

Narrative of a voyage to Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, through the Straits of Magellan in H.M.S. Adventure and Beagle (1826 - 1827)

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[begin extract]

After our return from Monte Video to Maldonado, the Adventure sailed for the former place, but remaining there longer than she had determined upon, we sailed up to join her; and on our passage made our number to H.M.S. Ranger, and soon afterwards fell in with the Adventure about mid-channel. The Adventure had found the English packet (King Fisher) on shore on the English bank, and had succeeded in getting her off. We also met some Brazilian frigates and brigs standing for the island of Goritti, in order to fortify it, and to annoy the Maldonadians by every possible means. We now made all sail along the great coast of Patagonia; and on the 28th of the month, the ships entered the Bay of, and anchored off, Port St. Elena [probably Caracoles, Chubut. Ed]. Here we found good anchorage for several ships, but it is exposed to a heavy swell from the south-west; this we fully experienced, for a tremendous sea, occasioned by heavy squalls, rolled in upon us and exposed us to the danger of being driven upon the rocks, which lay within a cable's length of us. The surrounding country is of frightful sterility and barrenness; no trace of vegetation can be met with; a universal chaos seems to reign, and nothing can be heard on the land but the harsh cry of the water-fowl and the roaring of the foaming surf on the dark and rugged rocks which line the shore. There is nothing indicative of its having been visited by any human being from the interior, and the whole country for miles round is such a wilderness as would prove most distressing to any crew who were so unfortunate as to be wrecked on this coast. Numerous herds of the wild guanacoe range in undisturbed possession of this trackless waste, and they are so docile as to allow of your near approach, although in some instances it required much manoeuvring to get them within range of the musket. The flesh is rather coarse, but when made into a sea-pie is enticing enough, and particularly after a day's shooting at Port St. Elena, for at this anchorage you meet with no berries or fruits, and, moreover, there is a great scarcity of fresh water, and all the ponds are brackish, and for miles up a sort of marsh it had that taste; this, added to the intolerable heat, and a walk of eight or ten miles, make you glad enough to get on board, and take a libation of "swiggle" where, at your ease, you can d?n the climate, the brackish water, and the long hollow valleys, and also view your cut and swollen lip in the glass of your dressing-case (your messmates laughing all the while), the sad consequence of the recoil of your gun in endeavouring to bring down the guanacoe at a long shot. You here meet the ostrich, and venomous snake, the eight-banded armadillo, and the cavee or fox. Hawks, owls, and buzzards, and various kinds of sea-fowl are the only remaining inhabitants of this wilderness.

From the quantity of wood thrown up high upon the beach, it appeared that a wreck had taken place at this port, but no doubt the survivors had got away from this desolate abode and put to sea. We found a piece of wood pointing out the grave of one of the party, with this inscription (but without date); "John Myers, Armourer, Commodore Decatur, New York," and as time had not made much havoc on this memento, it is probable that the wreck had taken place about five or six years previous to our arrival. We conveyed most of the wreck on board for fuel.

From want of better amusement, some gentlemen of the Adventure set fire to the long dry grass and withered stubble (which covered some acres of ground), and the wind carrying the flames into the deep valleys, raised an immense fire, which spread over the country to a great distance, and blazed away most furiously, making us think very little of the consecrated bonfires we had

previously seen blazing in the streets of the city of Rio.

This illumination, we afterwards ascertained, was observed at sea from a distance of fifty miles, and was the only inducement for a cutter, which we had previously fallen in with, to haul in for the land, her captain conjecturing that some casualty had happened to the ships.

One day, on the landing of a shooting party from the Beagle, we perceived three ostriches, and it may be imagined that the ostriches perceived us, for they commenced a sort of trot towards some rising ground which skirted the sea beach, and without turning their heads to see if we were following, disappeared in a moment. On our arrival at the top of the hill, breathless and anxious (for we expected the ostriches to be quietly waiting our arrival on the other side of it), no trace of them was to be seen, and nothing was discernible but a waste of country for miles a-head, although scarcely three minutes had elapsed from the time when we first saw them. We gazed at each other as much as to say, where the devil are they ?

The wind having veered to a desirable point, we weighed and made sail on the 4th December. The next land off which we anchored was Cape Fairweather; yet, notwithstanding its inviting name, we experienced severe south-westerly gales, which raged incessantly. This land is not so mountainous as that of Port St. Elena, but from the sea it bears equally as desolate and isolated an aspect. The cape is said to be much like the South Foreland, and the line of coast resembles that of Kent. The country in the distance has a green appearance, but nearer the coast there is plenty of grass, which is burnt and scorched by the influence of the sun. Innumerable herds of guanacoe are to be seen scattered over the distant plains, and they are so tame as to be approached within a few paces. The brown eagles, startled at the appearance of man in this forsaken place, keep incessantly whirling over your head, heedless of shot, and seem inclined to pounce down upon you. The jaguar, or South American tiger, was seen prowling and skulking among the rocks near the beach, but on our approach it quickly made off, sometimes stopping and looking round, and then making away for the interior of the country. From the quantities of bones which lay bleaching in the wind, it would appear that these savage animals continually prey upon the timid and harmless guanacoe. There are quantities of shrubs growing here bearing a red berry, which scent the air to a great distance by their peculiarly sweet and genial fragrance. No vestige of a human being could be met with; and the whole of this part of the coast of Patagonia, from Port St. Elena to Cape Virgins, presents the same cheerless and wild appearance, and in a space of nearly one thousand miles not a tree or bush is to be seen; and the continuation of the land to the northernmost entrance of the Straits of Magellan bears the same bleak and wild aspect. At the time we were off Cape Virgins, a reef was distinctly visible, running out about a mile into the sea. This cape is said to resemble the land off Cape Vincent in Spain.

It was at this anchorage that we first perceived the land of Terra del Fuego just perceptible above the horizon. The first land that strikes the eye upon entering the straits is a mount, designated "Mount Dinero." very much in appearance like Monte Video, and about the same size. The next land is Point Possession, which is rather high and bluff, and in this bay the two ships came to anchor on the 19th. We weighed again on the 21st, but meeting with a direct contrary wind, we were obliged to anchor nearer in land, having previously brought up at five or six miles off shore. We remained here several days unsheltered from the prevailing S. W. winds, which blew very severely, and the tide is particularly strong and rapid. Most of the time that we lay here we had a succession of these S.W. gales, accompanied with heavy rain and cloudy weather. On the north side of the bay are four rather conically-shaped mounts, called by Sir John Narborough (one of the preceding navigators), "Amon and his four

children," and named also by him "The Ass's Ears," from the resemblance which they certainly bear to the upper part of the head of that animal. The best anchorage is about two or three leagues from Amon. On our weighing, we found the anchor and cable were as bright as silver, and for these shores the chain-cable is the safest to use. Whilst at this anchorage Christmas-day arrived, and our private stock of provisions was put in requisition to furnish a good dinner in honour of it. What we lacked in fish and flesh we made up in puddings and pies, and our table was amply furnished with such fare; we were all merry and happy, and notwithstanding our being in the Bay of Possession, with a heavy swell on, we had each taken, before two o'clock, a sufficiency of grog to compose us very quietly to sleep. Our next attempt was the passage of the Narrows of the Hope [presumably

First Narrows, Ed.], and this day we had made some way through them; but the prevailing S.W. winds, assisted by a tide running against us at the rate of six or seven miles an hour, compelled us to return into the Bay of Possession. We here again encountered some furious winds, but on the 28th of December we made our second attempt, and with some difficulty accomplished the intricate navigation of the Narrows, having weighed anchor this day at eight o'clock, and we had passed them by eleven. The day preceding our second attempt, a great smoke was visible on the Fuegian shore, apparently a great way inland, but no natives could be perceived through the telescope. The distance between the shores of Patagonia and Terra del Fuego, at this Narrow, may be computed at four or five miles, the shores approaching each other nearer at this place than at any other passage of the straits. This land is tolerably high, but not striking or picturesque. The guanacoe at this place are extremely wild, and fled immediately they perceived the ship standing in shore; for, in tacking, to get through the Narrows, we frequently came within a few hundred yards of the land. The smoke of a large fire was now seen on the Patagonian side, but at a considerable distance up the country. The coast, until you arrive at the "Bay of the Thousand Virgins," is not marked by any peculiarity; the highest land is on the southern shore. The coast on the Second Narrows is remarkably bold and rugged, and continues in a line, gradually vanishing into the Bay of Possession. We came-to in the Bay of the Thousand Virgins, having in sight Point St. Gregory and Port San Isidro.

On the 1st of January we again made sail, and anchored in St. Gregory's Bay, in thirteen fathoms, about five or six miles from the Second Narrows. This is an excellent anchorage, and well sheltered from the prevailing severe winds, which are constantly veering from S.W. to W.S.W. and S.S.W. At this place we saw another great cloud of smoke, appearing at a considerable distance inland. The shore here is more pleasing than any from Cape Virgins, the general appearance of the coast until you arrive here being solitary and gloomy. A long tract of mountain is occasionally seen, covered with heath and verdure; but generally dark and ragged precipices, and overhanging cliffs, destitute of any vegetation, intersect the land on both shores. Captain Stokes and Lieutenant Skyring, the assistant-surveyor, and a midshipman, landed at this bay, with the chronometers, which were left in charge of the midshipman, while the captain and Lieutenant Skyring proceeded to a rising ground, about a mile distant, for the purpose of making observations. Whilst the midshipman was thus leisurely waiting their return, he perceived a large and savage-looking animal making way towards the place where he stood, snuffing the ground as he came along. This was rather an uncomfortable sight for Llewellyn (a sobriquet given him by his messmates), who now commenced quickly loading the musket, which he had luckily brought with him, and by the time this four-footed stranger had arrived within two hundred paces, the midshipman had fired a shot to make him bring-to. The ball struck not very wide of the mark, but had no other effect than causing the animal to pursue the same manoeuvres as the lion was said to have acted towards Don Quixote when that valiant knight waited for him at the open door of his cage. The midshipman now lay down, and resting the musket to steady his aim, the second shot whistled over the head of

the creature, who now seemed determined to cultivate a nearer acquaintance, and kept advancing towards him at a quicker rate; but on arriving within fifty paces the third bullet struck the earth close to his head, when he immediately stopped and kept looking at Llewellyn, who ensconced himself in the grass and fired again, when the animal wheeled suddenly round and made off, much in the same leisurely manner as it had approached.

On sailing hence, we fell in with a schooner, which stood in to the bay, and anchored close in-shore: she proved to be the Eliza and Ann, of Stonington, North America, and had been in the Straits some months upon a sealing expedition. The captain of her reported the Patagonian Indians to be friendly (having spoken with them a short time previously), and much inclined to traffic; this piece of information differed very much from the account given by some of his Yankee seamen, who told our men that the natives were exceedingly ferocious, and very much inclined to cut the throats of all strangers, but more particularly of the English; and then followed a tale of a boat's crew from an English vessel having landed upon the coast, some months before, and fired upon the natives, who, in consequence, were determined to murder all who came in their way. All who are acquainted with the Yankees are well aware of their inventive genius; but the captain of the schooner, however, told the truth in saying that the Indians were friendly; and this seemed the more strange, for these precious trading Yankees possess neither honour nor common honesty, nor one single idea beyond the price of cotton and dollars; in fact, our brother Jonathan may be defined to be in character an Englishman grafted on a Jew, as the name we have ingeniously conferred on him evinces ? John Nathan.

Towards evening, a large fire blazed forth on the point which extends out of Cape Gregory, and the next morning, two horsemen were seen upon the beach, pacing to and fro, and appeared as if inviting us to land. All on board were now anxious to get on shore, and the more so when we perceived a boat shove off from the Adventure, and proceed in the direction of the Indians. All the telescopes on board were in immediate demand to observe the first meeting with the Patagonians. As the boat neared the land, one of the horsemen came down to the beach, and met the lieutenant, who, on landing, advanced towards him with a musket on his shoulder: the other Indian seemed much more cautious, for, as the boat came close in-shore, he receded about a hundred paces from the other, and there stood with his horse's head turned from the boat's crew, as if doubting whether to remain or go. Captain Stokes now ordered a boat off from the Beagle to land the assistant-surveyor, and in which I was so fortunate as to get a passage. When set on shore, having been landed farther down the bay, I had nearly a mile to walk to the Indians, and on my arrival near the Adventure's boat, the two first that I beheld were a male and female, sitting quietly on a bank, and gazing at a sailor with a musket on his shoulder, who, walking to and fro near them, did not evince less curiosity. The man was apparently about forty-five, and the woman about forty: he was distinguished by a large, broad head, a very smooth face, and angular cheekbones, without either eyebrows or beard; the nose was flat, and the nostrils dilated; the eyes were small, dark, and sunken; the hair was exceedingly black and dishevelled; a small strip of coloured guanacoe skin was bound round the top of the head, confining a single ostrich feather, which waved over his right shoulder, and also partially confined the hair; but notwithstanding this ligature, it hung down on each side of his face, in wild disorder, as low as the breast. The complexion was dark olive, or rather it had a copper-coloured greasy look. He was of a particularly robust make, and about six feet three inches in height; his mouth was remarkably capacious, the lips thick and protruding, and the angles of the mouth contracted excessively, which gave him (notwithstanding a certain vacant stare, which I afterwards observed was peculiar to them all), a ferocity of look not at all inducing a wish for a farther acquaintance; that kind of expression which makes you regret being

unarmed. He surveyed me with a peculiar scrutiny, as did the old lady likewise (whom we afterwards heard called by the tribe "Maria"): she seemed to have a much greater share of good-nature than the man, and I therefore offered her a piece of biscuit, which she took between her fore-finger and thumb, and at first nibbled it with all the delicacy and grace of a boarding-school miss; she then became less polite, and crammed her mouth to an overflow.

I did not offer any to the man, and kept my eye upon him to observe if he appeared displeased at the neglect; he seemed to take no notice. I then gave him a few pieces, which he placed very carelessly in the palm of his hand, and whipped them into his mouth in a twinkling. I could not help remarking the facility and satisfaction with which he crunched the biscuit. The teeth of both were very even and white, and well calculated to grind the "hard tack," which I had given them, and the noise they both made while thus employed resembled the turning of a coffee-grinder. The old lady at this time smiled very pleasantly, and struck up a tune, her head jogging about as if it had been stuck upon wires. I cannot say "they were the sweetest notes I ever heard," for I did not imagine Nature could be guilty of such wild, incoherent, and unmeaning sounds: she seemed so pleased, that I stepped up to her, and taking hold of her hand, asked her if she could speak Spanish, to which interrogatory she made no reply, but continued her song. On my nearer approach, I found she was not scented, as Don Quixote asks, "like some curious glover," but had, as Sancho Panza observes, "rather a rammish smell." which I found proceeded from an old guanacoe skin in which she was encircled, and a raw piece of young guanacoe, which she seemed to prize very much, as it was fastened by a string close round her naked waist, and concealed under the guanacoe skin, which was her only covering.

I thought this a good chance of taking a sketch of their persons: I accordingly sidled up to the woman, and taking out my sheet of drawing paper, I commenced pencilling her out. The whiteness of the paper attracted their notice very much; they appeared to be a good deal puzzled to account for my looking at them so steadfastly, and then marking the paper. Having commenced upon the old lady Maria, she soon left off singing, and eyed me with great expression and attention; she nevertheless kept up the swinging system with her head, which was continually rolling from one shoulder to the other. The man all this time kept up a continual glib jabber, and I more than once suspected him of "giving lip." I showed him the sketches when I had finished them, at the sight of which his countenance brightened, and turning to the old lady, to my great surprise, he began to laugh, and cried out "Bueno," several times.

At this time the other Indians came galloping up, accompanied by some gentlemen from the Adventure, to whom the above two Indians had lent their horses, which accounted for their remaining behind. The whole group of Patagonians, which now appeared on horseback, consisted of about twenty persons, and among them were several boys and girls; their garb was solely of guanacoe skin, and their countenances had decidedly a Spanish expression. These young savages seemed to understand the system of pillage very well, for I was soon surrounded, and notwithstanding my endeavours to beat them off in the same manner as you would a swarm of bees, it was to no purpose; their curiosity to ascertain what I had in my pockets was irresistible, and I accordingly suffered myself to be quietly robbed of all the tobacco that I had brought with me on shore. The greater number of their countenances appeared feminine, and it required some consideration to determine upon the difference of sex; the general distinction observable was, that the men were broader across the shoulders, and had a sterner expression of countenance; they were all without beards. Among this party there was one in particular who amongst us bore the cognomen of "young Maria;" she was of a fairer hue, and did not possess that disagreeable olive tint. Young Maria seemed to have won the hearts of every one, and very many presents of beads, buttons, and tobacco, were given her; and as a particular

mark of distinction, a medal (which had been struck off in England, with the inscription of His Majesty's ships Adventure and Beagle, 1827,) was placed round her neck. Young Maria was always good-humoured, and showed a set of teeth which, for whiteness and uniformity, might have rivalled any in the dentists' shops in May's Buildings. She appeared to recognize the deference paid by the officers to Captains King and Stokes, by her calling them "Capitan;" but there was a wheedling Indian among them, with one eye, who used to style every one "Capitan," particularly when he perceived they had any thing to which he took a fancy.

Most of them were painted above and under the eye with a dark red-coloured earth, others were tinted with a white patch upon the chin and eyebrows. They varied in height from five feet ten inches to six feet three. Some wore buskins, made out of the guanacoe skin, which only came over the foot as far as the instep, leaving the toes bare. Their spurs are of a very curious make; they are each formed of two pieces of wood, about five inches in length, and are placed on the heel like our spur; two pieces of guanacoe skin confine the heel, and keep the sticks about two inches asunder; instead of a rowel, the ends are pointed with sharp iron pins, which project out about two-tenths of an inch. These spurs are confined to the foot by a strip of guanacoe skin, which is attached to the foremost end of each stick, which passes over the instep, and is secured at the ankle.

Round their waists were suspended three long thongs of leather fastened together, having three large balls of granite attached to them, sewed up in hide, and are used for catching wild horses and ostriches. Their method of using them is by holding in the hand one of the balls, whilst the other two are swung round the head until they acquire a certain impetus, they are then thrown at the object; the balls making a rotary motion, entwine round the legs of the pursued horse or ostrich; they are thus thrown down and taken at leisure. Although we had not an opportunity of accompanying them in the chase, yet they showed us the manner of using these "ballas," and also of the "lasso," which they also had with them. The women ride astride like the men, and their saddles (for some few had them) are exactly of the same construction as the recado or recow, consisting of a piece of wood, curved to lit the horse's back (something in the style of the English pack-saddle), with a hole made on each side to admit the stirrup-leather; two or three skins are put over it, and the whole is secured by a broad piece of hide tied under the horse's belly. The bridles are of hide, and the bit is of wood, confined to the horse's head by a strip of guanacoe skin; the stirrups are of a triangular shape, also made of wood, and suspended from the saddle by thongs of hide, of a width only sufficient to admit three toes; the stirrup is generally held with the great toe. Their horses (which are about the size of our ponies) are exceedingly swift; these they generally ride with great rapidity, and lacerate their sides in a dreadful manner (this may be imagined from the construction of the spur, which is, as well as the heel of the buskin, literally covered with blood). As the Adventure's boat, previous to the arrival of Captains King and Stokes, had shoved off, and was proceeding towards the ship, I was left alone among them, and not liking the novelty of my situation, a certain feeling ? "valour will come and go," ? induced me to leave the Patagonians, friendly as they were, and proceed at a quick pace towards our own boat. The Indians seeing me running away, and not understanding, I suppose, the reason of my sudden flight, galloped after me. I took this opportunity of placing one of the pistols which were in the boat in the hands of the foremost of them, to see if he had any idea of its use. It appeared to me as if this was the first time he had beheld such a weapon, yet, such is their general apathy, he did not discover any astonishment; neither had he any idea of discharging it, for when I placed his finger upon the trigger he did not offer to pull it, and on my pulling it for him, he did not manifest the least fear at the novelty of the report. The boat being about to return to the ship, I gave them some buttons, and taking "my last look and farewell of Maria," was soon alongside the Beagle.

I was told by the assistant-surgeon, that during my absence three or four Patagonians had been rowed off to the ship, and the nonchalance and unconcern which they showed while on board were laughable enough; one of the party, about six feet in height, and distinguished from the rest by a long straight nose, kept lolling against one of the guns and whistled away very unconcernedly; they all gave a proof of the apathy of their temper, for they took little or no notice of any thing during their stay in the ship. I shall here take my leave of them for the present,

"by and by I'll prattle,
Like Roland's horn in Roncesvalles battle."

Some of the Patagonians were persuaded to go on board the Adventure, and proceed with her as far as a certain point, where they were to be landed. At noon this day, the tide favouring us, we weighed and made sail for the second Narrows, formed by the Island of Nassau and Cape Gregory, which we had passed by two P.M.; these Narrows are about thirteen miles in length, by four or five in breadth; the Spanish navigators have given to them the appellation of St. Simon; the English that of St. Bartholomew's. At five P.M. we anchored under the east end of Elizabeth Island, and, on looking towards the shores of Patagonia, an immense smoke covered the whole extent of coast, the Patagonian tribes having followed the vessels towards the point where their companions were to be landed. Elizabeth Island is rather high and rugged, yet very level on the top; there are no trees upon it, but green verdure covers the surface in many places: we lay all the night and the following day under the lee of the island, as it blew very hard from the S. W. On the 5th of January we got under weigh, with a westerly wind, which was favourable for passing between Elizabeth and Penguin Islands, commonly said to be the most dangerous passage known in the straits; we soon passed Elizabeth Island, and at Black Point (Point Negro) the Indians on board the Adventure were set on shore. About this place the woody country commences, and the coast down to Fresh-water Bay is so thickly covered with trees, and presented such a contrast to the barren and arid wastes which we had hitherto seen, that the eyes of each on board seemed refreshed by viewing these thick forests which impenetrably grew upon the sides of the high mountains. Many hundreds of trees had been torn up by the wind, and scattered along the beach. At Fresh-water Bay, which is on the Patagonian coast, there is a very open roadstead, but a tolerably good anchorage about one mile and a half off shore; great quantities of excellent-flavoured geese, ducks, teal, and snipe are to be met with in the various ponds which skirt the beach; and the geese are the largest and most curiously feathered of any in the straits. The breast is entirely covered with small black feathers, thickly studded with white spots; they weigh from eight to ten pounds: I believe these to be the Brant geese mentioned by Sir John Narborough. Towards the evening of the last day that we remained here, a party of seven Fuegians came round a point in their canoes.

As these were the first natives of Terra del Fuego that we had seen, a short description of them may be interesting. They are of small stature, the tallest among them not being more than five feet two inches, and all of them, both male and female, were in a most destitute condition; the seal-skin, which comprises their only covering, fluttered in miserable tatters around their swarthy and greasy bodies; their coarse black hair, having the appearance of split whale-bone, hung over their face and shoulders, and it is hardly possible to conceive human beings in a more wretched and degraded condition: they greedily devoured some rancid seal blubber.

Leaving this wandering tribe to the full enjoyment of their unctuous fare, we again got under weigh and stood towards Port Famine, which was the next anchorage we were destined to touch at. The coast from Fresh-water Bay to Port

Famine presents the same appearance, nothing but impervious forests; the land is not very high, the Fuegian coast being scarcely perceptible from the Patagonian shore. We encountered on our passage down to Port Famine some extremely heavy squalls, and the crew appeared much rejoiced when we cast anchor in this harbour on the 6th of January. The land here is higher than any we had previously seen. The name of Port Famine was given to this place by one of the former navigators, in consequence of a settlement having been formed here by the Spaniards in 1584; and out of four hundred persons, only three or four had survived, the remainder having been literally starved to death. The Barberry tree is found here in great quantities, and also the Arbutus, but scarcely any other vegetable production. An exhaustless supply of mussels and limpets may be obtained, but the former are not of that large size which Byron states to have found here. This is a most excellent port either for wood or water; towards the upper end of the bay (S. W.) there are incalculable quantities of large trees, which, seem to have been whitening in the wind for ages, some completely rotten, and others in good preservation; in short, the ground all around is so thickly occupied by them, that you are led to wonder where they could all come from. The short time the Beagle remained here, all (whose duty did not keep them on board) were anxious to get on shore to provide for the mess, it having been "banyan" with us, in certain points, a good while; sometimes we supplied ourselves with a few teal, yet we were not always so successful, and as a little privation had made us not over nice in our eating, we sometimes brought on board two or three red beaks, (a dark bird about the size of a pigeon, with a red beak about four inches in length, and a strong fishy smell,) which, with a few parrots, we made into a curry, and thus dined very sumptuously off "pretty poll," our necessities frequently obliging us to pop some of the birds intended as "specimens " into the saucepan. Besides the birds before mentioned, we here found kingfishers, (a pretty curry,) goss-hawks, vultures, hawks, different species of owls, various kinds of sea-gulls, blackbirds, and thrushes, and a singular kind of small owl, with a variety of smaller birds; fish in abundance, the Adventure's seine having taken a miraculous draught; some of the smelts were of an extraordinary size and brilliancy, weighing upwards of three pounds each.

This life was too good to last long; the 15th of January arrived, and orders were sent on board the Beagle for parting company, when, taking leave of our friends on board the Adventure, the Beagle unmoored, and at six o'clock, A.M. had sailed out of Port Famine to proceed upon a survey of the western entrance of the Straits of Magellan, leaving our consort safely moored at Port Famine; and, as orders had been given for fitting their yawl as a cutter, for a survey of the opposite side of the coast about Port Valdez, we did not doubt when we met again, that "we should each have a tale to tell." The weather was fine, but hazy, and at eight A.M. Point St. Anne was bearing N.W.æW, Cape Shut Up of Byron, or San Isidro of the Spaniards, S.ΩW. Having made St. Nicholas Bay, we anchored in twelve fathoms near a small island within three cables' length of us. At a short distance from us, there was another small island of about eighty yards in circumference, covered with trees, upon which were perched numbers of birds; we were not long in pulling towards them, but on our near approach they turned out to be our old friends the "shags," and of course not worth shooting at. The assistant-surgeon here shot the first white goose, and not without some concern did we leave behind us a nest of little ducks, they being too young for a curry. The surgeon, purser, and master proceeded to a river, which runs up into the country thick with woods and swamps, but they did not meet with a single bird. This is not a safe place to run into in foul weather, the anchorage being so precarious; the impervious woods and the surrounding country are desolate to look upon, and here reigns a thorough isolation ? every thing silent and dreary.

On Tuesday the 17th, being becalmed, our boats were sent out to tow, but soon afterwards a breeze springing up, we up boat, and made all sail; on the evening of the 18th, after tacking and sounding many times during the day, we were

sheltered under Cape Holland. This cape is very high and bluff, and here the Fuegian shore begins to wear a desolate and chilly aspect. The mountains which skirt the beach are of extreme height; those inland are still higher, and covered with snow; and when the weather sets in hazy and tempestuous, which is often the case, it forms no very pleasing look-out. In lying under Cape Holland you have a shingly anchorage, and are tolerably sheltered from the prevailing S. W. winds; the Patagonian coast (about here) is frightfully mountainous and woody, and the channel nearly five or six miles in width. On the 20th we were off Cape Forward, likewise a high bluff promontory; the beach is covered with thick woods and trees, which grow nearly to the tops of the mountains; the land in the interior is of great altitude, and covered with a perpetual snow. It blew very fresh at the time we were passing this cape, and the squalls off the land came on so suddenly as to require much vigilance and care to prepare for them. We met with little really tempestuous weather on our passage from thence to Port Gallant, where we safely anchored in four fathoms. This is one of the best and safest harbours in the Straits, affording a safe and ready mooring, entirely land-locked, and sheltered from all winds. There is a long narrow spit, or sand, which rises from the mouth of a small river on the northern shore, and extends about one-third across the harbour. The anchorage is of strong dark blue mud. As soon as our ship got into the harbour, which lies nearly east and west, she was brought to, both on account of the sand-bank, and the wind being dead on end, and warped up a few cables' lengths in order to be perfectly secure.

Whilst lying here I read the following passage in Captain Wallis's Narrative of his Voyage through the Straits of Magellan, in 1767: "In Port Gallant Bay," he says. "the master of the Swallow climbed one of the highest mountains, which are here very lofty, hoping from the summit he should obtain a sight of the South sea, but he found his view interrupted by mountains still higher on the southern shore; before he descended, however, he erected a pyramid, within which he deposited a bottle containing a shilling and a paper, on which was written the ship's name and the date of the year; a memorial which possibly may remain there as long as the world endures." One of the midshipmen received an order from Captain Stokes to ascend in search of it, one of the mountains which appeared most practicable, being free from thickets, and unlike the others by which we were surrounded, which were thick and intricately wooded to their summits, and nearly four thousand feet in height. I obtained leave to accompany him; we proceeded in our search, after continuing which for a length of time with as much perseverance as ever was manifested by "Christian" in the "Pilgrim's Progress," we began to wonder whereabouts the "Master" had erected the "Pyramid," and not finding it, we concluded we must have mistaken the mountain; we therefore retraced our steps and arrived on the beach in a wet and muddy condition, disappointed in not finding the "bottle," or meeting with any "specimens," except a poor twittering swallow which we shot at the highest part of the mountain.

Dr. Bowen having suggested (the next day) the probability of discovering the bottle on some of the other mountains, which were of a still greater altitude, I volunteered to accompany him in a second search; so taking with us a gun and a pint-bottle of brandy, we soon entered the brakes which skirt the base of the mountain. Dr. Bowen proceeded first, and, being a tall athletic man, he broke down the interwoven thickets, so that I was enabled to proceed with less difficulty. About four hundred yards up the mountain the acclivity became much steeper, and at every step we sank above our knees in withered stubble and moss; in this manner we proceeded, almost in darkness, from the thick foliage of the trees, until we were stopped by a huge rock, which, jutting out, cut off all possibility of ascending farther in that direction, unless we had a mind to mount in the style of the "futtock shrouds," which was not the doctor's forte any more than my own. We then determined to round this part of the mountain, and here found a less objectionable passage. With much difficulty we ascended a

considerable distance, our path being continually obstructed by decayed roots of trees, till we arrived at another fearful projection, along the edge of which we could perceive an opening of about thirty yards in length, which led to a part of the mountain altogether divested of trees. Dr. Bowen went fearlessly forward, and I could do no less than follow him; but he excelled me both in courage and speed, and I soon lost sight of him. I then had recourse to bawling out his name, and the sound of his voice gave me that kind of confidence which I should suppose a person would feel when suddenly buried alive, on hearing the voices of persons employed in digging him out. Having got through this passage, a few paces brought me to the top of the mountain, and I was now upon a level plain, where several small ponds had formed, beside one of which was seated Dr. Bowen, dipping some biscuit in the crystal water; this reminded me of the player (Melchor Zapata) whom Gil Blas encountered in his journey "soaking crusts of bread in a spring." We took this opportunity of drinking the brandy, and also of looking down upon the Beagle, which appeared about half her tonnage. At the distance of nearly a quarter of a mile, we perceived a conically shaped mountain, upon which we expected to find our prize; so, surmounting a very great inclination to sleep, I arrived soon after the doctor at the top of this first conic elevation; but here was no pyramid, nor any indication of there ever having been one; we then proceeded to a still higher cone of the mountain about 500 paces from where we stood, and there was the "pyramid," (not quite so large as those of Egypt, for this was only four feet in height,) and, on removing the stones we perceived a bottle, broken in halves, in which was the "shilling," and several of what appeared to be musket cartridges, in a very damp condition: around the base of the pyramid were scattered several pieces of decayed wood; these were carefully collected, and taking the shilling and cartridges, we wrote, with a pencil, on a piece of paper, the following notable certification, as far as my memory serves: "Dr. Bowen and Mr. Macdouall, of his Britannic Majesty's ship Beagle, Pringle Stokes, Esq. commander, visited this spot in January, 1827, and found a bottle containing a shilling and several cartridges. They have left a pint bottle, in which was placed an English shilling and several buttons." Having enclosed this paper with an English shilling (which was compressed nearly double in order to admit of its entrance) in the empty brandy bottle, we replaced the old bottle, placed ours by its side, rebuilt the pyramid, and prepared to return.

On looking towards the sea-shore we perceived there was little or no impediment by this side of the mountain, there being scarcely any trees or bushes, in comparison with those we had encountered on the side by which we had ascended; and we should have chosen it for our descent, but, calculating that on reaching the sea-shore we should be, from the windings and deep lagoons which are visible along the line of coast, at least eight or ten miles from the ship, we returned as we went, and with much less difficulty. On our arrival on board we made Captain Stokes acquainted with the success of our expedition, and deposited in his hands the cartridges and the shilling. A day or two afterwards it was reported that what we had supposed cartridges, were memorials! but of their purport we could discover nothing until our return to Port Famine (two months afterwards), when they were presented to Captain King. They were then ascertained to be Bougainville and Cordoba's memorials of their voyage, the former of date 1766, the other 1786; the memorial left by the master of the Swallow had consequently escaped our search. I shall here take the opportunity of stating, that it was the intention of Captain Stokes to have replaced the shilling and the memorials, and to have rebuilt the cross placed here by Cordoba (Morro do Cruz, Port Gallant), of which the decayed wood seemed to have been a part, on his return to the straits for the second survey.

Leaving Port Gallant on or about the 21st January, Captain Stokes, in his haste to get through the straits, had forgotten to take on hoard several of the boarding-pikes which had been arranged along-shore, and to which were affixed silk handkerchiefs, for the purpose of survey. They were consequently left there,

though he intended to remove them on his return to the harbour. We moved on to the westward, occasionally encountering those heavy squalls off the land which blow with such an overwhelming force from the south-west. Smoke was visible on both shores, but we did not bring-to to speak the natives. The line of coast from Cape Notch to Cape Providence, on both shores, presents a chain of snow-capped mountains rising to a great height; intermingled among them are dark cavities of rocks, others rising in conical shapes, and forming a thousand different figures, which, with the trees and forests occasionally breaking upon the sight, give some idea of the wilderness in this part of the world. Having anchored under Cape Providence, we found it to be tolerably good holding ground, but rather a dangerous harbour to run into, particularly in squally or foggy weather, as there are various rocks visible just above the water.

We had now passed a stretch of country of nearly two hundred and fifty miles, the wind having been directly contrary the whole distance. The almost incessant rain and damp and cold atmosphere began to have its effect upon our crew, and some of our strongest and most able-bodied seamen were fast sinking under a constant exposure upon deck, which continued gales of wind made absolutely indispensable. To particularise the daring and determined attempts made for the last few days by Captain Stokes to reach Cape Pillar (then about thirty-five miles from us) would be perhaps a tedious narration of gales of wind blowing with unrelenting fury right a-head, and only to be appreciated by those who have been beating to windward at the mercy of a heavy sea and the wind blowing a perfect hurricane. Neither was Captain Stokes of a disposition to lay quietly under Cape Providence waiting for fair weather; he was none of your "fair weather Jacks;" but with a resolution and energy hardly to be surpassed, he boldly and fearlessly braved the difficulties which thickened around him; trusting to himself, and having confidence in the skill and seamanship of Lieutenants Skyring and Sholl and the other officers, he vainly endeavoured to reach the western entrance, and was constantly driven back, exposed as we then were to the heavy swell of the great Pacific, which rolled in upon us with unabated violence. After repeated and unavailing trials. Captain Stokes, apparently tired out by the constant and never-varying point from which such heavy squalls set in, determined at all hazards to reach Cape Pillar, and, on the morning of the 31st January, the wind howling around us, and the atmosphere dense and cheerless, we put to sea. During the day we tacked nearly thirty times, and when within ten miles of Westminster Island, the wind blew with redoubled violence. The evening began to close in: still we dashed on, and still were driven back; the sea broke over the vessel many times, and she laboured very much, and oftentimes was buried in the deep trough of the sea. At length we were struck on the larboard side by a heavy sea, which threw us nearly on our beam-ends, the hammock-nettings on the larboard side, towards the forecastle, being completely under water, and the men who were there immersed above their knees: it broke the stanchions and carried away the first gig. The "idlers," who were battened down (and more than ten men were upon the sick-list), seemed to be quite unconcerned at the din and noise overboard? "nothing so much the spirit calms as rum and true religion;"? but talked over the probability of reaching Cape Pillar on such a boisterous evening. By this time it was nearly dark, and nothing was to be seen around us but black and gathering clouds, from which a vivid gleam of lightning occasionally shot, making the gloom still more awful;

"That night, a child might understand,
The Deil had business on his hand."

and now Captain Stokes, despairing of making any farther way, ordered "about ship" and ran for our old anchorage: in passing too near the rocks (which I before mentioned are in the harbour). the ship struck three successive times, grating harshly against them, and heeling-over fearfully; each shock made sad defalcations in the glass and crockery, both of the officers and ship's company.

At this crisis, nothing could exceed the surprising activity of the sick, particularly of old Baptiste, the black cook, "a gentlemanly kind of man," who, jumping out of his hammock, made directly for the main hatch, loudly vociferating, "God b?t ! she go to hell ! You tiefs, why you no butt up de hatch?" which being very soon accomplished by those on the doctor's list, up they went, "sauve qui peut." I must not forget to mention one elderly gentleman on board, who had been estropié for some time, occasioned by an old ulcer, but who was now seen practising a quick hobble about the gun-room, full of "dolens maeste," looking very pale. I must here beg to digress, and request the learned reader to remember, that if, like Sancho, "I speak a great deal of nonsense, it does not proceed from malice but infirmity," therefore, leaving him ejaculating pious exclamations, and repeating the creed, which, no doubt, he did very incorrectly "in his confusion," I, with some others, rushed upon deck to see what was the matter. The men were all abroad, scarcely knowing which rope to lay hold of; but the danger had been momentary; the fore-sail having been kept on, had dragged her completely over the rocks, and in a few minutes afterwards we were safely anchored. This was what I afterward heard called "touch and go," and, perhaps, one of those occurrences which serve people to talk and laugh about when the danger is past; but, at the time such a mistake really occurs, the case is found to be no laughing matter.

The next morning, the 1st of February, Captain Stokes, accompanied by Mr. Flinn, the master, Mr. Jones, volunteer of the second class, and twelve men, being victualled for five days and well armed, proceeded in the cutter to look out for harbours, so that if we were again assailed by these tremendous squalls we might obtain a nearer shelter than by returning to Cape Providence. The weather had not cleared up; it rained incessantly, and it was, moreover, exceedingly cold; consequently the search upon which the captain had gone did not promise either comfort or enjoyment. The 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th days had passed, and nothing of the cutter had been heard of, and many conjectures were formed as to her fate. Considerable anxiety was manifested, and many on board unhesitatingly predicted the loss of the whole party. On the afternoon of the 6th day all eyes were strained towards the point where we expected the cutter to appear, and we were about surrendering our last hope of again seeing her, when, to our great joy, she hove in sight, coming down right before the wind. On her arriving alongside, we soon perceived an alteration in the looks of all, except Captain Stokes and Mr. Flinn, who appeared none the worse for the cruise; but, on looking after our messmate, he presented such a whimsical appearance that we scarcely could suppress the laugh to which we felt a strong inclination, for his face, naturally bluff, was puffed up and swollen, and speckled of a blue tint, something resembling that of a drowned person. The effect of the weather upon some of the men had been different: their faces looked as long as an eight shilling teaboard. It was useless for us to ask any questions of Mr. Jones until he had attended to the demands of the "Victualling department;" one of us was obliged to cut up the provision for him, his hands being rendered nearly powerless from the effects of the cold. The relation which he gave of their cruise proved their having suffered severely; it had rained without cessation the whole time, which prevented them from making a fire, and they were without the possibility of getting a dry shelter, as they found most of the places upon which they landed complete swamps; they were consequently compelled to lie down shivering in their wet clothes, under such shelter as they could find; if so fortunate as to fall asleep, it was but of short duration: they awoke in agony, the wet and damp ground filling them full of "aches and pains." They availed themselves of every short interval of fair weather, and found some good anchorages. Having put into "Separation Harbour," they found there a family of the wandering natives of Terra del Fuego, consisting of two men and two young children, likewise a dog; the women had been concealed. The elder of the two was a very facetious gentleman, and imitated all he saw done; if spoken to, he repeated the words with a surprising precision, and even the tone and gesture.

The captain said to the younger savage, "Don't your eyes, pull off my boots !" which he repeated with the exactness of an echo: he had a particular wish to abscond with any thing that he laid his hands on a tin can and a spoon he concealed under his seal-skin covering. The children were pretty, and of an interesting tawny colour. This account made us anxious to weigh from Cape Providence, and bring up in Separation Harbour; but Captain Stokes not having completed the survey, we did not leave it until the 9th February, when, the weather being fine, but still blowing hard, we got under weigh, and after putting into various anchorages, and surveys being made in the boats of many lagoons, coves, and deep bays, on both shores, we arrived at Separation Harbour on the 15th February. It presented on all sides a hideous track of rocks of great altitude, and a perfect wilderness and desolation reigned around us.

At the first opportunity, I succeeded in obtaining a passage on shore, in company with Dr. Bowen and Lieutenant Sholl, and on the boat passing the wigwam which was built on the left of the harbour, we beheld, thrust through the top of it, the head and naked shoulders of the younger savage, who loudly cried out Cheree-cow-wow, Che-ree-cow-wow, and these words he continued to bawl out with the whole strength of his lungs. We landed a few minutes afterwards at the farther end of the harbour (where plenty of good water descends from the rocks), and made our way over sharp-pointed rocks to the place they had chosen for erecting the wigwam. When our party came within twenty paces of them we perceived the old Indian, apparently about fifty years of age, standing with a club raised over his shoulder in an offensive position, and a youth of nineteen, with a long straight stick or lance, which he held in the attitude of throwing at us; seeing us stop, they both indulged in a long hideous guttural vociferation, the harsh and inharmonious tones of which savoured more of the growl than the voice of a human being. Having listened patiently to this strange clatter, we again moved forward, our noses forewarning us of an approach towards the Den of Cacus. The old Indian had lowered his club as we came up, and on our giving him a biscuit, he greedily began to gnaw it, holding it fast with both his hands, and calling out cheop, cheop, several times. This, we afterwards found out, was a favourite word of his, the meaning of which we vainly endeavoured to ascertain. As he stood close to the entrance of the wigwam, we offered to move him on one side in order to go in, when he again set up his guttural talk, and exclaimed petites, petites, and pointed inside the wigwam, to the opening of which we saw come forward two little girls, in a state of nudity, the eldest about the age of six, the youngest four, who both began to cry at the sight of us: but, giving to each a string of white beads and a piece of biscuit, they both ceased crying, and old Che-ree-cow-wow immediately left off gnawing the biscuit, and set up the cry of cheop, cheop, upon which Lieutenant Sholl offered him a string of red ones, which he no sooner beheld than he clutched them with considerable force, and in a moment hid them under his arm-pit. The elder child had its head encircled with a peculiar string of light-coloured small shells, and it was some time before we could persuade the infant to part with them; but the display of some party-coloured beads and a spoon was too much for old Che-ree-cow-wow; he took the shells off the head of the child, but not without first consulting its inclination, (for they appeared to be very affectionate to their children, as we observed in several instances,) and, placing it in the hands of Dr. Bowen, made a vigorous clutch at the spoon and beads, which he deposited in the usual hiding place, uttering cheop, cheop, with great eagerness and good-humour. The younger was constantly repeating the words he heard with great accuracy, and also busied himself in attempts to pluck out our eyebrows; it so happened that he took Lieutenant Sholl off his guard, and gave him a severe twinge. It would appear from this circumstance, and their not having any themselves, that they pluck out their own.

We now all had a dance together, our new acquaintances jumping about and making as much noise as any of us: and the dirty copper-coloured appearance of the

elder Indian struck me, while he thus capered about, as being particularly hideous. He was about five feet six inches in height and exceedingly robust and broad-chested, but had altogether a most miserable appearance; he certainly resembled a devil more than a human being. Having exercised ourselves sufficiently, both the Indians crept upon their hands and knees into the wigwam, the entrance to it being so near the ground as not to allow of any other mode of ingress; ? and perhaps it may be as well, for the edification of those who never read of, or saw any, to give some account of these temporary habitations. A great number of long straight branches of trees are fixed in the ground in a circle, at certain distances apart, the area being about fifteen feet; some pliant twigs keep the ends of the branches together, which being bent, form a centre at the top; it is rendered comfortably warm and air-tight by a covering of boughs and seal-skins; the fire is made in the centre, around which they sat in the midst of smoke, which could not possibly escape, there being no aperture at the top, but through the doorway, which being so low, rendered its egress almost impossible; but they appear to be very little incommoded by it. Having thus thrust ourselves into the wigwam, we found our friends huddling over the fire, which now burnt very brightly, and keeping the children close to them; they motioned us to sit down likewise, and we arranged ourselves accordingly. They commenced rummaging about the sides of the wigwam, and soon produced some large mussels, which they put into the fire, and while these were cooking, they extended their limbs and drew closer to the blaze. Not much relishing a farther continuance in the wigwam, we crawled out; and seeing us about to depart, they pointed to the masts of the ship, visible above the headland, and exclaimed sheroo, sheroo, by which we understand them to mean the ship, and we beckoned the elder to follow; he pointed to the masts, repeating their word sheroo, and came with us some way down the mountain; we then gave him a biscuit to encourage him, but he no sooner received it, than he suddenly changed his mind, and made his way quickly back, waving his hand to bid us farewell as he ran along, repeating the word sheroo as long as we were in sight. As the boat passed the wigwam on our return, they both shouted che-ree-cow-wow, and continued to utter those words until a turning in the land hid us from their view.

On visiting the shore the day following, and taking with us a good supply of grog and biscuit, we were so fortunate as to crawl into the wigwam just as its inhabitants were at dinner; they had gathered an immense quantity of limpets and mussels, which they were roasting with great dispatch. Having seated ourselves, the younger Indian displayed a characteristic trait of preference to the mid who accompanied our party, by attempting to pluck out his eyebrows; then taking one of the largest mussels that appeared sufficiently roasted, and giving it a turn or two in his mouth, apparently for the purpose of cooling it, he presented the dainty morsel to my companion, who very politely signified his rejection of the proffered favour by shaking his head; the Indian then transferred the mussel to the hand of the elder child, who brought and held it up to our middy's mouth, at the same time talking to him very prettily in Fuegian; but all was quite useless; neither her persuasions nor mine could induce him to venture on a taste. Old Cheop, perceiving my eyes water from the effects of the smoke, immediately dried them with his dirty fist; for this piece of kindness I gave him a button, which he directly hid between his toes, as he did likewise another given him by my friend. Being now anxious to get him off to the ship, I endeavoured by taking hold of my trowsers and other signs to acquaint him, that by going on board he would obtain similar ones; and farther to encourage him, I took off my old flushing jacket and put it upon him. These efforts not availing, I drew forth the bottle of grog, at the sight of which he commenced a rattling noise in his throat. I then placed my hand over his eyes, and held the bottle to his mouth, when he swallowed the liquor greedily; before removing my hand from his eyes, I put the bottle in my pocket; when he found it gone, he made eager signs for more, crying out cheop, cheop, and uttering other wild and incoherent sounds. The younger Indian stood by all this time, looking up to the sky, with his hands

together above his head, and kept calling out picharee, picharee, in a piteous tone of voice, but what he meant I could not possibly make out; however, I comforted him also by a taste of the grog, which he gulped down with equally as much go't as the elder and we heard no more about picharee. Having by this time gained their entire confidence, I moved down the mountain, inviting the elder Indian to follow, which he did immediately; the younger one, taking his station at the door of the wigwam (as if to guard the children), cried out, "D ?n your eyes," an expression he had picked up amongst us, and of which he was perfect master. To prevent the elder Indian from running back, as he had done the day before, we kept him before us: he made his way down the rocks much easier and swifter than we could, although he was barefooted. On arriving at the boat, we bundled him in, one of the sailor's first helping him on with an old pair of canvass trowsers. We were soon alongside the ship, and he made his appearance, no doubt for the first time, on board of a man-of-war. He evinced a much greater share of curiosity than the Patagonians; he looked around him with much earnestness, gazing sometimes down upon the deck, then up at the rigging, but always kept a look-out to see if I was near him. Captain Stokes ordered him a glass of port wine, which he appeared to like as well as the grog, and finished a second and third glass with great composure of countenance. The doctor, upon this occasion, placed his hand on the top of the Indian's head, to discover if he possessed (as he said) "the organ of veneration;" upon which Old Cheop began to pull and rub the doctor's head likewise, in rather a less unceremonious manner. We soon afterwards introduced him to the "middies' berth," and it being then about four o'clock (our tea-time), we placed before him a basin of warm souchong, made very sweet, into which he immediately put his greasy hand, and he did not seem inclined to withdraw it, until some of us moved the basin, and placed his hands on either side of it, when he raised it to his mouth and drank the whole off. He now refused to take more grog, but observing him eyeing the sugar, we placed a quantity of it before him; on tasting it, his eyes glistened with delight, while he testified the greatest gratification by sucking and licking his fingers: he now pointed to the basin for more tea, which was given to him until he had emptied it six times; he then fell-to upon some ship's beef and biscuit, which, with a large piece of plum-duff, he very soon conveyed down his throat; but, while thus gloriously stuffing himself, he did not forget the children, for he occasionally placed pieces of beef and pudding under his jacket, next his skin, as he said, for the petites. But what he appeared to relish full as much as the pudding, was several "purser's dips" which we gave him; these he finished with an evident "gust," swallowing cotton and all. The candles, however (to use a nautical phrase), "choked his luff:" we then made him a tumbler of very sweet grog, which he drank off, scraping up with his finger the undissolved sugar that had settled at the bottom of the glass. Whilst he was thus agreeably engaged, he contrived to secrete every spoon upon the table; some he placed under his arms, and others up his sleeve. We then gave him a small looking-glass, in which he surveyed himself very steadfastly, and turned the glass to observe what was on the other side, and not seeing his face, he turned it round again, and was a good deal puzzled when he again saw himself; however, he continued to gaze on, till raising his head, and putting on a most ludicrous smile, he looked attentively at every one in the berth, indulging, at the same time, in a low murmuring gabble, which at length burst out into cheop, cheop, and suddenly hid the glass in the usual depository, exclaiming petites, petites, and huddled himself up, as if fearful of having it taken away from him. I showed him some drawings of the Patagonians. but he did not seem to recognise them. The time having arrived when it became advisable to put him on shore. I made an attempt to recover my flushing-jacket, but he had concealed under it such an olio of beef, pudding, sugar, candles, and biscuit, that it was prettily bedaubed, nor was he at all inclined to relinquish it. Before placing him in the boat, we stuck on his head a red night-cap, so that he looked like a large ourang-outang; we also made him presents of beads, spoons, and knives, with all of which he was highly pleased. As he went on shore, he amused himself (as was reported) by

eating the arming of grease off one of the sea-leads employed in sounding.

On the following day, the younger Indian, on perceiving the boat making towards the shore, set up the cry of che-ree-cow-wow, and made his way down to the party with great celerity, running over the rocks with a surprising swiftness, and took his seat in the boat, where he waited very patiently until they pulled off to the ship; on being brought into the berth, and the door closed, he displayed great uneasiness, hammering with his hands until it was opened: we treated him in the same manner as we had the elder Indian, but he proved not so voracious a feeder. Before coming on board, he had painted his nose and face; his eyes, which were small and black, did not want lustre; and had it not been for his coarse ragged hair, which hung down the sides of his head and face in lank and dishevelled masses (except over the front of the head, where it was cut smooth, and just long enough to conceal a forehead "villanous low"), he would have looked like a Spanish youth. His features were regular; his wide mouth was well furnished with teeth as white as ivory, and his hands and feet were small and well formed. As he had come on board only with the seal-skin covering, we rigged him out in a flannel waistcoat and shirt, and one of the marines gave him an old red jacket and a pair of canvass trowsers, so that he looked a respectable member of society, and giving him also presents of beads, knives, and looking-glasses, he departed equally pleased and delighted as the elder Indian.

The next day being out on a shooting-party, we paid a visit to the wigwam; the Indians no sooner heard us coming through the bushes, than they ran out to meet us, the younger Indian resumed his tattered seal-skin, and Old Cheop appeared in "cuerpo," with the shirt and flannel waistcoat torn in pieces, rolled round his middle. On entering the wigwam, we saw nothing of the rest of the clothing that had been given to them, except the red cap. After much trouble we succeeded in obtaining some spear heads, made probably from the bones of the seal and otter; also some shells, which serve them to drink out of, and likewise several wicker baskets of a rude construction. We could not ascertain the method they used to obtain fire, and in order to discover it, we were about to extinguish the one they had in their wigwam, but no sooner did they perceive our intention, than they rushed in to prevent us, and appeared so earnest that we deemed it prudent to desist. Around their hut were scattered a great quantity of mussel and limpet shells and seal-bones; they use the club to kill the latter animal, as we discovered by pointing to that weapon, when the elder Indian struck the ground several times, and pointed to the sea, at the same time blowing and snuffing, as if to give us an idea of the noise made by the seals. At this time the younger made an attack upon the eyebrows of Mr. Bynoe, using a mussel-shell as a pair of tweezers. We left them soon afterwards, and saw them no more. They were building a canoe while we were with them; it was formed of several pieces of some kind of bark, along the edges of which were made several holes, and fastened or sewed together with seal-gut. Nature seems to have endowed these people with much ingenuity and perseverance, for the labour required to build these canoes must be very great, sharp mussel-shells being their only implements. Among the variety of trees which compose the woods at this harbour, the birch is the largest, growing to from twenty-five to twenty-six feet in height, but generally very crooked; in the building of small vessels it might be rendered serviceable. The winter bark (of which there is an abundance) is distinguished by its leaves resembling those of the laurel; it grows very straight, and is in height about thirty feet, the dimensions rarely exceed twenty inches, and the square nine or ten. There are also other bushes, bearing a white blossom, eight or ten feet high, of a singular hardness; and also the Barberry tree, whose stem and branches are of a warped and irregular growth, and there are no other trees of size, in the woods at this anchorage, worthy of attention or remark.

On the 20th of February we again got under way, and came-to amidst an

archipelago of islands not laid down in any chart; indeed I was given to understand that the coast from Cape Providence to Cape Victory is but very imperfectly laid down by preceding navigators: these rocks bore to the east, S.E. by S. and to the west S.S.W. On the 22d we again weighed, the wind blowing fresh; at about thirty minutes past nine we saw the Evangelists, and as it now blew much fresher, we bore up for Separation Harbour. On the 24th and 25th we were off the Evangelists, the centre of them bearing W. Ω S. and on the 24th the captain went on shore at Cape Victory to fix its latitude. The weather at this time was particularly fine and pleasant, not a cloud was to be seen, "Ocean slumbered like an unweaned child," and harmony and good-fellowship reigned among us. We had met with no savages since leaving Separation Harbour, nor could any traces of their huts or wigwams be found on the land about Cape Victory, or in any of the coves or bays where we touched; we therefore concluded that this part of the coast is but little frequented by the natives.

As we were now upon our return, I shall speak briefly as possible of the different lagoons, coves, and harbours we met with, for I apprehend that a full description of them would be tiresome to the general reader; and I have avoided, for the same reason, an account of the different depths of water, and the rise and fall of the tide, and all geographical descriptions, as there are some well-

penned relations by the preceding navigators upon that head, and I have therefore considered any notice from me upon these matters altogether unnecessary; and if in this narrative I should be found to differ from others in any former account of the Patagonians and Terra del Fuegians, it will be remembered that, "I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke, but here I am to speak what I do know."

On the 27th we weighed from Port Tuesday on our return: standing over to the northern shore, we brought up in an immense bay, where there is a good anchorage, and called by the captain, Cape Parker. It is an open roadstead, having three low flat islands at each side athwart its mouth. The northern side of this bay is very shallow to a great extent; and the interior of the country partakes of the usual desolation, swampy grounds, cataracts, and large ponds of water.

This bay seems to have escaped the notice of all the preceding navigators, as it is not laid down in any chart of the coast. Captain Stokes and Lieutenant Skyring were engaged the whole afternoon, mid-deep in water, in making a survey of the northern part of the anchorage; and notwithstanding the weather was cold and rainy, they pursued their observations with unremitting activity and perseverance. While Captain Stokes was thus engaged. Lieutenant Sholl and myself rounded a sandy beach at this part of the bay; on proceeding onwards we heard a roaring of water, and on breaking our way through the forest, we came to a large cataract rolling its foaming course over a steep bank, above which the country appeared to be divested of wood. Having with some difficulty crossed this torrent, we came to an open plain, about two hundred paces in breadth and half a mile in length; on either side of this treeless space the mountains rose to a great altitude, thickly wooded with trees of all sizes, some withered and bleached by age, others of a green and lively verdure. A deadly silence reigned in this solitude, if we except the now fainter sounds of the waterfall, whose distant murmurings served but to heighten the effect of the surrounding desolation. As we walked along, we came to a natural pond of about thirty yards in circumference. I tasted the water and found it very sweet and good. On regaining the beach, we discovered among some bushes a quantity of mussel and limpet shells, and a few steps further in the forest we came upon a regular kraal, or village of deserted wigwams of various sizes. The natives must have remained here some time, for on all sides of these skeleton huts were strewed a great number of well-picked bones, we supposed of the seal and otter, although some of them appeared like the thigh-bone of a child. We searched all the wigwams in hope of meeting with some shells, but all these drinking cups had

been removed. There must have been rare feasting at this place; and I strongly suspected them to be cannibals and a little wolfish in their appetite, from an incident which occurred in the wigwam of Old Cheop at Separation Harbour. I had one morning paid a visit to the wigwam, and being seated inside I had taken off my jacket for the younger Indian to admire, and having my shirt sleeve above my elbow, I proceeded to search round the hut for some spear heads, when Old Cheop suddenly clutched me by the elbow with one hand, while with the other he clawed and rubbed my naked arm. Whether he was struck by the difference of complexion from his own brown pelt, or fancied a broil (there was a good fire at the time in the wigwam), I know not; but certain it was that he talked to the younger savage very earnestly, who also seized my arm and held it very tight, at the same time he exchanged, I conceived, an anthropophagic look with the capacious mouthed Cheop. At this time the younger Indian let go his hold and stirred up the fire, both of them making low moaning and clucking noises (as if they had got the "rattles" in their throat) for some minutes. During this strange exhibition of civilities I sat very quiet; but I unhesitatingly declare, that had I met with these natives in any of my sporting excursions away from the ship, this sort of behaviour would have made me very uneasy, and have been quite a sufficient inducement for me to have left their company without a moment's delay. Captain Stokes had taken the cutter round a point farther to the northward, whence, after a considerable delay, she returned, and we rejoined the Beagle.

Captain Stokes having made a particular survey of this place, we weighed and came to an anchor in a bay under Cape Tamar, perhaps as bad an anchorage as any in the straits, being a very open roadstead. The difficulty is in getting close under the cape, in consequence of the many rocks, and the wind blowing directly from the west.

On the 1st of March we came-to in a bay under Cape Upright, where there is a good anchorage. We cruised in the gig round the harbour, which is of great extent, and goes some distance inland; it would prove an excellent and secure rendezvous for small vessels. We saw several birds in this anchorage considerably larger than a goose; their wings are very short, so as not to admit of their rising out of the water; but when disturbed, they move along the surface with great swiftness, beating the sea with their wings, and from the noise and rapidity of motion, we gave them the name of "steamers." There are some birch and pine trees in this harbour in good condition, and also the winter bark.

On March 3d, got under way, and at 4 P.M. made Cape Monday, bearing W. N. W. and Cape Notch, E. by N.; the weather became squally, upon which we bore up and run towards a harbour. At five, we were surprised at seeing a boat in a S.E. direction. apparently making towards us; fired four signal guns that she might not mistake our position, as we were now getting close in-shore. About half-past six she came alongside, and proved to be a whale-boat, with six men in her, belonging to a schooner, (the Prince of Saxe Cobourg,) Captain Brisbane, that had been wrecked on the 19th of December, in Fury Harbour, at the south entrance of the Barbara Channel. These men had been dispatched by Captain Brisbane towards the western entrance, in the hope of falling in with a South-Sea whaler, and it proved a lucky circumstance to them that they chanced to meet with the Beagle, as no vessel had hove in sight during our stay in that latitude. They represented the situation of Captain Brisbane as extremely perilous, the Fuegians becoming daily more numerous, and displaying hostile inclinations. The natives, when but few in number, are civil enough, and you may strip and leave them bare with impunity; but I do not consider it at all safe to fall in with them when they have a manifest advantage, as you may get knocked on the head for the sake of a string of beads or a few buttons, although, in some instances, the crew of the whale-boat had met with particular kind treatment from some of the families and tribes at the different lagoons wherein they sheltered for the

night, for they soon made up a fire, assisted in drawing up the boat, and brought them plenty of fish, limpets, and mussels; but this was not always the case, for meeting one day with a number of large canoes full of these savages, they instantly gave chase to the whale-boat, shooting after them with their bows and arrows, and throwing their spears, and, with some difficulty, she escaped by the quickness and superiority of her pulling.

Captain Stokes consequently lost no time in proceeding to Port Gallant, in which we were moored on the 4th instant, and found that since our departure from this harbour the natives had paid it a visit, and had erected several wigwams; they had, however, quitted the place, and had taken with them the boarding-pikes which we had left standing on the beach. The next day, Lieutenant Sholl was dispatched in the whale-boat to Port Famine, with four men, victualled for twenty-one days, with dispatches for Captain King, to prevent any uneasiness which might arise in consequence of remaining absent from the Adventure for a much longer period than had been calculated upon. The same day Captain Stokes, the master, and Mr. Kirke, midshipman, with the six shipwrecked seamen and some of our own crew, proceeded in the launch and cutter to the relief of Captain Brisbane, at Fury Harbour, about seventy miles distant from Port Gallant. They returned on the 8th, bringing away Captain Brisbane and the rest of the shipwrecked seamen. Mr. Kirke related to me a few particulars of their passage. About midway in the Barbara Channel, they encountered a great many Indians in their canoes, who endeavoured to keep up with the launch and cutter, and as the boats neared any of the natives occupying the rocks and headlands (which in a great many places were thronged by them), they, as the boats passed underneath, set up a halloo, and discharged their arrows and spears, which, however, fell greatly short of the mark; but how great was the surprise of Captain Stokes and the rest of the officers, to behold some of these naked savages running along the beach, holding in their hands the identical boarding-pikes which had been missed from Port Gallant on our return. These pikes they flourished over their heads in a formidable manner, and this conduct made the captain still more anxious to make all haste to the relief of Captain Brisbane. Our party were happy to find, on their arrival at Fury Harbour, all of them in perfect safety, although they had been terribly alarmed by the report of one of their men, who was stationed on an adjacent mountain upon the look-out for the return of the whale-boat. This man, perceiving two large boats at a distance pulling towards Fury Harbour, was seized with a panic, and running down the mountain, he rushed into the tent, erected by Captain Brisbane, crying-out, "The Indians! the Indians!" In an instant they all armed themselves, in the idea that the Indians were attacking them en masse; and what made this supposition the more probable, was their conduct a day or two previous, when they made an attack upon the stores, thieving every thing they could lay their hands on, and were only prevented entering the tent by the determined resistance of Captain Brisbane and his crew. As they had departed suddenly, Captain Brisbane conjectured they might return in greater numbers, and expecting an attack, he had made preparations for blowing them up with gunpowder, having placed three or four small barrels near their usual landing-place. Our party found on their arrival the place in a good state of defence, and had the Indians commenced hostilities, they would not have had much the best of the fight; however, the shipwrecked party were agreeably surprised on discovering their mistake, and manifested the greatest joy at their unexpected deliverance.

As the party were returning, they landed where a great many Indians had collected, most of whom were painted or daubed over the face and body, red and white, and such was the miserable state of some of these tribes, that they hardly appeared the figures of men; however, they were very friendly, and a good many lances and bows and arrows were obtained from them, in exchange for beads, knives, &c.; also two of their dogs, which are a breed resembling a fox, all but in colour, which is of a dirty grey cast; the head is sharp, ears long, and the

tail bushy. Belonging to our ship's crew there was a black man, who had gone in the cutter, and he no sooner landed among the natives than they all gathered round him, astonished at his black face, and uttering strange sounds, pointed at him with their fingers, and kept touching his face and pulling his woolly head, laughing loudly, and indulging in many extravagant gestures, as if delighted at his sable appearance; nor could they believe for some time that it was his real colour; when, however, they became satisfied of this fact, their joy was unbounded, and they began to dab him with a sort of red earth, which they carried with them in a seal-skin bag. But "blackey" not relishing the metamorphose, he broke through the swarm which encircled him, and made for the boat, into which he jumped, concealing himself from view at the bottom of it; nor could he be persuaded to venture among them again, although they followed him to the boat, and beckoned him to come on shore, holding out their bows and arrows as an inducement; but it was all to no purpose, so they amused themselves by pointing and laughing at his woolly head whenever he raised it above the sides of the boat.

We left Port Gallant on the 10th, and the same day joined the Adventure in Port Famine, having been absent from her fifty-four days. At our approach she manned her yards and gave us three cheers. It is needless to express the joy manifested on our return ?

"The smile, the question, and the quick reply,
And the heart's promise of festivity," - ?

for our lengthened absence from the ship had created in Captain King and all his officers a most painful anxiety.

The Adventure had been newly painted. and looked exceedingly gay, and the Beagle also was smart enough when she first sailed out of Port Famine;

"How like the prodigal doth she return with overweathered
ribs, and ragged sails, lean, rent, and beggared by the strumpet wind." ?
Merchant of Venice.

All on board the Adventure remarked an alteration in our personal appearance, and I believe none of us looked much the fatter for our excursion; we were, however, glad to see them looking so well, and their society and a little good cheer soon made us forget the fatigues and difficulties we had undergone.

During our absence, they had manned two boats, in which the master, second mate, a midshipman, and clerk, had proceeded to the opposite side of the strait, facing Port Famine, upon a shooting excursion, and having remained there a day or two, had arrived nearly mid-channel on their return back, when they were overtaken by one of those severe squalls so prevalent in these straits; and from the tempestuous weather which had now set in, accompanied by a heavy tumbling sea, it required the greatest caution to prevent their being swamped. One of the boats had shot a considerable distance a-head when, on looking back, they perceived the cutter keel uppermost, and their unfortunate companions struggling with the waves; they quickly bore down to their assistance, and the cutter having righted, they saw Mr. Ainsworth (the master) and Mr. Hodgskin (the clerk) succeed in getting into her, when she was again upset, and they had to renew the struggle for their lives. The other boat neared them fast, and Mr. Ainsworth and Mr. Hodgskin and the crew were observed clinging to the sides of the cutter, almost exhausted. Mr. Williams (second mate) hallooed to encourage them still to hold on; in a minute afterwards they were alongside ? but too late. Poor Ainsworth had finally sunk, but not before he had saved the life of Mr. Hodgskin, who having lost his hold, exclaimed, "Oh, Ainsworth, save me !" when the noble fellow at once reached to him one hand, holding on with the other; his sinking

companion seized it, and was thereby enabled to regain his hold of the cutter. A few minutes afterwards, poor Ainsworth suddenly disappeared, being unable longer to sustain the weight of his heavy boots and flushing dress, in the pockets of which were several pounds of shot. Mr. Hodgskin was dragged into the other boat, more dead than alive. Three of the men were also drowned, but had it not been for the skill and coolness displayed by Mr. Wilson (midshipman) and Mr. Williams, the whole party would inevitably have met a similar fate. After this lamentable disaster, the survivors thought it most advisable to bear up for the nearest point of land, and running in-shore, landed in a cove, where they passed the night. Early the next morning they set sail and arrived on board the Adventure.

Poor Ainsworth ! his good companionable qualities had endeared him to his brother officers, and his loss was much regretted; soon afterwards, Captain King caused a memento of this unhappy event to be erected on a conspicuous part of Port Famine.

This place on our first arrival abounded in snipe, two or three brace flying up every ten paces, but the surgeon of the Adventure (a most excellent shot) had made such havoc among them, that they were soon much thinned; I therefore extended my researches alongshore for some miles, bivouacking in the gipsy style; and not wanting materials for making a fire, a teal or a wild duck often made an excellent repast. One day being out, and as I always preferred wandering from the beaten track, and rambling towards a part of the coast perhaps never before visited by human being, I found myself about two o'clock in the afternoon some three or four leagues from the ship, and being fatigued with so long a walk I stopped in a small cove, where I made a fire, and whilst busily employed in roasting a teal, I was surprised to hear the sharp bark of a dog at no great distance from me. Alarmed at the noise I started up, and seizing my gun, ran towards the seashore, expecting to see a tribe of Fuegians close upon me; but I was somewhat relieved by seeing only one Indian about one hundred paces from me; he came running quickly over the broken rocks towards the place where I stood, alarmed, no doubt, by the dog, and making his way to ascertain the cause of its barking. At the sight of me he stopped and crouched down, but in a moment afterwards darted into the woods, which skirt the beach for miles alongshore, followed by his four-footed companion. He had been, by his appearance, upon a hunting excursion, for he was armed with a lance, and was doubtless a good way from his wigwam. By the suddenness of his departure, I was prevented from asking him to dinner; however, I walked to the place where he had disappeared, and waited some time in the hope of seeing him again, but by his not making his appearance, I concluded he had made the best of his way back through the woods to his tribe, and I returned also to my fireside, where I found the teal, for want of proper attendance, rather scorched; but I sat down with a good appetite, occasionally glancing among the bushes expecting to see an Indian staring at me from amidst the thickets by which I was surrounded. On again visiting this spot about three weeks afterwards, I found two or three wigwams had been erected near it in the interim.

The Adventure yawl had returned from a survey of the coast about Port Valdez, and they had met with several families of natives, and found them very friendly, and not of that marauding character which Captain Brisbane had observed of those in the Barbara Channel. The greater part of the Beagle's crew were now on shore towards the S. W. end of the bay, employed in washing their clothes, &c., and one afternoon, Mr. Bynoe and myself having been out shooting in that direction, we were surprised to find a number of the men employed hauling on a rope fixed to the top of a large tree, whilst others were engaged in setting it on fire and digging round the root. Upon inquiry of one of the seamen (Waller) who was amusing himself at a tub, washing his clothes, with a pipe in his mouth, as to what occasioned all this noise and bustle, he said that he had seen an immense black snake go under the root of the tree: but there was something in the dry

manner in which he said this, that convinced us he was enjoying what he would have called a lark; however, it being no business of ours, we waited to see the event. Soon afterwards, Lieutenant Sholl, who had the care of the men on shore, and who was heading the party, came up to us, and said, "I dare say, when I get this snake that I shall be obliged to give it up as a specimen:" upon which we remarked, that possibly he might elude that claim; and he was about to reply, when one of the sailors cried out, "Mind, my boys, here he is ? I hear him hiss," when Lieutenant Sholl ran towards them, exclaiming, "Take care he don't bite any of you, for it is certain death in a few moments." And now all was hurry and confusion, and hatchets and pikes were instantly upraised to knock the venomous reptile on the head the moment it appeared ? for the tree had caught fire, and it was pulled up by the roots, the sailors giving a loud huzza as it fell to the ground with a great crash, blazing away most fiercely. Waller, during this uproar, continued at the tub, puffing out large streams of tobacco-smoke, and laughing away, in which we could not help joining. In the mean time the sailors busied themselves in searching for the snake, and Waller was questioned as to the size and length of it, and to the certainty of that being the tree; all of which questions he answered with great seeming confidence. Lieutenant Sholl loudly regretted its disappearance, and ordered the men to give up the search. Waller confessed to us, sometime afterwards, what we had all along suspected, that he had seen no snake, but that he had said so purposely to have some fun with his shipmates, not suspecting, at the time, that Lieutenant Sholl would interfere; but seeing him take so much interest in the affair, he was fearful of undeceiving him, lest he should be punished. We kept the secret accordingly. During our stay at Port Famine we were not visited by the natives, although on the opposite side of the strait the smoke of large fires was visible. One afternoon, Mr. Flinn and Dr. Bowen went over to meet the inhabitants, and succeeded in obtaining from some of the native women a few wicker baskets and spear heads. Whether these gentlemen had, like Dr. Pangloss (as observed by Miss Cunegund) been giving lessons in experimental philosophy, I cannot possibly determine, but they returned with their clothes confoundedly bedaubed with red paint.

Mr. Anderson, the botanist, was particularly indefatigable at this harbour, and generally returned from his excursions with some singular specimens of birds and flowers. I had extended my walk one morning to a considerable distance from the ship, and shot several parroquets, when I was surprised to hear loud hammerings proceeding from various parts of the wood in which I was, and shortly a flock of birds (larger than a thrush) flew past me with loud cries, and settled on the different trees around; they commenced hammering with great force with their long beaks against the bark, producing a noise like people at work upon a boat. The plumage of these birds is extremely beautiful. On the back of the neck and head, which are of a bright red colour, is a long tuft of red feathers, which was finely erected as they darted up the trees; I soon put a stop to the loud peckings of some, and being anxious to possess as many of these birds as I could, I shot several, eagerly following in whatever direction they flew. I persevered then so far that, on thinking about returning, I found myself so bewildered in the intricacies of the forest, that I knew not which way to take for the sea shore. I walked one way, then another, but the farther I went the more I was puzzled. I then took to climbing one of the highest trees, in the hope of catching a glimpse of the sea, but nothing appeared save the leafy forest around me and I descended, cursing the red-headed woodpeckers and my own precipitate stupidity in losing myself. After endeavouring unsuccessfully for more than an hour to find my way back, I began to experience some very unpleasing reflections, and sat down beside a small uprooted tree to deliberate, or rather to soliloquise; but I soon bethought myself that remaining at the root of a tree in useless reflection would utterly fail in extricating me from the difficulty. I therefore plucked up courage and again floundered on, exercising my swearing talents with great eloquence to keep my spirits up, and at length came to a

small rivulet which ran meandering through the woods; and recollecting that I had stepped over a small brook on first entering the forest, I followed the course of this stream, which fortunately for me pursued its course to the sea shore, and in about half an hour brought me (to my no small satisfaction) at the very spot where I entered the wood.

The time drew nigh, when a dinner was to be given on shore by Captains King and Stokes, to the officers of the expedition, and the tables which had been erected in the largest tent groaned under a profusion of roast and boiled, and other tender and savory meats, and of an infinite number of wild fowl, together with vast quantities of tongues and hams, and also some tureens, which put some of us in rapture when we knew these to contain mock turtle soup, made from an old pig which had been on board some time, and had had the range of Port Famine for a long period. This rich soup, with a plenty of puddings and pies, formed our repast. The wines also were rich and good; and a number of decanters of port and sherry, Teneriffe and Madeira, were distributed about the table. It was not in the nature of some in our berth to view these preparations without feeling an eager anxiety (which we concealed as well as we could) to commence operations; and by the time the dinner hour had arrived, we were in excellent spirits to do justice to so ample a display. Captain King was the president, on the right hand of whom sat Captain Stokes, and on the left Mr. Atrill (whose affections seemed entirely captivated by the tureens, which he surveyed with evident pleasure). Lieutenant Sholl officiated as vice-president; and now the soup-ladles were never still, and Captain King was sufficiently employed in distributing it quick enough. Mr. Atrill pronounced it to be "excellent soup," and he came in for a good share of the forced meat balls, while the rich grease ran down the sides of his mouth and glistened upon his chin. Every person seemed to enjoy the dinner, and the various dishes were not long without customers: as for me, I was ashamed of eating so much, but looking round and seeing all as busily engaged as myself. I no doubt escaped observation. After the cloth was removed the wine circulated pretty freely, and the healths of many distinguished characters were drunk. Several songs were sung, and the greatest conviviality prevailed, and on the health of Captain King being proposed, that gentleman returned thanks in a neat and elegant speech, as did, likewise, Captain Stokes upon a like occasion. But nothing could equal the good-humour of our vice-president, who harangued the company with considerable talent, and by his own peculiar hilarity contributed much to the good fellowship of the evening; and in the plenitude of his joy he did not forget to eulogize the charms of young Maria, the belle of the Patagonians, and all of us wished once more to have a look at her Indian phiz. I could perceive that more than one of the gentlemen gave evident signs of being Bacchi plenus, and the purser by this time had some difficulty in preserving his equilibrium. Captain King (who had been conversing with Captain Stokes) now turned round to make some observation to Mr. Atrill, but the purser, not waiting to hear what he had to say, suddenly fell backwards off the form, giving the table a kick with his feet as he fell. Being quickly raised up by some persons in attendance, he resumed his seat, saying "he thought there had been backs to them:" It was all to no purpose; two minutes afterwards he fell over in the same manner, and was dragged out underneath the tent. The clerk, who had observed him vanish so unceremoniously, staggered out to look after him, and the purser perceiving him said, "won't you support the button?" upon which the clerk caught hold of Mr. Atrill to keep him up, but unfortunately he somehow or another rolled into a ditch, dragging the purser in after him. The clerk, on getting out, was heard to say, "I'm not drunk," but it was said a great many believed otherwise at the time. The vice-president, who had often during the evening "set the table in a roar," was now seen quietly to slide off his seat, and crawl away upon his hands and knees. Captains King and Stokes soon after leaving the table, we broke up, and I went to Mr. Harrison's tent, where I thought I had secured a berth; but I found it occupied, whereupon I enveloped myself in a large cloak, and lay down in one corner. About four in the morning

we were all woke up by the vice-president, who on leaving the table had fallen asleep among the bushes, and he had just awoke, almost frozen, it being "a nipping and an eager air;" but on looking round the tent what was our surprise to see extended a tall figure in uniform, with a blanket rolled tightly round his head. Upon disturbing him, he turned out to be the assistant-surgeon of the Adventure, who was at a loss to know in what latitude he was, not recollecting when he came into the tent.

On the 7th of April we departed from Port Famine, and in the evening came-to in Fresh Water Bay. On the 8th we brought up in a bay near Cape Negro, the western point of Elizabeth Island, bearing N.N.W., and Quarter-Master's Island N.E.ΩE. On the morning of the 10th we again saw the smoke arising from the fires of the Patagonians, and as we neared Gregory Bay, we could perceive the coast lined with them; some were standing on horses' backs, and waving large skins to and fro in the air, as signals for us to come on shore. About half-past six o'clock we came-to at this anchorage, and one of the boats being manned, Lieutenant Sholl and Dr. Bowen went on shore. The doctor returned about two in the morning bringing with him three of the Patagonians, Lieutenant Sholl remaining behind as a hostage for their safe return. In the morning, Mr. Atrill endeavoured to obtain one of the curiously-painted skins in which they were wrapped, by offers of beads and knives; but these proving an inadequate temptation, Mr. A. brought from below an old sword, and striding about the deck, he flourished it over his head several times. The idea of possessing this formidable, and to them novel weapon, acted like enchantment. One of them more active than the rest immediately threw his skin to Mr. Atrill, and snatched away the sword. On going ashore soon afterwards, I remarked this Indian walking from the beach towards his companions with an air of great grandeur, with head erect, and displaying vast importance, before an old Indian. The cacique (for such he proved to be) no sooner beheld the sword, than, running to the possessor, he had it girded on himself. The actions of withdrawing the blade from the scabbard, waving it in the air, and returning it, afforded him great delight. These manoeuvres he practised ten or a dozen times, laughing each time he drew and viewed the glittering blade. Sometimes he would draw the sword and make a cut with it, straightening his arm close to his side, in the manner represented in the drawing, and this position he would keep for some time.

The beach was now for a considerable distance thronged by the natives, and there might have been collected in men, women, and children, from three to four hundred people. They were evidently assembled for the purpose of barter, for an innumerable quantity of ostrich feathers (of no value), skins of the guanacoe, and other animals, were laid out upon the stubble, as if for inspection. Almost all the Indians were on horseback, and a number of large dogs were to be seen crouching down among those who had dismounted and arranged themselves in different groups; altogether they must have possessed nearly 150 dogs, and some of these animals (in packs of twenty or thirty together) were observed ranging the plain in various directions. Such an assemblage of savage-looking people, of all ages, even children at the breast, intermingled with horses and dogs, was altogether a novel sight, particularly when parties of them were squatting in circles round large fires cooking horseflesh. A great many of them were young, and rather handsome for Indians; while others were old, and as frightful as it is possible to conceive anything in human shape to be. Some wore a single ostrich feather on one side of the head, kept on by a string of hide tied over it. The men were not muscular, their legs and arms having a roundness and appearance entirely feminine. Meeting with Lieutenant Sholl, I asked him how he had passed the night among them; he told me that they made him up a bed of skins, and ranged themselves all round him, when he fell fast asleep, nor did they awaken him until the morning, he having slept as well as ever he did in his life. Upon my inquiring after "Young Maria" (for I had not met with her), he began to laugh heartily; and on asking the occasion of his mirth, I was not a little

surprised to hear that "Maria" had turned out to be a gentleman; this discovery caused much mirth amongst us, but as all were equally deceived, the features and expression being decidedly feminine, the shaft of ridicule was blunted against any one in particular.

As I understood their encampment to be distant about five miles from the sea shore, I proceeded in the direction pointed out to me by an officer of the Adventure who had visited it, and giving the rein to the horse, I was carried at a swift canter over a level country, which was, as far as I could see on all sides, deeply indented by the horses' hoofs, proving that the Patagonians had been in the neighbourhood a considerable time. Having ridden about four miles, I perceived, in a gentle declivity, towards which I was fast approaching, a smoke arising from a large fire, burning briskly; around it were huddled a number of young Patagonian females,

" A' plump and strapping in their teens,"

apparently busied in cooking some kind of flesh. On my riding up, some withdrew from the fire and came towards me, with merry and laughing faces, making signs for me to dismount and sit down among them. Not being averse to merry society, I did not hesitate to accept their courteous offer; and, tying my horse to a piece of stubble, I seated myself amidst these tawny and almost naked savages. The eldest did not appear more than twenty-five years of age, and might have been considered well looking, but for her long ragged hair, streaming down over her shoulders and as low as her waist; this however gave to her face a singular wildness of expression, heightened by her black and piercing eyes, which were painted underneath with red and black patches. They offered me a portion of the meat they were preparing, a proof of their hospitality, with which I would readily have dispensed, but not thinking it courteous to refuse, I chewed a piece for some time, until disgust overcoming my politeness, I suddenly ejected the nauseous and bitter food with a spattering noise, to their evident confusion and amazement. At this breach of good manners, the elder looked very displeased, and immediately gnawed off another piece, which she thrust into my hand, exclaiming, *cavallo*, (the Spanish for horse); this expression was repeated by the rest of the group, and they all endeavoured to convince me how good it was, by eating voraciously of it themselves. Thus was my good-nature most severely taxed, but wishing to be friendly rather than otherwise, I constrained myself to gorge a considerable quantity, which, in a short time, produced very uncomfortable sensations, and notwithstanding they said it was *cavallo*, I strongly suspected it to be the flesh of some other animal, from its being so exceedingly strong and bitter. During our repast, I observed many of them talking together of me and laughing, while those nearest me were continually inserting their hands in my hair, and pulling open my waistcoat. One of the young ladies came and sat down by my side, and after looking steadily in my face, she also began to unbutton my waistcoat, and talked and laughed to the others. Not much admiring these extravagances, as they got rather noisy and beset me too closely to be agreeable, (for they forcibly took out of my pockets most of the tobacco and beads that happened to be there), I began to fear that, being a good way from my companions, they might also take a fancy to my jacket and trousers; I therefore threw some buttons to a distance from me, and they no sooner ran to pick them up, than I disengaged the horse's reins from the stubble, and leaped upon his back, applying the sharp spurs to his sides. The Indians no sooner perceived me galloping away, than they commenced a loud and wild halloo, such as we may suppose was set up after Tam O'Shanter,

"When out the hellish legion sallied."

I pursued my way towards the camp, perceptible a good distance a-head, and in a short time I arrived at these habitations, which consisted of about fifteen or

twenty huts, formed of poles and skins, and built in the same manner as our gingerbread booths at a fair, enclosed on three sides, and entirely open in front; between each hut there was a space of three or four yards. Having tied the horse to the poles of the first, I walked in, and beheld seated in one corner a Patagonian woman, who was rolling up compositions of earth, of various colours, red, black, and white; these she formed to about the size and length of a stick of sealing-wax, and were used for beautifying themselves in the manner previously described. She was exceedingly good-tempered, and kept laughing to another woman, who was squatted down just outside the hut, and they both frequently looked at me very significantly, repeating the words chick, chick, chick. The sides of the hut were hung round with strange implements of their manufacture; and what appeared worthy of notice were the ballas, of a much superior size and make to those I had seen round the waists of the Patagonians on the beach; I therefore purchased two or three pairs for some beads and tobacco. On going to the other huts, I found them entirely vacated, these two women and an old Indian being the only persons now left in the encampment. On the outside of the dwellings were hung several heads and shoulders of deer, which apparently had not been long killed; these were secured for the benefit of the mess. There were a great many dogs prowling about the place, but they took no notice.

The following is a description of one of their tombs which I visited. In the centre of a circular trench, of about a foot in depth, and twelve or fourteen yards in circumference, a number of bushes and skins were raised up in the form of a cone, to the height of twelve or fifteen feet; the top of the cone was closely covered in with bushes and skins, and surmounted by two small red flags; around the outside of the trench were placed, at certain distances, several flags of a similar description. But what had the most singular appearance, were the effigies of two horses, made out of skins, which were placed, the nose of one of them resting on a stick, close outside the trench. As I was viewing this tomb, an old Indian approached me in great grief, making a loud and doleful outcry, with a singular variation of note, which he continued as long as I remained near the place.

On my return to the encampment, many of the natives had arrived from the beach, some of whom did not seem best pleased at my having possessed myself of their property; they pointed to several of their implements which I had fastened around me, muttering to each other; but as I had obtained them in fair exchange from the old Indian and the two women, who would not only have sold all the moveables that were in the huts, but the huts likewise, so solicitous were they to possess the beads, buttons, and tobacco, I did not feel disposed to relinquish them. One of the women,

"A souple jade she was and strang."

now rushed forward, and seizing me by the girdle, dragged me along with great ease, and endeavoured to deprive me of the ballas. Not much fancying the grasp of this giantess, I made violent efforts to disengage myself, but she did not let go her hold until she had made me relinquish one set of the ballas. After my release I was not long in mounting my horse, and riding off as fast as I could. On my arrival at the beach I perceived a crowd of Patagonians engaged in what I imagined to be a religious ceremony; they were assembled round an elderly woman, who held in her hands a small wooden christo (so she called it), at the sight of which the people set up a loud howl; then descending into a lone [sic] tone of voice, they uttered many dismal groans; these again broke out into discordant kind of singing, all the while smearing themselves with red and white paint, spitting in the palms of their hands, and slapping themselves over the face, arms, and legs. Altogether it was a strangely wild scene. Is there not a possibility of reclaiming them from these absurdities? and there would be an

original glory (left, no doubt, for some of our missionaries), in making these people desist from practising such fooleries around little Christo, and the hallelujahs of the Patagonians would be finer to hear "than all the bells in Christendom."

Since these people have been known, they do not seem to have altered: wrapped in the guanacoe skin, and inured from infancy to privation, they range the desert uncontrolled: subservient to no law or will but their own, they undoubtedly possess a contentment and a delight in their native wilds inconceivable to the inhabitants of the civilised world.

I was again surrounded by several of the party, who recognising the articles I had brought from their camp, an old cacique rode up to me, holding up his hands, and, with great emphasis, pronounced the words malo, malo! then pointing with his finger in the direction of the encampment, said, ahi, ahi! and motioned to the others to take them away; but I managed to get off, and gave them in charge to one of the sailors who had the care of the boat. I compromised with them afterwards, for some strings of beads and knives, and they were well satisfied. Among these people were found a bow and quiver of arrows of a similar description to those used by the natives of Terra del Fuego, and an Indian was pointed out as a native of that island; he was of short stature, but I could not recognise any other distinction, he being habited like a Patagonian; he appeared to be one of them, and was no doubt perfectly reconciled to his fate: he certainly had joined a better mess, but how he came among them is another affair, and of which we could give no account. Being seated on a bank with one of the Indians, I showed him a picture of old Che-re-cow-wow, which I had brought with me on shore, and at the same instant I pointed to the land of Terra del Fuego, which is plainly to be seen from Gregory bay. He looked at the savage, and, laughing, pointed over to the land likewise, and exclaimed, Zapoliens! ? the name, I supposed, given by the Patagonians to the Fuegian Indians. Dr. Bowen, whilst engaged talking to the cacique, chanced to tread upon one of the dogs, when the animal immediately flew at him, and was instantly aided and abetted by some others, and the entire pack would soon have followed, had not some of the Indians arose simultaneously and beaten them off.

About three o'clock in the afternoon the bay presented a very animated appearance; it seemed as if others of the Patagonians, who in the early part of the day were straggling about the wild recesses of this part of the country, had arrived at their camp, and being apprised of our landing, they had now rode up to welcome and greet our arrival on their shores. Several fires were kindled on the beach in various places, and parties were to be seen busily engaged in cooking portions of venison and other flesh, while others were making preparations to do the same, having only to unloose a small string which confined large lumps of cavallo to their naked sides. On these occasions the most perfect amity appeared to subsist among them, and at their dinner hour, at any rate, they were not required to pay particular attention to their caciques, for a very broad, squat-faced Patagonian, who bore that appellation, possessed of a most capacious chest and brawny shoulders, thrust himself among the dingy circle, and having unflanked himself from a cincture of guanacoe flesh, he quickly conveyed it among the glowing embers, watching in seeming ecstasy the flaring morsel, until it had become as dark as his own black and ragged locks. They were all, and at the same time, equally busy about the fire, each turning and roasting his individual portion. The greater part, when the flesh was sufficiently blackened, withdrew it from the fire and sank their well-arranged teeth into it, gnawing, or rather tearing off, some good mouthfuls; but I observed many preferred having a feed peu cuit; but these were few in proportion to the others. It was easy to perceive their appetites were of the first order; and perhaps it is fortunate that nature has given them a very capacious swallow, for a roll and a turn appeared to be quite sufficient for mastication. I only

noticed one instance of a slight mistake being made by one of the party, who, I suppose, had ventured upon too large a bid, for I could perceive him begin to stare like a throttled earwig; but after a few outstretchings of neck he bolted it very comfortably, and in a short time regained his composure. As this circumstance did not excite the notice of the party, I naturally concluded that such an occurrence was not at all unusual.

When the cacique had finished his dinner, he sought out, as he had hitherto done, Captain King, to whom he was constantly pointing out from among the assembled group the different caciques and their sons; and all of the sons, I must say, with only one exception, were stupid-looking "six-foot sucklings," The countenance of one of the caciques' sons evinced greater expression of mind, and he seemed to possess more activity than the rest, for he was seldom still, and kept looking eagerly round, as if to see that all was quiet, and that no row took place among his people and our party; at least, it struck me to be his endeavour to preserve order, for suddenly the bluff-headed cacique ran up to Captain King, crying out "capitan, capitan," and pointed with his finger to the beach, where a sailor was seen mounted on horseback, seemingly much against the will of one of the Patagonians, who was endeavouring to unhorse him, but Jack held on like a Briton, and away went the horse at a full gallop. Many of the Patagonians gave chase, no doubt to pull him off, but Jack was so malicious as to balk their intention, by suffering a somerset over the horse's head. When this was perceived by the cacique's son, I saw him ride up to those of his party who had given chase, and talk to them, and they all very speedily returned. Captain King also gave the sailor a slight intimation of what he might expect if he were again guilty of a like action.

I chanced to be upon the beach some short time afterwards, when I was joined by this son of a cacique, and also by the wheedling Indian, whom I formerly mentioned as having but one eye, when the former of them offered me rather a round stone, which was particularly smooth, and of a dark colour; as it did not appear to be of the least utility, I returned it to him. On my mentioning this circumstance on board (after we had left Patagonia), it was said that in all probability this might have been a bezoar stone, for which Sir John Narborough was indefatigable in searching the inside of the guanacoe. As I perceived the son of the cacique and him of the one eye walk towards a cluster of women, who were seated on a bank hard by, amusing themselves by chewing pigtail, I determined to accompany them, and therefore walked towards the group, and seated myself among them; but what was my surprise, when I was suddenly seized hold by one of the party (it was a grasp I remembered very well), and on looking in her face I soon recognised her to be the lady who had so officiously dismantled me of the ballas at the encampment. She now made a great outcry of pipa, and thrusting her hand very unceremoniously into my waistcoat-pocket, pulled out a small Spanish pipe (a sort of Judy, about the size and length of what we see adorning the mouths of our sprat-women), which was no sooner in her possession than she filled it with tobacco, and running to a fire hard by, lighted her pipe, and returned in triumph to her seat upon the bank. I certainly had obtained, for some buttons, this identical tube of one of the women who saluted me with the cry of chick, chick, when I first saw them at the encampment, and on looking round I perceived the very individual herself stuck up among them. I very soon explained to the son of the cacique, by signs (which he understood very well), that I had given some buttons to Madame, who was laughing at me just opposite, and she had given the pipe in exchange; but I neither could recover one nor the other, notwithstanding he made every exertion to obtain possession, in which he was seconded by my one-eyed friend.

There was an old lady among the Patagonians who had two very pretty daughters, the eldest of whom was the handsomer, and she was a mother. The younger, to relieve her sister, I suppose, then cradled on her knee a staring infant, which

looked like a little baboon with its head shaved; and as she acted in the capacity of chief nurse, she would frequently take the child in her arms, and holding its face before the dusky visage of the old woman, took great delight in observing that venerable lady fondle and talk to the child, which she did in such a strange manner, and made so many ugly and hideous faces, that I have no hesitation in saying that she would have frightened an English infant into fits. This young lady no sooner perceived that I noticed the child, than she beckoned me over to sit by her, an invitation I could not resist, and then she took great pains to convince me how clever she was, for having first unswathed the infant from several skins, she held up its little offensive frame for me to admire, and then proceeded (with repeated expectorations and other ablutions) in the usual duties of a nurse. After various scrapings and rubbings (which caused the little wretch to gape and throw out its legs and arms like an expiring frog), she wrapped it in some other skins, and after having conveyed it into a sort of cradle (resembling those in use among the Indians of North America), she slung the child at her back. I did all I could to appear gratified and pleased at the exhibition, and believe succeeded tolerably well; but not wishing another such infliction, I was about to take my departure, when I was prevented by the women, who did not wish me to leave them, and I therefore continued in gentle dalliance until an old Indian rode up to the group. As soon as he dismounted, I was seized with a desire to possess myself of the singular stirrups which dangled from the saddle, and I offered him such presents as I thought he would value, at the same time I intimated to him my wish of receiving the stirrups in exchange. He was proceeding to take them off to give them into my possession, when an old woman (his wife, I suppose,) rushed forward to prevent him, and attempted to divest him of the knives and tobacco I had given him; but this he resisted, and succeeded, notwithstanding her noisy interference, in placing the stirrups in my hands. This behaviour she was far from enduring with a tame submission, and she advanced towards him with her under-lip lowered down upon her chin (a very pretty and becoming method of showing her teeth and displeasure), when I placed, hoping to compound matters, a small looking-glass, and held it up that she might observe her own sweet countenance. The sight of her face (now rendered as ugly as possible by passion) instantly conveyed the highest gratification, and she surveyed herself with evident pleasure; and after a few innocent and playful curlings of nose, and twisting of lips, "for there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a glass," she appeared to be quite reconciled to the loss of the stirrups, although she occasionally looked at them with a discontented eye; but when she observed me about to put them in my pocket, she broke out at the old Indian in a long, noisy jargon, and he now motioned me to go away, which I immediately did, leaving him to calm the angry dame, for she still continued talking in a very ill mood, which he good-humouredly listened to, and did not seem to heed.

"It gars me greet
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd sage advices
The husband frae the wife despises."

On my proceeding along the beach towards other crowds of them, I observed that a few were refreshing themselves with some ship biscuits, and occasionally putting a bottle to their mouths, which did not seem to hold water, but a liquor by far more palatable, and the tall old Indian (of whom I have made the drawing, and who was so fond of flourishing his sword) was engaged in busy conversation with Captain King, while other caciques were huddled round Captain Stokes, as if to ask

"by what strange cause
He sought these wilds, traversed by few?"

and they all appeared very desirous of being noticed by him. While I entertained myself in viewing the assembled tribe, and listening to the wild and unusual noises into which they sometimes broke out, I saw a young Indian approach who had purchased a sword and scabbard, but he found, on drawing the blade, that it was curtailed in the length by at least one-half. On perceiving this, he was evidently much vexed, and he went about showing the fragment of the blade to those around him, and seemed to be perfectly aware of the useless bargain he had made. But what added to his mortification was the old Patagonian, who now advanced, waving his long, shining sword, which he contrasted (his features assuming a smile of exultation) with the broken blade of the luckless Indian. My next care was to introduce myself among other parties of them (for I was always fond of variety), and, to my great amusement, I perceived a midshipman from the Adventure, sitting on a bank, in lively conversation with several handsome-looking Patagonian girls, who, perhaps, not understanding the smoothness of his face, succeeded in putting the young man to the blush, owing, very possibly, to the presence of some gentlemen from the Beagle, who had witnessed the amorous attack. As the evening set in, the Patagonian women were seen to load their horses with the numerous skins which had been spread out upon the shore, and mounting on the top, proceeded, with a slow pace, into the country; others still lingered on the beach, and to the very last seemed unwilling to part with us; some gratuitously offered their spurs and guanacoe skins, while many, more avaricious, were eager to make a good exchange. The Adventure's boat having shoved off for the ship, that of the Beagle soon followed, and as long as we remained in sight, many of the Patagonians, standing on their horses' backs, continued waving their guanacoe skins in token of farewell; but notwithstanding these marks of friendship and good-will, I could not help thinking, after my adventures among them, upon what Shylock observes to Bassanio.

"I will buy with you,
Sell with you, talk with you, walk with you,
And so following; but I will not eat with you,
Drink with you, nor pray with you."

The next morning the ships got under way, and soon passed the Narrows of the Hope. We again anchored in Possession Bay, and on looking towards the shore, we could perceive, but at a great distance inland, the smoke from the fires of other tribes of Patagonians, and from the quantity which spread over the face of the country, they might possibly have been nearly as numerous as those we had left at Gregory Bay. On looking towards the Fuegian coast, no smoke was now visible; and had it been requisite to have landed there when we first entered the straits and anchored in Possession Bay (for then an immense smoke was seen), although here, also, at a good distance inland, we doubtless should have encountered a formidable muster of the natives of Terra del Fuego. The face of the country hereabouts is level, and we could not but observe the striking contrast between the western and the eastern entrance of the Straits of Magellan. The wind and weather being much in our favour, we very soon cleared the straits, and stood away for Monte Video. I believe that most in our berth were overjoyed at the prospect of replenishing our stock; for the greater part of our plates, dishes, and glasses, were broken, and all our spoons abridged in the handles; the teapot was without any handle at all, and had received some curious indentings, and the spout had got a slue to port. But what occasioned us to laugh, in spite of all these disasters, was the failure of an expedient to which the clerk had been reduced; for, not having a cabin, he had lashed up to the top of the berth, a quantity of the ship's papers, thinking they would ride in safety, but, one rough and unlucky day, at twelve o'clock, when we were all busily engaged in throwing down our scaldings, the lashings gave way, and the open list pitched out of the berth, the slop-book assaulted the red head of the steward, the allowance lists flew all over the table, and a flight of weekly accounts descended into the soup.

As I happened one day to be walking the deck with Captain Brisbane, the conversation turned upon Fury Harbour, and he related to me a fracas which he had with the natives soon after he was wrecked; and while it substantiates, in some degree, what I have said about their kindness when they happen to have the superiority, it places beyond doubt their friendly intentions towards Captain Brisbane. One morning, shortly after the wreck, he was employed on board in saving what stores and provisions he could, when some canoes of Indians (as was their daily custom) came down upon him, and at first paddled round the ship, but soon afterwards they remained stationary almost close alongside, and appeared to be anxiously observing what was passing on board. As they had hitherto been tolerably harmless, and had interfered no further than by merely stealing various trifles which came in their way, he did not suspect them of any more sinister motive, when suddenly one of the canoes came close to the ship, while the other party paddled off to some distance, and there waited the return of the others. During this movement he observed that no women were in the canoes, but not suspecting from this circumstance that any mischief was intended, he pursued what he was about, and had just hooked up some clothing and other necessaries, when the party of Fuegians which had come alongside mounted the deck. As these savages take a great deal of notice, they soon commenced examining what was upon deck, and a coat and trousers became objects of much attention. Captain Brisbane had enough to do to make them throw down whatever they took up; but he might have spared himself that trouble, for when he succeeded in making them let go one thing, they had seized upon another. He soon found that he was much inconvenienced by their coming on board, and as they greatly disturbed him by giving utterance to a succession of clucking, unmeaning, and guttural sounds, he thought it best to give them some biscuits, which they gnawed with greedy and hungry appetites. As they now became more peaceable, he again busied himself about the wreck, and he had been but a few minutes engaged, when on looking round he perceived that his swarthy visitors were scrambling over the side in great haste, and that the trousers and other wearing apparel had vanished from the deck. On discovery of the theft, he was over the side in an instant, and was so fortunate, (or unfortunate if you will), as to jump into the canoe as they were about to push off, when they immediately seized their paddles and following the other canoes (which now darted away with exceeding swiftness towards the opposite shore) succeeded in conveying the captain off in triumph. It was therefore his first care, in this emergency, to give the nearest Indian a blow which tumbled him over the others to the further end of the canoe, and the rest, seeing him approach towards them with a marvellous fist, instantly set up a deplorable yell, and the canoe was almost immediately afterwards overturned. It was well for Captain Brisbane that he could swim like a duck, and being a man of great strength and activity, he quickly swam to the canoe (for the Indians had soon righted her) and was equally dexterous in getting in as soon as themselves, when they instantly upset her again; but this time he was the second who got in, and the others seemed to have had enough, for they made the best of their way towards the other canoes; and as they swam along, from their ragged streaming hair, and the wild savage noises they uttered, they might easily have been mistaken for so many sea monsters. The savage now in the canoe with Captain Brisbane, had began to paddle fast towards the shore, when the captain, seizing one of the oars, struck him a blow upon the arm which laid it open almost from the elbow to the shoulder. At this unavoidable salutation the savage set up a most infernal howl, but not heeding this loud outcry, Captain Brisbane motioned him to return to the ship, a sign which he perfectly understood, and set about immediately, as well as his wounded arm would allow him, and the captain assisted him with the paddle, which he sometimes flourished over his head to remind the Indian of what he might expect if he played off any Fuegian trick. In this manner they reached the vessel, when Captain Brisbane commenced a search for the clothing, but he could find only the trousers, which had been concealed under some skins at the bottom of the canoe. The native was suffered to depart

without further molestation, and he paddled away, awkwardly enough, towards the migratory crew, who were seem waiting his arrival on the opposite shore.

The sailors who had been employed about the tent did not perceive the commencement of the fracas, but had now pushed off to the assistance of their commander, whom they joined on board the wreck. From some further conversation which I had respecting the country about Fury Harbour, I was led to believe that this part of Terra del Fuego was intersected by various channels or rivers, which branching off in many directions, formed numerous islands, in which "no genial plant takes root, no verdure quickens," for all of them partake of that same desolation and rocky land which I have already said is met with from Port Gallant to Cape Pillar. I was also given to understand, that when Captain Weddell proceeded in the ship Jane, far to the southward of Cape Horn, that Captain Brisbane had the command of the Beaufoy in that expedition. Had we not been in company with the Adventure, we should have had a very quick run to the Rio de la Plata, but that ship sailed badly in light winds, and we were frequently obliged to shorten sail that we might not run a-head of her. This delay proved vexing enough, but when we were about a hundred leagues from the river a dense fog set in, and although we strained our eyes to catch a sight of her, and burnt blue lights, and kept up a noisy thumping on the drum, yet it was of no avail; and considering that she was running fast for Monte Video, we lost no time in sailing after her, but by some means we arrived off that harbour a good many hours before she came in.

[end of extract]