together with the interest in the Rev. Mr. Caudray, his suddenly acquired wealth, and his intended departure on the "Cashmere." The machinery of the Durande brought back from the Douvres rocks was the topic of the day. People were incredulous. The shipwreck had appeared extraordinary, the salvage seemed impossible. Everybody hastened to assure himself of the truth by the help of his own eyes. Business of every kind was suspended. Long processions of towns-folk with their families, from the "Vesin" up to the "Mess," men and women, gentlemen, mothers with children, infants with dolls, were coming by every road or pathway to see "the thing to be seen" at the Bravées, and turning their backs upon St. Peter's Port. Many shops at St. Peter's Port were closed. In the Commercial Arcade

there was an absolute stagnation in buying and selling. The Durande engrossed everybody's attention. Not a single shopkeeper had made a sale that morning, except a jeweller, who marvelled much at having sold a wedding-ring to "a man who seemed to be in a great hurry, and who asked where the dean's house was." The shops that remained open were centres of gossip, where loungers discussed the miraculous salvage. There was not a promenade on the Hyvreuse, which is known in these days, nobody knows why, as Cambridge Park; no one was visible on High Street, then called the Grande Rue; nor in Smith Street, then known as the Rue des Forges, nor in Hauteville. Even the Esplanade was deserted. One might have supposed it was Sunday. A visit from a royal personage to review the militia at the Anresse could not have drained the town more completely. All this hubbub about a "nobody" like Gilliatt, caused a good deal of shrugging of the shoulders among persons of grave and correct habits.

The church of St. Peter's Port, with its three gable-ends, its transept and steeple, stands near the water's edge at the end of the harbour, and nearly on the landing-place itself, where it welcomes those who arrive, and bids the departing "God-speed." This edifice is the most prominent feature in the long line of buildings on the sea-front of the town.

It is both the parish church of St. Peter's Port and the Deanery of the whole island. Its officiating minister is the surrogate of the bishop, a clergyman invested with full powers.

The harbour of St. Peter's Port, a very fine and large port at the present day was at that epoch, and even up to ten years ago, much smaller than the harbour of St. Sampson. It was enclosed both on the right and left side by massive walls which curved until they almost

met again at the mouth of the harbour, where a little white lighthouse stood. Under this lighthouse a narrow opening, still furnished with two rings for the chain with which it was customary to close the passage in ancient times, formed the only entrance for vessels. The harbour of St. Peter's Port might be compared to the claws of a huge lobster opened a little way. These odd pincers tore a scrap of sea from old ocean and tried to compel it to remain calm. But during easterly winds the waves rolled heavily against the narrow entrance, the harbour was rough, and it was advisable not to enter it. This having been the case on the "Cashmere's" arrival, the vessel had anchored in the roads.

The vessels, during easterly winds, preferred this course, which also saved them the port dues. At such times the boatmen of the town, a hardy race of mariners whom the new harbour has thrown out of employment, came in their boats to fetch passengers from the landing-place or at stations on the shore, and carried them with their luggage, often in heavy seas, but always without accident, to the vessels about to sail. The east wind blows off the shore, and is very favourable for the passage to England; the vessel at such times rolls, but does not pitch.

When a vessel happened to be in the port, everybody embarked from the quay. When it was in the roads they took their choice, and embarked from any point on the coast. In every creek or inlet there was a boat for hire. The Havelet was one of these creeks. The little harbour (for that is the signification of the word) was near the town, but was such a lonely place that it seemed a long way off. This seclusion was due to the shelter afforded by the high cliffs of Fort St. George, which overlooked this retired inlet. The Havelet was accessible by several paths. The most direct was along the water's



edge. This path had the advantage of taking one from the town to the church in five minutes, and the disadvantage of being covered by the sea twice a day. The other paths were more or less abrupt, and led down to the creek through gaps in the steep rocks. Even in broad daylight it was dusk in the Havelet. Huge walls of granite hemmed it in on three sides, and thick bushes and brambles cast a sort of soft twilight upon the rocks and waves below. No spot could be more peaceful than this in calm weather, nor more tumultuous during heavy seas. The ends of some of the branches there were always wet with the foam. In the springtime, the place was full of flowers, of birds nests, of perfumes, of butterflies, and bees. Thanks to recent improvements, this romantic nook no longer exists. Fine straight lines have taken the place of these wild features; masonry, quays, and little gardens have made their appearance; terraces have become the rage, and modern taste has finally subdued the eccentricities of the cliff and the irregularities of the rocks below. •

## CHAPTER II.

### DESPAIR CONFRONTS DESPAIR.

IT was a little before ten o'clock in the morning. The crowd at St. Sampson was apparently increasing. The multitude, feverish with curiosity, was moving towards the north; and the Havelet, which lies to the southward was more deserted than ever.

Notwithstanding this, there was a boat there and a boatman. In the boat was a travelling-bag. The boatman seemed to be waiting for some one.

The "Cashmere" was visible at anchor outside the harbour, and as she did not start till midday there was as yet no movement aboard.

Any one passing along the cliffs overhead might have heard the murmur of conversation in the Havelet, and if he had leaned over the overhanging cliff might have seen, some distance from the boat, in a nook among the rocks and bushes, where the eye of the boatman could not reach them, a man and a woman. It was Caudray and Déruchette.

These quiet nooks on the sea-shore, the favourite haunts of lady bathers, are not always so solitary as is believed. One is sometimes observed and watched there. Those who seek shelter and solitude in them may easily be followed through the thick bushes; and, thanks to the multiplicity and entanglement of the paths, the granite and the shrubs which favour the stolen interview, may also favour the witness.

Caudray and Déruchette stood face to face, looking into each other's eyes, and holding each other by the hand. Déruchette was speaking. Caudray was silent. A tear that had gathered upon his eye-lash hung there and did not fall.

Grief and profound emotion were imprinted on his strong, intellectual countenance. A painful resignation was there too,—a resignation hostile to faith, though springing from it. Upon this face which had seemed so angelic until now, there was a stern almost bitter expression. He who had hitherto meditated only on doctrine, had begun to meditate on Fate,—an unhealthy occupation for a priest. Faith dissolves under its action. Nothing disturbs the religious mind more than that bending under the weight of the unknown. Life seems a perpetual succession of misfortunes to which man is forced to submit. We never know from what side the sudden blow will come. Misery and happiness enter or make their exit like unexpected guests. Their laws, their orbit, their principle of gravitation, are beyond man's ken. Virtue does not lead to happiness, nor crime to retribution: conscience has one logic, fate another; and neither coincide. Nothing is foreseen. We live as we can,—from hand to mouth, as it were. Conscience is the straight line, life is the whirlwind which creates above man's head black chaos or blue sky as the case may be. Fate does not practise the art of gradations. Her wheel turns so fast sometimes that we can scarcely distinguish the interval between one revolution and another, or the link between yesterday and to-day. Caudray was a believer whose faith did not exclude reason, and whose priestly training did not shut him out from passion. The religions which impose celibacy on the priesthood know what they are about. Nothing is more destructive to the individuality of a priest than

love. All sorts of clouds seemed to darken Caudray's soul.

He had looked too long into Déruchette's eyes.

These two beings evidently worshipped each other.

There was in Caudray's eye the mute adoration of despair.

Déruchette spoke :—

“You must not leave me. I cannot bear it. I thought I could bid you farewell. I cannot. Why did you come yesterday? You should not have come if you were going so soon. I never spoke to you. I loved you, but knew it not. That day, when M. Hérode read the story of Rebecca to us, and when your eyes met mine, my cheeks were like fire, and I thought, “Oh, how Rebecca must have blushed! And yet, if any one had told me yesterday that I loved you, I should have laughed at them. It is this that makes our love seem so terrible. It appears almost like an act of treachery. I was not on my guard. I went to church, I saw you, I thought everybody there was like myself. I am not reproaching you; you did nothing to make me love you; you did nothing but look at me; it is not your fault if you look at people; and yet it made me adore you. I did not even suspect it. When you took up the book it was a flood of light; when others took it, it was only a book. You raised your eyes sometimes; you spoke of archangels. Ah, you were my archangel! What you said penetrated my mind at once. Before you came I do not know whether I even believed in God. Since I have known you, I have learned to pray. I used to say to Douce, dress me quickly, lest I should be late at service; and I hastened to the church. I did not know the cause. I said to myself, ‘How devout I am becoming!’ It is from you that I have learned that I do not go to church for God's service. It is true; I went for your sake. You

spoke so well, and when you raised your hands to heaven, you seemed to hold my heart within your two white hands. I was foolish, but I did not know it. Shall I tell you where you did wrong? It was in coming to me in the garden; it was in speaking to me. If you had said nothing, I should have known nothing. If you had gone away I should, perhaps, only have been sad, but now I should die. Now I know that I love you, you cannot leave me. Of what are you thinking? You do not seem to listen to me."

"You heard what was said last night?" Caudray responded.

"Ah me!"

"What can I do against that?"

They were silent for a moment. Caudray continued:

"There is but one thing left for me to do, — depart.

"And me, to die. Oh, how I wish there was no sea, but only sky. It seems to me as if that would settle all, and that our departure would be the same. It was wrong to speak to me; oh, why did you speak to me? Do not go! What will become of me? I tell you I shall die. You will be far away when I am in my grave. Oh, my heart will break! I am very wretched; yet my uncle is not unkind."

It was the first time in her life that Déruchette had ever said "my uncle." Until then she had always said "my father."

Caudray stepped back, and made a sign to the boatman. Déruchette heard the sound of the boat-hook on the shingle, and the step of the man on the gunwale of the boat.

"No! no!" cried Déruchette.

"It must be, Déruchette," replied Caudray.

"No! never! For the sake of an engine, impossible! Did you see that horrible man last night? You cannot

leave me thus. You are wise; surely, you can find a way out of this trouble! It is impossible that you bade me come here this morning with the idea of leaving me. I have never done anything to deserve this; you can have no cause to reproach me. Is it by that vessel you intend to sail? I will not let you go. You shall not leave me! Heaven does not open thus to close so soon. I know you will remain. Besides, it is not yet time. Oh, how I love you!"

And pressing close to him, she interlaced the fingers of both her hands behind his neck, as if partly to make a bond of her two arms for detaining him, and partly, with clasped hands, to pray.

But he put her gently from him in spite of her determined resistance.

Déruchette sank down upon a projecting rock covered with ivy. As she did so, she unconsciously pushed the sleeve of her dress up to the elbow, showing her beautiful bare arm. There was a strangely haggard look in her eyes. The boat was approaching.

Caudray took her head between his hands. The maiden had the air of a widow, and the youth that of a grandfather. He touched her hair with a sort of reverent care, fixed his eyes upon her for some moments, then kissed her tenderly but solemnly on the forehead, and in accents trembling with anguish, and which plainly revealed the struggle in his soul, he uttered the word which has so often resounded in the depths of the human heart, "Farewell!"

Déruchette burst into loud sobs.

At this moment they heard a voice near them, which said solemnly and deliberately:—

"Why do you not marry?"

Caudray raised his head. Déruchette looked up.

Gilliatt stood before them.

He had approached by a side path.

He did not look like the same man they had seen the night before. He had arranged his hair, shaved off his beard, put on his shoes and stockings, and a white shirt, with a broad collar turned over, sailor fashion. He wore a sailor's costume, but every article was new. He had a gold ring on his little finger. He seemed perfectly calm.

His sunburnt skin had become pale.

They gazed at him astonished. Though so changed, Déruchette recognized him. But the words he had spoken were so foreign to what was passing in their minds at that moment, that they left no distinct impression.

Gilliatt spoke again.

"Why should you say farewell? Become man and wife, and go together."

Déruchette started. A nervous trembling shook her from head to foot.

"Miss Lethierry is of age," Gilliatt continued. "It depends entirely upon herself. Her uncle is only her uncle. You love each other —"

"How came you here?" Déruchette interrupted in a gentle voice.

"Make yourselves one," repeated Gilliatt.

Déruchette began to have some idea of the meaning of his words.

"My poor uncle!" she stammered out.

"If the marriage was still to take place he would refuse," said Gilliatt. "When it is over he will consent. Besides, you are going to leave Guernsey. When you return he will forgive you."

"Besides, he is thinking of nothing just now but the rebuilding of his boat," Gilliatt added, with a slight touch of bitterness. "This will occupy his mind during your absence. The Durande will console him."

"I cannot," said Déruchette, in a state of stupor which

was not without its gleam of joy. "I cannot leave him unhappy."

"It will be only for a short time," answered Gilliatt.

Caudray and Déruchette had been, as it were, bewildered. They began partially to recover themselves now. The meaning of Gilliatt's words grew plainer as their surprise diminished. There was still a slight doubt in their minds, but they were not inclined to resist. We yield easily to those who come to save us. Objections to a return into paradise are weak. There was something in the attitude of Déruchette, as she leaned imperceptibly upon her lover, which seemed to make common cause with Gilliatt's words. The strangeness of this man's presence, and of his utterances, which, in the mind of Déruchette in particular, created intense astonishment, was a thing quite apart. He said to them, "Become man and wife!" This was clear; if there was any responsibility, he assumed it. Déruchette had a vague feeling that he, for many reasons, had a right to decide her fate. Caudray murmured thoughtfully, —

"True, an uncle is not a father."

His resolution was weakened by this sudden and fortunate turn in affairs. The scruples of the clergyman melted in the flame, in his love for Déruchette.

Gilliatt's tone became abrupt and harsh, and one could detect a feverish pulsation in it.

"There must be no delay," he said curtly. "The 'Cashmere' sails in two hours. You have just time, but that is all. Come."

Caudray surveyed him attentively, then suddenly exclaimed, —

"I recognize you. It was you who saved my life."

"I think not," Gilliatt replied.

"Yonder," said Caudray, "at the extremity of the Banques."



"I do not know the place," said Gilliatt.

"It was on the very day I arrived here."

"Let us lose no time," interrupted Gilliatt.

"And if I am not mistaken you are the man we saw last night."

"Possibly."

"What is your name?"

Gilliatt raised his voice:—

"Boatman! wait here for us. We shall return soon. You asked me, Miss Lethierry, how I came to be here. The answer is very simple. I followed you. You are twenty-one. In this country, when persons are of age, and depend only on themselves, they can be married when they please. Let us take the path along the beach. It is passable; the tide will not rise till noon. But we must lose no time. Come with me."

Déruchette and Caudray seemed to consult each other by a glance. They were standing close together, motionless. They were intoxicated with joy, but there is a strange hesitation sometimes on the very threshold of happiness. They understood, as it were, without understanding.

"His name is Gilliatt," whispered Déruchette.

Gilliatt interrupted them with a tone of authority.

"What do you linger for?" he asked. "I tell you to follow me."

"Whither?" asked Caudray.

"There!"

And Gilliatt pointed towards the spire of the church.

Gilliatt walked on ahead, and they followed him. His step was firm, but they walked unsteadily.

As they approached the church, a dawning smile became visible on the pure and beautiful countenances of the two lovers. In the hollow eyes of Gilliatt there was the darkness of despair.

The beholder might have imagined that he saw a spectre leading two souls to paradise.

Caudray and Déruchette scarcely realized what had happened.

The interposition of this man was like the branch clutched at by the drowning. They followed their guide with the docility of despair, leaning on the first comer. Those who feel themselves near death easily accept the accident which seems to save. Déruchette, being most ignorant of life, was more confident. Caudray was thoughtful. Déruchette was of age, it is true. The English formalities of marriage are simple, especially in primitive regions, where the clergyman has almost a discretionary power; but would the dean consent to celebrate the marriage without even inquiring whether the uncle consented? This was the question. Nevertheless, they would soon learn. At all events, the attempt would afford them a respite.

But who was this man? And if it was really he whom Lethierry had declared should be his son-in-law the night before, what could be the meaning of his actions? The very obstacle itself seemed to have become a kind providence. Caudray yielded; but his yielding was only the hasty and tacit assent of a man who feels himself saved from despair.

The pathway was uneven, and sometimes wet and difficult to pass. Caudray, absorbed in thought, did not observe the occasional pools of water or the heaps of gravel. But from time to time Gilliatt turned and said to him, "Take heed of those stones. Give her your hand."

## CHAPTER III.

### THE FORETHOUGHT OF SELF-SACRIFICE.

THE clock struck ten as they entered the church. By reason of the early hour, and also on account of the deserted condition of the town that day, the church was empty.

At the farther end, however, near the table which in the reformed church fills the place of an altar, there were three persons, — the dean, his curate, and the registrar. The dean, who was the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, was seated; the curate and the registrar stood beside him.

An open Bible lay on the table.

Beside the dean, upon a credence-table, was another book. It was the parish register. That, too, was open, and an observant eye might have detected a freshly written page on which the ink was not yet dry. A pen and writing materials lay beside the register.

The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode rose on perceiving Caudray.

“I have been expecting you,” he said. “All is ready.”

The dean, in fact, was attired in his clerical robes.

Caudray glanced at Gilliatt.

The Reverend Doctor added, “I am at your service, brother;” and bowed.

It was a bow which turned neither to right nor left. It was evident from the direction of the dean’s glance

that he did not recognize the existence of any one but Caudray, for Caudray was a clergyman and a gentleman. Neither Déruchette, who stood a little to one side, nor Gilliatt, who was in the rear, were included in the salutation. In his look was a sort of tacit understanding in which Caudray alone was included. The observance of these little niceties constitutes an important feature in the maintenance of order and the preservation of society.

The dean, with a graceful and dignified urbanity, continued:—

“ I congratulate you, my colleague, from a double point of view. You have lost your uncle, and are about to take a wife; you are blessed with riches on the one hand, and happiness on the other. Moreover, thanks to the boat which they are about to rebuild, Mess Lethierry, too, will be rich, — which is as it should be. Miss Lethierry was born in this parish; I have verified the date of her birth in the register. She is of age, and her own mistress. Her uncle, too, who is her only relative, consents. You are anxious to be united immediately on account of your approaching departure. This I can understand; but it being the marriage of the rector of the parish, I should have been gratified to have seen it attended with a little more solemnity. I will consult your wishes by not detaining you longer than necessary. The essentials will be soon complied with. The form is already drawn up in the register, and only the names remain to be filled in. By the provisions of the law and custom, the marriage can be celebrated immediately after the issue of the licence. The declaration necessary for the licence has been duly made. I will hold myself responsible for a slight irregularity, inasmuch as the application for a licence ought to have been registered seven days in advance; but I yield to

necessity and the urgency of your departure. Be it so, then. I will proceed with the ceremony. My curate will be the witness for the bridegroom; as regards the witness for the bride — ”

The dean turned towards Gilliatt. Gilliatt made a movement of his head.

“ That is sufficient,” said the dean.

Caudray remained motionless; Déruchette was happy, but equally powerless to move.

“ Nevertheless,” continued the dean, “ there is still one obstacle.”

Déruchette started.

The dean continued:—

“ The representative here present of Mess Lethierry applied for the licence for you, and signed the declaration on the register.” And with the thumb of his left hand the dean pointed to Gilliatt, which prevented the necessity of pronouncing his name. “ The messenger from Mess Lethierry,” he added, “ informed me this morning that being too much occupied to come in person, Mess Lethierry desired that the marriage should take place immediately. This desire expressed verbally, is not sufficient. In consequence of the slight irregularity attending the issue of the license, which I take upon myself, I cannot proceed so hastily without making a personal inquiry of Mess Lethierry, unless some one can produce his signature. However great my desire to serve you, I cannot be satisfied with a mere verbal message. I must have some written authority.”

“ That need not delay us,” said Gilliatt, handing a paper to the dean. The dean took it, scanned it hastily, seemed to pass over some lines as unimportant, and read aloud: “ Go to the dean for the license. I wish the marriage to take place as soon as possible. Immediately would be better.”

He placed the paper on the table, and proceeded :—

“ It bears Lethierry’s signature. It would have been more respectful to have addressed it to me. But as it is a question of serving a colleague, I ask no more.”

Caudray glanced again at Gilliatt. There are moments when mind and mind comprehend each other. Caudray felt that there was some deception but he had not the strength, perhaps he had not even the desire, to reveal it. Whether from obedience to a latent heroism which he but imperfectly divined, or whether from a deadening of the conscience, arising from the suddenness with which happiness had been placed within his reach, he uttered not a word.

The dean took the pen, and aided by the clerk, filled up the blanks on the page of the register; then rose, and by a gesture invited Caudray and Déruchette to approach the table.

The ceremony began.

It was a strange moment. Caudray and Déruchette stood side by side before the minister. One who has ever dreamed of a marriage in which he himself was chief actor, may conceive of the feeling which they experienced.

Gilliatt stood at a little distance in the shadow of the pillars.

Déruchette, on rising that morning, unspeakably wretched and despairing, and thinking only of death and the winding-sheet, had dressed herself in white. The attire, which had been associated in her mind with the grave, was well suited to her nuptials. A white dress is all that is necessary for a bride.

Her face was radiant with happiness. Never had she appeared more beautiful. Her features were remarkable for prettiness rather than beauty. Their only fault, if fault it be, lay in a certain excess of grace. Déruchette

in repose, — that is, neither disturbed by passion nor grief, — was graceful above all.

A face like this transfigured is our ideal of the Virgin. Déruchette, touched by sorrow and love, seemed to have caught that nobler and more holy expression. It makes the difference between the field daisy and the lily.

The tears had scarcely dried upon her cheeks; one perhaps still lingered in the midst of her smiles. Traces of tears indistinctly visible form a pleasing but touching accompaniment of joy.

The dean, standing near the table, placed his hand upon the open book, and asked in a distinct voice whether they knew of any impediment to their union.

There was no reply.

Caudray and Déruchette advanced a step or two towards the table.

“Joseph Ebenezer, wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?” asked the dean.

Caudray replied, “I will.”

“Durande Déruchette, wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband?” the dean continued.

Déruchette, in an agony of soul, springing from her very excess of happiness, murmured rather than uttered: “I will.”

Then followed the beautiful form of the Anglican marriage service. The dean looked around, and in the dim light of the church, uttered the solemn words:

“Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?”

Gilliatt answered, “I do!”

There was an interval of silence. Caudray and Déruchette felt a vague sense of oppression in spite of their joy.

The dean placed Déruchette’s right hand in Caudray’s; and Caudray repeated after him:—

“I take thee, Durande Déruchette, to be my wedded

wife for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part; and thereto I plight thee my troth."

The dean then placed Caudray's right hand in that of Déruchette, and Déruchette said after him:—

"I take thee to be my wedded husband for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness or in health, to love, cherish, and obey, till death do us part; and thereto I plight thee my troth."

"Where is the ring?" asked the dean.

The question took them by surprise. Caudray had no ring; but Gilliatt removed the gold ring which he wore upon his little finger. It was doubtless the wedding-ring which had been sold that morning by the jeweller in the Commercial Arcade.

The dean laid the ring on the Bible; then handed it to Caudray, who took Déruchette's little trembling hand, slipped the ring on her fourth finger, and said:

"With this ring I thee wed!"

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," continued the dean.

"Amen," said his curate.

Then the dean said, "Let us pray."

Caudray and Déruchette turned towards the table, and knelt down.

Gilliatt, standing near, inclined his head.

They knelt before God; he was bending beneath the burden of his fate.



## CHAPTER IV.

“FOR YOUR WIFE: WHEN YOU MARRY.”

AS they left the church they could see the “Cashmere” making preparations for departure.

“You are in time,” said Gilliatt.

They again took the path leading to the Havelet.

Caudray and Déruchette went first; Gilliatt, this time, walking behind them. They were like two somnambulists. Their bewilderment had not passed away, but only changed in form. They took no heed of where they were going, or of what they did. They hurried on mechanically, scarcely conscious of the existence of anything, — feeling that they were united forever, but scarcely able to connect two ideas in their minds. In ecstasy like theirs it is as impossible to think as it is to swim in a torrent. In the midst of their trouble and despair they had been raised to the seventh heaven of delight. They were in Elysium. They did not speak, but their souls were absorbed in sweet communion.

The footsteps of Gilliatt behind them reminded them of his presence now and then. They were deeply moved, but could find no words. Such excess of emotion results in stupor; theirs was delightful but overwhelming. They were man and wife: every other idea was secondary to that. Gilliatt had done them an inestimable kindness; that was all that they could grasp. In their secret hearts they thanked him fervently, profoundly.

Déruchette felt that there was some mystery to be explained later, but not now. Meanwhile they accepted their unexplained happiness. They submitted to the decision of this determined man who made them happy as if he had a right to do it. To question him, to talk with him, seemed impossible. Too many impressions were rushing upon them at once for that. Their mental absorption was pardonable.

Events sometimes succeed each other with the rapidity of hailstones. Their effect is overpowering; they deaden the senses and render incidents incomprehensible even to those whom they chiefly concern. We become scarcely conscious of our own adventures; we are overwhelmed without guessing the cause, or crowned with happiness without realizing it. For some hours Déruchette had been subjected to every kind of emotion: first, surprise and delight at meeting Caudray in the garden; then horror at the monster whom her uncle had presented to her as her husband; then anguish when the angel of her dreams spread his wings and seemed about to depart; and now joy, such joy as she had never known before, founded on an inexplicable enigma,—the restoration of her lover by the very monster who had so horrified her.

Gilliatt, her evil destiny of last night, to-day became her saviour! She could not explain it satisfactorily to her own mind. It was evident that Gilliatt had devoted the entire morning to preparing the way for their marriage. He had done everything; he had answered for Mess Lethierry, seen the dean, obtained the licence, signed the necessary declaration, and thus the marriage had been rendered possible. But Déruchette did not understand it. Even if she had, she would not have comprehended the reasons.

She could do nothing but close her eyes, and grate-

fully yield herself up to the guidance of this good spirit. There was no time for explanations, and expressions of gratitude seemed too insignificant.

The little power of thought which they retained was scarcely more than sufficient to guide them on their way, to enable them to distinguish the sea from the land, and the "Cashmere" from any other vessel.

In a few minutes they reached the little landing.

Caudray entered the boat first. As Déruchette was about to follow, she felt some one pluck her gently by the sleeve. It was Gilliatt who had placed a finger upon a fold of her dress.

"Madam," he said, "you are starting on a journey very unexpectedly. It has struck me that you will have need of dresses and linen. You will find a trunk aboard the 'Cashmere,' containing a lady's clothing. It came to me from my mother. It was intended for my wife if I should ever marry. Permit me to ask your acceptance of it."

Déruchette, partially aroused from her dream, turned towards him. In a voice that was scarcely audible, Gilliatt continued:—

"I do not wish to detain you, madam, but I feel that I ought to give you some explanation. On the day of the misfortune, you were sitting in the lower room; you uttered certain words. It is not at all strange that you have forgotten them. We cannot be expected to remember every word we speak. Mess Lethierry was in great trouble. It was certainly a noble vessel, and one that did good service. The misfortune was recent; there was a great excitement. There are things which one naturally forgets. It was only a vessel wrecked among the rocks; one cannot be always thinking of an accident. But what I wished to tell you was that as it was said that no one would go, I went. They said it was impos-

sible; but it was not. I thank you for listening to me a moment. You can understand, madam, that if I went there, it was not with the thought of displeasing you. This is a thing, besides, of old date. I know that you are in haste. If there was time, if we could talk about this, you might perhaps remember. But this is all useless now. The history of it goes back to a day when there was snow upon the ground. And then on one occasion, as I passed you, I thought you looked kindly on me. That is how it all happened. With regard to last night, I had not had time to go to my home. I came from my labour; I was all torn and ragged; I startled you, and you fainted. I was to blame; people do not go like that to strangers' houses; I ask your forgiveness. That is about all I wanted to say. You are about to sail. You will have fine weather; the wind is in the east. Farewell. You will not blame me for troubling you with these things. This is the last minute, you know."

"I am thinking of the trunk you spoke of," replied Déruchette. "Why do you not keep it for your wife, when you marry?"

"It is not likely that I shall ever marry, madam," replied Gilliatt.

"That would be a pity," said Déruchette; "you are so good. Thank you."

And Déruchette smiled. Gilliatt returned her smile. Then he assisted her into the boat.

In less than a quarter of an hour Caudray and Déruchette were aboard the "Cashmere."

## CHAPTER V.

### THE GREAT TOMB.

GILLIATT walked swiftly along the beach, passed hastily through St. Peter's Port, and then hurried towards St. Sampson by way of the shore. In his anxiety to avoid people he knew, he shunned the highways now crowded with pedestrians excited over his great achievement.

For a long time, as the reader knows, he had had a way of traversing the country in every direction without being seen by any one. He knew all the by-paths, and preferred lonely and circuitous routes; he had the shy habits of a wild beast who knows that he is disliked, and keeps at a distance. When quite a child, he had been quick to feel how little welcome men showed in their faces at his approach, and he had gradually contracted that habit of holding himself aloof which had since become an instinct.

He passed the Esplanade, then the Salerie. Now and then he turned and looked behind him at the "Cashmere" in the roads, which had just set sail. There was very little wind, and Gilliatt moved faster than the vessel as he walked with downcast eyes among the rocks on the water's edge. The tide was beginning to rise.

Suddenly he paused, and, turning his back upon the sea, contemplated for some minutes a clump of oaks beyond the rocks that hid the road to Vale. They were the oaks at the spot called the Basses Maisons. It was

there that Déruchette once wrote the name of Gilliatt in the snow. Many a day had passed since that snow had melted away.

He continued on his way.

The day was beautiful, — more beautiful than any that had been seen that year. It was one of those spring days when May suddenly pours forth all its beauty, and when Nature seems to have no thought but to rejoice and be happy. Amid the many murmurs from forest and village, from the sea and the air, a sound of cooing could be distinguished. The first butterflies of the year were resting on the early roses. Everything in Nature seemed new, — the grass, the mosses, the leaves, the perfumes, even the rays of light. The sun shone as if it had never shone before. The pebbles seemed bathed in coolness. Birds but lately fledged sang from the trees, or fluttered among the boughs in their attempts to use their new-found wings. There was a combined chattering of goldfinches, pewits, tomtits, woodpeckers, bullfinches, and thrushes. Lilacs, lilies of the valley, daphnes, and melilots mingled their hues in the thickets. A beautiful aquatic plant peculiar to Guernsey covered with an emerald green the pools where the kingfishers and the water-wagtails, which make such graceful little nests, came down to bathe. Through every opening in the branches appeared the deep blue sky. A few wanton clouds chased each other along the azure sky, with the undulating grace of nymphs. The ear seemed to catch the sound of kisses wafted from invisible lips. Every old wall had its bunch of gillyflowers like a bridegroom. The plum-trees and laburnums were in bloom; their white and yellow blossoms gleamed through the interlacing boughs. The spring had showered all her gold and silver on the woods. The new shoots and leaves were green and fresh. Calls of welcome were in the

air; the approaching summer opened her hospitable doors for birds coming from afar. It was the time of the arrival of the swallows. Clumps of furze-bushes bordered the steep sides of the roads until it should be time for the hawthorn. The pretty and the beautiful reigned side by side; the magnificent and the graceful, the great and the small. No note in the grand concert of Nature was lost. Microscopic beauties took their place in the vast universal plan in which everything was as distinguishable as if seen in limpid water. Everywhere a divine fulness, a mysterious sense of expansion, suggested the unseen workings of the moving sap. Glittering things glittered more than ever; loving natures seemed to become more tender. There was a hymn in the flowers, and a radiance in the sounds of the air. The widely diffused harmony of Nature burst forth on every side. All things that felt the dawn of life invited others to put forth shoots. A movement coming from below, and also from above, stirred vaguely every heart susceptible to the powerful though covert influence of germination. The flower gave promise of the fruit; young maidens dreamed of love. It was Nature's universal bridal. It was sunny and bright and warm; through the hedges in the meadows children could be seen laughing and playing games. The apple, peach, cherry, and pear trees filled the orchards with their masses of white and pink blossoms. In the fields were primroses, cowslips, milfoil, daffodils, daisies, speedwell, hyacinths, St. John's wort, violets, blue borage and yellow irises, together with those beautiful little pink star-shaped flowers which are always found in large patches, and which are consequently called "companions." Insects covered with golden scales glided between the stones. The flowering houseleek covered the thatched roofs with purple bloom; and the

bees were abroad, mingling their humming with the murmurs from the sea.

When Gilliatt reached St. Sampson, the water had not yet risen at the farther end of the harbour, and he was able to cross it dry-shod and unobserved, behind the hulls of several vessels drawn up for repairs. A number of flat stones placed at regular distances were of great assistance to him in crossing. He was not noticed. The crowd was at the other end of the port near the narrow entrance, by the Bravées. There, his name was in everybody's mouth. They were, in fact, talking so much about him that no one paid attention to him. He passed, protected to some extent by the very commotion he had caused.

He saw the sloop lying where he had moored it, with the funnel standing between its four chains, the movements of carpenters at work, and confused outlines of figures passing to and fro; and he could distinguish the loud and cheery voice of Mess Lethierry giving orders.

He threaded the narrow alleys behind the Bravées. There was no one else there. Public curiosity was concentrated on the front of the house. He chose the footpath that skirted the low wall of the garden, but stopped at the angle where the wild mallow grew. He saw once more the big stone where he used to spend his time, — the wooden bench where Déruchette was wont to sit, and glanced again at the path where he had seen the shadow of two forms which had vanished from his gaze forever.

He soon went on his way, climbed the hill of Vale Castle, descended it, and directed his steps towards the Bû de la Rue.

The Houmet-Paradis was a solitude.

His house was exactly as he had left it that morning, after dressing himself to go to St. Peter's Port.



A window was open, through which his bagpipe might have been seen hanging to a nail upon the wall. Upon the table was the little Bible given to him as a token of gratitude by the stranger whom he now knew as Caudray.

The key was in the door. He approached, placed his hand upon it, turned it twice in the lock, then put it in his pocket, and departed.

He did not walk in the direction of the town, but towards the sea.

He crossed the garden diagonally, taking the shortest cut without regard to the beds, but taking care not to tread upon the plants which he had placed there because he heard that they were favourites with *Déruchette*.

He climbed the parapet, and let himself down upon the rocks below. Going straight on, he began to follow the long ridge which connected the *Bât de la Rue* with the huge granite obelisk rising perpendicularly out of the sea, and known as the *Beast's Horn*.

The famous *Gild-Holm-'Ur* seat was on this rock.

He strode from rock to rock like a giant striding over mountain peaks. To make long strides over a ridge of jagged rocks is like walking on the ridge of a roof.

A fisherwoman with dredge-nets, who had been wading barefooted among the pools of sea-water, and had just regained the shore, called out to him, "Take care! The tide is coming in."

But he hastened on.

Having reached the big rock on the point, — the *Horn*, which rises like a pinnacle out of the sea, — he stopped. It was the extreme end of the promontory.

He looked around.

Out at sea were a few fishing-boats at anchor. From time to time, little rivulets of silver streamed from them in the sun, — it was the water running from the

nets. The "Cashmere" was not yet off St. Sampson. She had set her maintopsail, and was between Herm and Jethou.

Gilliatt walked around to the other side of the rock, and came up under the Gild-Holm-'Ur seat, at the foot of the steep stairs where he had helped Caudray down less than three months before. He ascended.

Most of the steps were already under water. Only two or three were still dry. He mounted them.

The steps led up to the Gild-Holm-'Ur. He reached the niche, gazed at it for a moment, pressed his hand on his eyes, and let it glide gently from one eyelid to the other, — a gesture by which he seemed to obliterate the memory of the past, — then sat down in the hollow, with the perpendicular wall behind him and the ocean at his feet.

The "Cashmere" at that moment was passing the great round sea-washed tower, defended by one serjeant and a cannon, which marks half the distance between Herm and St. Peters' Port.

A few flowers waved among the crevices in the rock above Gilliatt's head. The sea was blue as far as eye could reach. The wind came from the east; there was a little surf in the direction of the island of Sark, of which only the western end is visible from Guernsey. In the distance one could dimly discern the coast of France like a line of mist, and the long strip of yellow sand at Carteret. Now and then a white butterfly fluttered by. Butterflies frequently fly out to sea.

The breeze was scarcely perceptible. The blue expanse above as well as below was perfectly tranquil. Not a ripple agitated those serpent-like lines of more or less intense azure which indicate the contour of the reefs below.

The "Cashmere," making but slight progress, had set

her topsail and studdingsails to catch the breeze. All her canvas was spread, but the wind being a side one, her studdingsails only compelled her to hug the Guernsey coast more closely.

She had passed the St. Sampson beacon, and was off the hill of Vale Castle. The moment was fast approaching when she would round Bû de la Rue Point.

Gilliatt watched her approach.

The air and sea were still. The tide rose not in waves, but by an imperceptible swell. The level of the water crept upwards, without any palpitation. The subdued murmur from the open sea was soft as the breathing of a child.

In the direction of the harbour of St. Sampson, the sound of carpenters' hammers could be faintly heard. The carpenters were probably at work constructing the tackle, gear, and apparatus for removing the engine from the sloop.

The sounds, however, scarcely reached Gilliatt by reason of the mass of granite at his back.

The "Cashmere" approached with the slowness of a phantom ship.

Gilliatt watched it intently.

Suddenly a touch and a sensation of cold caused him to look down. The sea had reached his feet.

He lowered his eyes, then raised them again.

The "Cashmere" was quite near now.

The side of the rock in which the rains had hollowed out the Gild-Holm-'Ur seat was so completely vertical, and there was so much water at its base, that in calm weather vessels were able to pass within a few cables' lengths of it without danger.

The "Cashmere" was abreast of the rock. It rose straight upwards as if it had grown out of the water; or like the lengthening out of a shadow.

The rigging stood out darkly against the sky and in the magnificent expanse of the sea. The tall sails, passing for a moment between the beholder and the sun, became illumined with a singular glory and transparency. The water murmured softly, but no sound attended the majestic passing of the vessel. The deck was as plainly visible to Gilliatt as if he had been standing upon it.

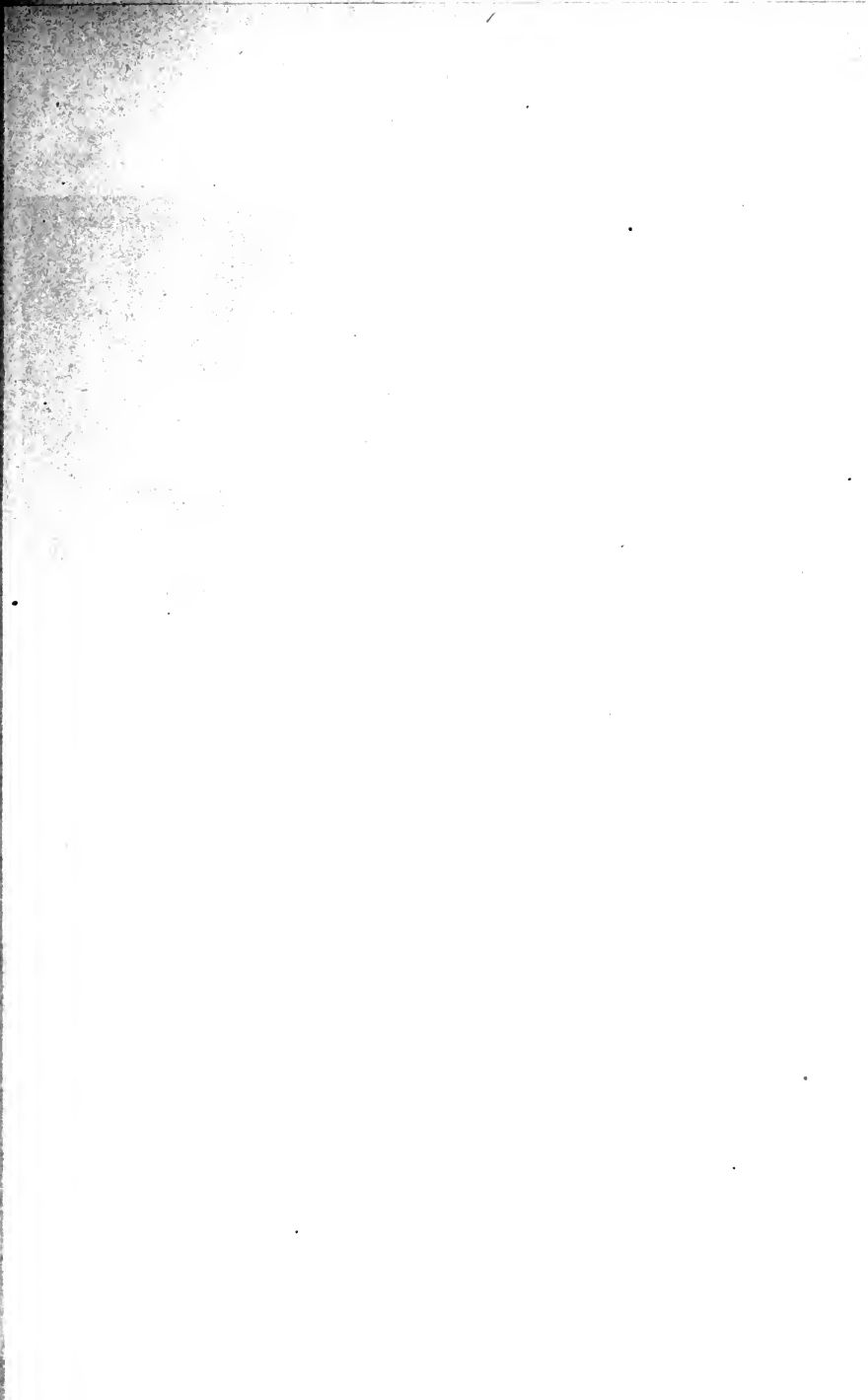
The "Cashmere" almost grazed the rock.

The steersman was at the helm, a cabin-boy was climbing the shrouds, a few passengers were leaning over the bulwarks contemplating the beauty of the scene, the captain was smoking; but Gilliatt saw nothing of all this.

There was a nook on deck on which the broad sunlight fell. It was on this corner that Gilliatt's eyes were fixed. In the sunlight there, sat *Déruchette* and *Caudray*. They were sitting together side by side, like two birds, warming themselves in the noonday sun, upon one of those covered seats with a little awning which well-ordered packet-boats provided for passengers, and which were marked "For ladies only," when they happened to be on an English vessel. *Déruchette's* head was resting on *Caudray's* shoulder; his arm was around her waist; they held each other's hands with their fingers interwoven. A celestial light beamed on these two beautiful and innocent faces, one so virginal, the other so heavenly in expression. Their chaste embrace was indicative at the same time of their earthly union and their purity of soul. The seat was a sort of alcove, almost a nest; at the same time it formed a sort of halo around them, — the tender aureole of love melting into a cloud.

The silence was like the silence of heaven.

*Caudray's* gaze was fixed in rapt contemplation.







Photographie Goupil & Co

S. Duce

1870





Déruchette's lips moved; and in that perfect silence, as the wind carried the vessel near shore, and it glided within a few feet of the Gild-Holm-'Ur, Gilliatt heard the soft and musical voice of Déruchette exclaiming:

"Look yonder! It seems as if there were a man upon the rock."

The vessel passed on.

Leaving the promontory of the Bû de la Rue behind her, the "Cashmere" glided out upon the broad expanse. In less than a quarter of an hour, her masts and sails formed upon the water merely a sort of white obelisk rapidly diminishing in size. Gilliatt felt that the water had reached his knees.

He watched the vessel speeding on her way.

The breeze freshened. He could see the "Cashmere" run out her lower studdingsails and her staysails in order to take advantage of the rising wind. She was already out of the waters of Guernsey. Gilliatt followed the vessel with his eyes. The waves had reached his waist.

The tide was rising. Time was passing.

The sea-mews and cormorants circled excitedly around him, as if trying to warn him of his danger. Perhaps some of his old companions of the Douvres were among them and had recognized him.

An hour passed.

The wind from the sea was scarcely felt in the roads; but the outlines of the "Cashmere" were rapidly fading in the distance. The sloop, according to all appearance, was sailing fast. It was already nearly off the Caskets.

But there was no foam around the Gild-Holm-'Ur; no wave beat against its granite sides. The water rose peacefully. It was nearly up to Gilliatt's shoulders.

Another hour passed.

The "Cashmere" was beyond the waters of Alderney. The Ortachs concealed it from view for a moment; it passed behind the rocks and emerged again as from an eclipse. The sloop was hastening northward. It was only a white speck now glittering in the sunlight.

The birds were still hovering over Gilliatt, uttering short, shrill cries.

Only his head was visible now. The tide was nearly at the flood.

Gilliatt was still watching the "Cashmere."

Evening was approaching. Behind him, in the roads, a few fishing-boats were returning home.

Gilliatt's eyes remained fixed upon the vessel in the distant horizon.

Their expression resembled nothing earthly. A strange lustre shone in their calm yet tragic depths. There was in them the knowledge of hopes never to be realized; the calm but sorrowful acceptance of an end widely different from his dreams; the solemn acceptance of an accomplished fact. The flight of a star might be followed by such a gaze. By degrees the shadow of approaching death began to darken them, though they were still riveted upon that point in space. The wide water around the Gild-Holm-'Ur and the vast gathering twilight closed in upon them at the same instant.

The "Cashmere," now scarcely perceptible, had become a mere spot in the thin haze. Gradually, this spot grew paler. Then it dwindled still more. Then it disappeared altogether.

As the vessel vanished from sight in the horizon, the head of Gilliatt disappeared beneath the water. Nothing was visible now but the sea.

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...the waters of Alderney.  
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*"Gilliat's eyes remained fixed upon the vessel  
 in the distant horizon."*

Etched by Leopold Flameng. - From Drawing by  
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James Flaxman 18













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