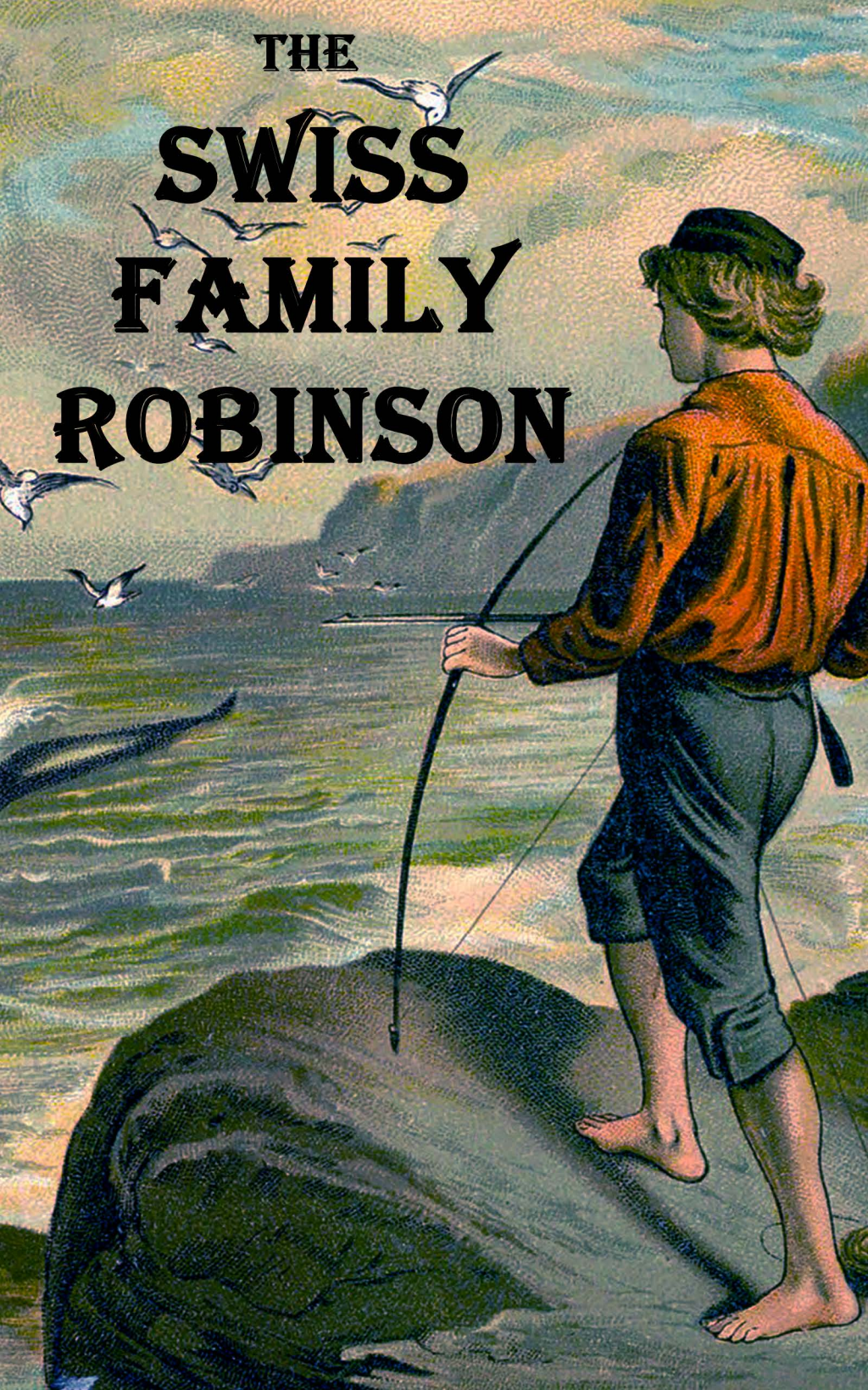


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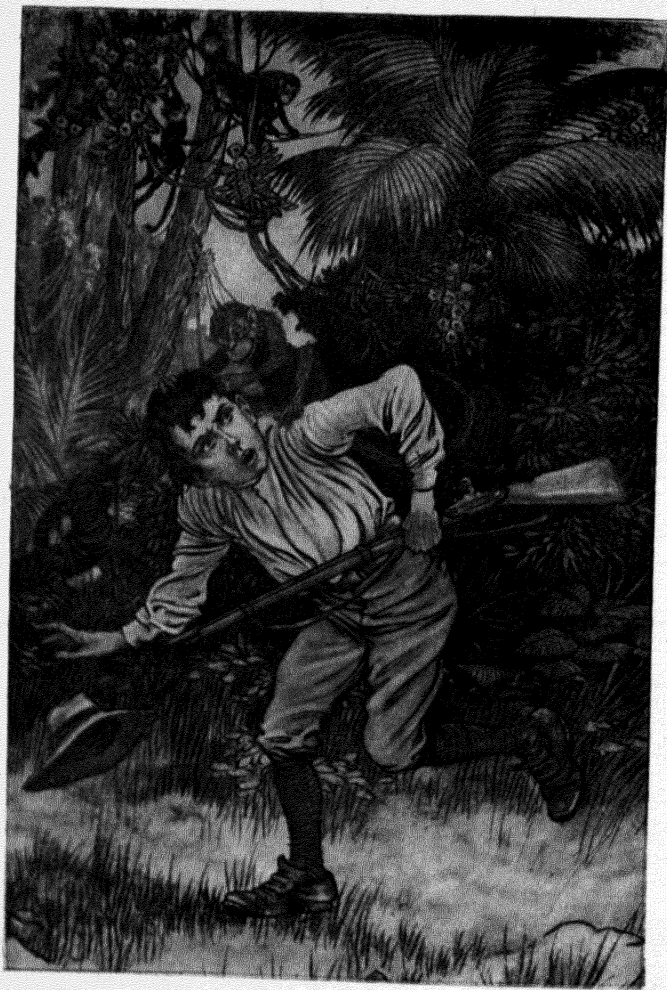


THE
SWISS FAMILY
ROBINSON

By
J. R. WYSS

Illustrated by
CHARLES FOLKARD

LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS LTD
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO. INC.



The young Monkey sprang nimbly on Fritz's shoulders

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First published in this abridged edition 1916
Last reprinted 1953

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CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. A SHIPWRECK AND A LANDING	9
II. VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY	26
III. CHANGE OF ABODE	47
IV. USEFUL OCCUPATIONS—THE PINNACE	52
V. THE WILD ASS—A HOUSE IN A ROCK	63
VI. ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS—WINTER	71
VII. A DANGEROUS VISITOR	79
VIII. BEARS! BEARS!	88
IX. DISPATCHES FROM THE INTERIOR—THE TEA PLANT	93
X. AFTER TEN YEARS	99
XI. FRITZ'S ADVENTURES—OUR ADOPTED SISTER AND HER STORY	104
XII. CONCLUSION	118

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE YOUNG MONKEY SPRANG NIMBLY ON FRITZ'S SHOULDERS	<i>Frontispiece</i>
APPROACHING THE ISLAND	<i>facing page 14</i>
WE BEHELD A SCENE OF WILD AND SOLITARY BEAUTY	" 33
WE CAREFULLY COLLECTED ALL THE FLOATING BITS OF WOOD	" 48
A TROOP OF LARGE-SIZED FLAMINGOES	" 65
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND MAGNIFICENT SPEC- TACLE PRESENTED ITSELF	" 80
CRUSHED IN THE MONSTROUS RINGS THAT THE SERPENT THREW AROUND HIM.	" 97
I KNOCKED DOWN A VERY LARGE BIRD, AN ALBATROSS, I THINK	" 112

CHAPTER I

A SHIPWRECK AND A LANDING

ALREADY the tempest had continued six days; on the seventh its fury seemed still increasing; and the morning dawned upon us without a prospect of hope, for we had wandered so far from the right track, and were so forcibly driven toward the south-east, that none on board knew where we were. The ship's company were exhausted by labour and watching, and the courage which had sustained them was now sinking. The shivered masts had been cast into the sea; several leaks appeared, and the ship began to fill. The sailors forbore from swearing; many were at prayer on their knees; while others offered miracles of future piety and goodness, as the condition of their release from danger. "My beloved children," said I to my four boys, who clung to me in their fright, "God can save us, for nothing is impossible to him. We must however hold ourselves resigned, and, instead of murmuring at his decree, rely that what he sees fit to do is best, and that should he call us from this earthly scene, we shall be near him in heaven, and united through eternity. Death may be well supported when it does not separate those who love."

My excellent wife wiped the tears which were falling on her cheeks, and from this moment became more

tranquil. We all fell on our knees, and supplicated the God of Mercy to protect us; and the emotion and fervour of the innocent creatures are a convincing proof that even in childhood devotion may be felt and understood, and that tranquillity and consolation, its natural effects, may at that season be no less certainly experienced. Fritz, my eldest son, implored, in a loud voice, that God would deign to save his dear parents and his brothers, generously unmindful of himself: the boys rose from their posture with a state of mind so improved that they seemed forgetful of the impending danger. I myself began to feel my hopes increase, as I beheld the affecting group. Heaven will surely have pity on them, thought I, and will save their parents to guard their tender years!

At this moment a cry of "Land, land!" was heard through the roaring of the waves, and instantly the vessel struck against a rock with so violent a motion as to drive every one from his place; a tremendous cracking succeeded, as if the ship was going to pieces; the sea rushed in, in all directions; we perceived that the vessel had grounded, and could not long hold together. The captain called out that all was lost, and bade the men lose not a moment in putting out the boats. The sounds fell on my heart like a thrust from a dagger: "We are lost!" I exclaimed and the children broke out into piercing cries. I then recollected myself, and, addressing them again, exhorted them to courage, by observing that the water had not yet reached us, that the ship was near land, and that Providence would assist the brave. "Keep where you are," added I, "while I go and examine what is best to be done."

I now went on the deck. A wave instantly threw me

down, and wetted me to the skin; another followed, and then another. I sustained myself as steadily as I could; and looking around, a scene of terrific and complete disaster met my eyes: the ship was shattered in all directions, and on one side there was a complete breach. The ship's company crowded into the boats till they could contain not one man more, and the last who entered were now cutting the ropes to move off. I called to them with almost frantic entreaties to stop and receive us also, but in vain; for the roaring of the sea prevented my being heard, and the waves, which rose to the height of mountains, would have made it impossible to return. All hope from this source was over, for, while I spoke, the boats, and all they contained, were driving out of sight. My best consolation now was to observe, that the slanting position the ship had taken would afford us present protection from the water; and that the stern, under which was the cabin that enclosed all that was dear to me on earth, had been driven upwards between two rocks, and seemed immovably fixed. At the same time, in the distance southward, I descried through clouds and rain, several nooks of land, which, though rude and savage in appearance, were the objects of every hope I could form in this distressing moment.

Sunk and desolate from the loss of all chance of human aid, it was yet my duty to appear serene before my family: "Courage, dear ones," cried I on entering their cabin, "let us not desert ourselves: I will not conceal from you that the ship is aground; but we are at least in greater safety than if she were beating upon the rocks; our cabin is above water; and should the sea be more calm

to-morrow, we may yet find means to reach the land in safety."

Soon after night set in; the fury of the tempest had not abated; the planks and beams of the vessel separated in many parts with a horrible crash. We thought of the boats, and feared that all they contained must have sunk under the foaming surge.

My wife had prepared a slender meal, and the four boys partook of it with an appetite to which their parents were strangers. They went to bed, and, exhausted by fatigue, soon were snoring soundly. Fritz, the eldest, sat up with us. "I have been thinking," said he, after a long silence, "how it may be possible to save ourselves. If we had some bladders or cork-jackets for my mother and my brothers, you and I, father, would soon contrive to swim to land."

"That is a good thought," said I; "we will see what can be done."

Fritz and I looked about for some small empty firkins; these we tied two and two together with handkerchiefs or towels, leaving about a foot distance between them, and fastened them as swimming-jackets under the arms of each child, my wife at the same time preparing one for herself. We provided ourselves with knives, some string, some turfs, and other necessaries which could be put into the pocket, proceeding upon the hope that, if the ship went to pieces in the night, we should either be able to swim to land, or be driven thither by the waves.

Fritz, who had been up all night, and was fatigued with his laborious occupations, now lay down near his brothers, and was soon asleep; but their mother and I, too anxious

to close our eyes, kept watch, listening to every sound that seemed to threaten a further change in our situation. We passed this awful night in prayer, in agonising apprehensions, and in forming various resolutions as to what we should next attempt. We hailed with joy the first gleam of light which shot through a small opening of the window. The raging of the winds had begun to abate, the sky was become serene, and hope throbbed in my bosom, as I beheld the sun already tinging the horizon. Thus revived, I summoned my wife and the boys to the deck to partake of the scene.

Fritz advised that we should all throw ourselves into the sea, while it was calm, and swim to land. "Ah! that may be well enough for you," said Ernest, "for you can swim; but we others should soon be drowned. Would it not be better to make a float of rafts, and get to land all together upon it?"

"Vastly well," answered I, "if we had the means for contriving such a float, and if, after all, it were not a dangerous sort of conveyance. But come, my boys, look each of you about the ship, and see what can be done to enable us to reach the land."

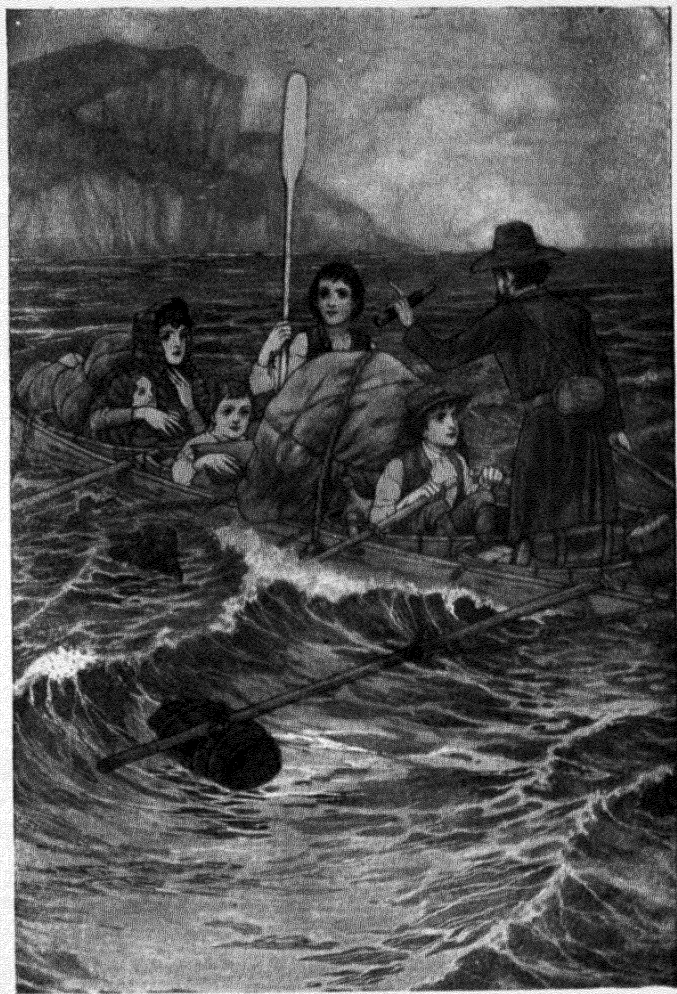
They now all sprang from me with eager looks, to do as I desired. I, on my part, lost no time in examining what we had to depend upon as to provisions and fresh water. My wife and the youngest boy visited the animals, whom they found in a pitiable condition, nearly perishing with hunger and thirst. Fritz repaired to the ammunition room; Ernest to the carpenter's cabin; and Jack to the apartment of the cabin; but scarcely had he opened the door, when two large dogs sprang upon him, and saluted

him with such rude affection that he roared for assistance, as if they had been killing him. Hunger, however, had rendered the poor creatures so gentle that they licked his hands and face, uttering all the time a low sort of moan, and continuing their caresses till he was almost suffocated. Poor Jack exerted all his strength in blows to drive them away: at last he began to understand, and to sympathise in their joyful movements, and put himself upon another footing. He got upon his legs, and gently taking the largest dog by the ears, sprang upon his back, and with great gravity presented himself thus mounted before me, as I came out of the ship's hold. I could not refrain from laughing, and I praised his courage; but I added a little exhortation to be cautious, and not go too far with animals of this species, who, in a state of hunger, might be dangerous.

By and by my little company were again assembled round me, and each boasted of what he had to contribute. Fritz had two fowling-pieces, some powder and small-shot, contained in horn flasks, and some bullets in bags.

Ernest produced his hat filled with nails, and held in his hands a hatchet and a hammer; in addition, a pair of pincers, a pair of large scissors, and an auger, peeped out at his pocket-hole.

Even the little Francis carried under his arm a box of no very small size, from which he eagerly produced what he called some little sharp-pointed hooks. His brothers smiled scornfully. "Vastly well, gentlemen," said I; "but let me tell you that the youngest has brought the most valuable prize. These little sharp-pointed hooks, as Francis calls them, are fishing-hooks, and will probably



Approaching the Island

be of more use in preserving our lives than all we may find besides in the ship. In justice, however, I must confess, that what Fritz and Ernest have contributed will also afford essential service."

"I, for my part," said my wife, "have brought nothing; but I have some tidings to communicate which I hope will secure my welcome: I have found on board a cow and an ass, two goats, six sheep, and a sow big with young: I have just supplied them with food and water, and I reckon on being able to preserve their lives."

"All this is admirable," said I to my young labourers; "and there is only master Jack, who, instead of thinking of something useful, has done us the favour to present us two personages, who, no doubt, will be principally distinguished by being willing to eat more than we shall have to give them."

"Ah!" replied Jack, "but if we can once get to land, you will see that they will assist us in hunting and shooting."

"True enough," said I, "but be so good as to tell us how we are going to get to land, and whether you have contrived the means?"

"I am sure it cannot be very difficult," said Jack, with an arch motion of his head. "Look here at these large tubs. Why cannot each of us get into one of them, and float to the land? I remember I succeeded very well in this manner on the water, when I was visiting my godfather at S——."

"Every one's thought is good for something," cried I, "and I begin to believe that what Jack has suggested is worth a trial: quick, then, boy! give me the saw, the auger, and some nails; we will see what is to be done."

I recollected having seen some empty casks in the ship's hold: we went down, and found them floating in the water which had got into the vessel; it cost us but little trouble to hoist them up, and place them on the lower deck, which was at this time scarcely above water. We saw, with joy, that they were all sound, well guarded by iron hoops and in every respect in good condition; they were exactly suited for the object; and, with the assistance of my sons, I instantly began to saw them in two. In a short time I had produced eight tubs, of equal size, and of the proper height. We now allowed ourselves some refreshment of wine and biscuit. I viewed with delight my eight little tubs, ranged in a line. I was surprised to see that my wife did not partake our eagerness; she sighed deeply as she looked at them. "Never, never," cried she, "can I venture to get into one of these."

"Do not decide so hastily, my dear," said I; "my plan is not yet complete; and you will see presently that it is more worthy of our confidence than this shattered vessel, which cannot move from its place."

I then sought for a long pliant plank, and placed my eight tubs upon it, leaving a piece at each end reaching beyond the tubs; which, bent upward, would present an outline like the keel of a vessel. We next nailed all the tubs to the plank, and then the tubs to each other, as they stood, side by side, to make them the firmer, and afterwards two other planks, of the same length as the first, on each side of the tubs. When all this was finished, we found we had produced a kind of narrow boat divided into eight compartments, which I had no doubt would be able to perform a short course in calm water.

But now we discovered that the machine we had contrived was so heavy, that, with the strength of all united, we were not able to move it an inch from its place. I bid Fritz fetch me a crow, who soon returned with it: in the meanwhile I sawed a thick round pole into several pieces, to make some rollers. I then, with the crow, easily raised the foremost part of the machine, while Fritz placed one of the rollers under it.

"How astonishing," cried Ernest, "that this engine, which is smaller than any of us, can do more than our united strength was able to effect! I wish I could know how it is constructed."

I explained to him as well as I could the power of Archimedes' lever, with which he said he could move the world, if you would give him a point from which his mechanism might act, and promised to explain the nature of the operation of the crow when we should be safe on land.

Jack here remarked that the action of the crow was very slow.

"Better slow than never, Jack," replied I.

We had spent the day in laborious exertions; it was already late; and as it would not have been possible to reach the land that evening, we were obliged to pass a second night in the wrecked vessel, which at every instant threatened to fall to pieces. We next refreshed ourselves by a regular meal; for, during the day's work, we had scarcely allowed ourselves to take a bit of bread, or a glass of wine. Being now in a more tranquil and unapprehensive state of mind than the day before, we all abandoned ourselves to sleep; not, however, till I had used the

precaution of tying the swimming apparatus round my three youngest boys and my wife, in case the storm should again come on. I also advised my wife to dress herself in the clothes of one of the sailors, which were so much more convenient for swimming, or any other exertions she might be compelled to engage in. She consented, but not without reluctance, and left us to look for some that might best suit her size. In a quarter of an hour she returned, dressed in the clothes of a young man who had served as volunteer on board the ship. She could not conceal the timid awkwardness, so natural to her sex, in such a situation: but I soon found means to reconcile her to the change, by representing the many advantages it gave her, till at length she joined in the merriment her dress occasioned, and one and all crept into our separate hammocks, where a delicious repose prepared us for the renewal of our labours.

By break of day we were all awake and alert, for hope as well as grief is unfriendly to lengthened slumbers. When we had finished our morning prayer, I said, "We now, my best beloved, with the assistance of Heaven, must enter upon the work of our deliverance. The first thing to be done, is to give to each poor animal on board a hearty meal; we will then put food enough before them for several days; we cannot take them with us; but we hope it may be possible, if our voyage succeeds, to return and fetch them. Are you now all ready? Bring together whatever is absolutely necessary to our wants. It is my wish that our first cargo should consist of a barrel of gunpowder, three fowling-pieces, and three carbines, with as much small-shot and lead, and as many bullets as our

boat will carry; two pairs of pocket-pistols, and one of large ones, not forgetting a mould to cast balls in: each of the boys, and their mother also, should have a bag to carry game in; you will find plenty of these in the cabins of the officers." We added a chest containing cakes of portable soup, another full of hard biscuits, an iron pot, a fishing-rod, a chest of nails, and another of different utensils, such as hammers, saws, pincers, hatchets, augers, etc., and lastly, some sail-cloth to make a tent. Indeed the boys brought so many things that we were obliged to reject some of them, though I had already exchanged the worthless ballast for articles of use in the question of our subsistence.

When all was ready we stepped bravely each into a tub. At the moment of our departure the cocks and hens began to cluck, as if conscious that we had deserted them, yet were willing to bid us a sorrowful adieu. This suggested to me the idea of taking the geese, ducks, fowls, and pigeons with us; observing to my wife that, if we could not find means to feed them, at least they would feed us.

We accordingly executed this plan. We put ten hens and an old and a young cock into one of the tubs, and covered it with planks; we set the rest of the poultry at liberty, in the hope that instinct would direct them towards the land, the geese and the ducks by water, and the pigeons by the air.

We were waiting for my wife, who had the care of this last part of our embarkation, when she joined us loaded with a large bag, which she threw into the tub that already contained her youngest son. I imagined that she intended it for him to sit upon, or perhaps to confine him so as to

prevent his being tossed from side to side. I therefore asked no questions concerning it. The order of our departure was as follows:

In the first tub, at the boat's head, my wife, the most tender and exemplary of her sex, placed herself.

In the second, our little Francis, a lovely boy, six years old, remarkable for the sweetest and happiest temper, and for his affection to his parents.

In the third, Fritz, our eldest boy, between fourteen and fifteen years of age, a handsome, curl-pated youth, full of intelligence and vivacity.

In the fourth was the barrel of gunpowder, with the cocks and hens, and the sail-cloth.

In the fifth, the provisions of every kind.

In the sixth, our third son, Jack, a light-hearted, enterprising, audacious, generous lad, about ten years old.

In the seventh, our second son, Ernest, a boy of twelve years old, of a rational, reflecting temper, well informed for his age, but somewhat disposed to indolence and pleasure.

In the eighth, a father, to whose paternal care the task of guiding the machine for the safety of his beloved family was entrusted. Each of us had useful implements within reach; the hand of each held an oar, and near each was a swimming apparatus, in readiness for what might happen. The two dogs, perceiving we had abandoned them, plunged into the sea and swam to the boat; they were too large for us to think of giving them admittance, and I dreaded lest they should jump in and upset us. Turk was an English dog, and Flora a bitch of the Danish breed. The dogs, however, managed the affair with perfect

intelligence. When fatigued, they rested their fore-paws on one of the paddles, and thus with little effort proceeded.

Our voyage proceeded securely, though slowly; but the nearer we approached the land, the more gloomy and unpromising its aspect appeared. The coast was clothed with barren rocks, which seemed to offer nothing but hunger and distress. I was venting audibly my regret that I had not thought of bringing a telescope that I knew was in the captain's cabin, when Jack drew a small one from his pocket, and with a look of triumph presented it to me.

The acquisition of the telescope was of great importance; for with its aid I was able to make the necessary observations, and was more sure of the route I ought to take. By and by we perceived a little opening between the rocks, near the mouth of a creek, towards which all our geese and ducks betook themselves; and I, relying on their sagacity, followed in the same course. This opening formed a little bay; the water was tranquil, and neither too deep nor too shallow to receive our boat. I entered it, and cautiously put on shore to a spot where the coast was about the same height above the water as our tubs, and where, at the same time, there was a quantity sufficient to keep us afloat.

The first thing we did on finding ourselves safe on *terra firma*, was to fall on our knees, and return thanks to the Supreme Being who had preserved our lives, and to recommend ourselves with entire resignation to the care of his paternal kindness.

We next employed our whole attention in unloading the boat. We looked about for a convenient place to set

up a tent under the shade of the rocks; and having all consulted and agreed upon a place, we set to work. We drove one of our poles firmly into a fissure of the rock; this rested upon another pole, which was driven perpendicularly into the ground, and formed the ridge of our tent. A frame for a dwelling was thus made secure. We next threw some sail-cloth over the ridge, and stretching it to a convenient distance on each side, fastened its extremities to the ground with stakes. Lastly, I fixed some tenter-hooks along the edge of one side of the sail-cloth in front, that we might be able to enclose the entrance during night by hooking in the opposite edge. The chests of provisions, and other heavy matters, we had left on the shore. The next thing was to desire my sons to look about for grass and moss, to be spread and dried in the sun, to serve us for beds. During this occupation, in which even the little Francis could take a share, I erected near the tent a kind of little kitchen. A few flat stones I found in the bed of a fresh-water river served for a hearth. I got a quantity of dry branches: with the largest I made a small enclosure round it; and with the little twigs, added to some of our turf, I made a brisk cheering fire. We put some of the soup-cakes, with water, into our iron pot, and placed it over the flame; and my wife, with my little Francis for a scullion, took charge of preparing the dinner.

My own occupation was now an endeavour to draw the two floating casks on shore, but in which I could not succeed. While I was looking about to find a more favourable spot, I heard loud cries proceeding from a short distance, and recognised the voice of my son Jack.

I snatched my hatchet, and ran anxiously to his assistance. I soon perceived him up to his knees in water in a shallow, and that a large lobster had fastened its claws in his leg. The poor boy screamed pitiably, and made useless efforts to disengage himself. I jumped instantly into the water; and the enemy was no sooner sensible of my approach than he let go his hold, and would have scampered out to sea, but I turned quickly upon him, and took him up by the body, and carried him off, followed by Jack, who shouted our triumph all the way. He begged me at last to let him hold the animal in his own hand that he might himself present so fine a booty to his mother.

Ernest, ever prompted by his savoury tooth, bawled out that the lobster had better be put into the soup, which would give it an excellent flavour; but this his mother opposed, observing that we must be more economical of our provisions than that, for the lobster of itself would furnish a dinner for the whole family. I now left them, and walked again to the scene of this adventure, and examined the shallow: I then made another attempt upon my two casks, and at length succeeded in getting them into it, and in fixing them there securely on their bottoms.

Soon after we had taken our meal, the sun began to sink into the west. Our little flock of fowls assembled round us, pecking here and there what morsels of our biscuit had fallen on the ground. Just at this moment my wife produced the bag she had so mysteriously huddled into the tub. Its mouth was now opened; it contained the various sorts of grain for feeding poultry—barley, peas, oats, etc., and also different kinds of seeds and roots of

vegetables for the table. In the fullness of her kind heart she scattered several handfuls at once upon the ground, which the fowls began eagerly to seize.

A little later, we began our preparations for repose. First, we loaded our guns and pistols, and laid them carefully in the tent: next, we assembled together and joined in offering up our thanks to the Almighty for the succour afforded us, and supplicating his watchful care for our preservation. With the last ray of the sun we entered our tent, and, after drawing the sail-cloth over the hooks, to close the entrance, we laid ourselves down close to each other on the grass and moss we had collected in the morning.

The children observed, with surprise, that darkness came upon us all at once; that night succeeded to day without an intermediate twilight. "This," replied I, "makes me suspect that we are not far from the equator, or at least between the tropics, where this is of ordinary occurrence; for the twilight is occasioned by the rays of the sun being broken in the atmosphere; the more obliquely they fall, the more their feeble light is extended and prolonged; while on the other hand, the more perpendicular the rays, the less their declination: consequently the change from day to night is much more sudden when the sun is under the horizon."

I looked once more out of the tent to see if all was quiet around us. The old cock, awaking at the rising of the moon, chanted our vespers, and then I lay down to sleep. In proportion as we had been during the day oppressed with heat, we were now in the night inconvenienced by the cold, so that we clung to each other

for warmth. A sweet sleep began to close the eyes of my beloved family; I endeavoured to keep awake till I was sure my wife's solicitude had yielded to the same happy state, and then I closed my own. Thanks to the fatigue we had undergone, our first night in the desert island was very tolerably comfortable.

CHAPTER II

VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY

I WAS roused at the dawn of day by the crowing of the cocks. I awoke my wife, and we consulted together as to the occupations we should engage in. We agreed that we should seek for traces of our late ship companions, and at the same time examine the nature of the soil on the other side of the river, before we determined on a fixed place of abode. My wife easily perceived that such an excursion could not be undertaken by all the members of the family; and full of confidence in the protection of Heaven, she courageously consented to my proposal of leaving her with the three youngest boys, and proceeding myself with Fritz on a journey of discovery. I entreated her not to lose a moment in giving us our breakfast. She gave us notice that the share of each would be but small, there being no more soup prepared. "What, then," I asked, "is to become of Jack's lobster?" "That he can best tell you himself," answered his mother. "But now pray step and awake the boys, while I make a fire and put on some water."

The children were soon roused; even our slothful Ernest submitted to the hard fate of rising so early in the morning. When I asked Jack for his lobster, he ran and fetched it from a cleft in the rock, in which he had

concealed it: "I was determined," said he, "that the dogs should not eat my lobster." "I am glad to see, son Jack," said I, "that that giddy head upon your shoulders can be prevailed upon to reflect. 'Happy is he who knows how to profit by the misfortunes of others,' says the proverb. But will you not kindly give Fritz the great claw, which bit your leg (though I promised it to you), to carry with him for his dinner in our journey?"

"What journey?" asked all the boys at once. "Ah! we will go too: a journey! a journey!" repeated they, clapping their hands and jumping round me like little kids. "For this time," said I, "it is impossible for all of you to go; we know not yet what we are to set about, nor whither we are going. Your elder brother and myself shall be better able to defend ourselves in any danger without you; besides that with so many persons we could proceed but slowly. You will then all three remain with your mother in this place, which appears to be one of perfect safety, and you shall keep Flora to be your guard, while we will take Turk with us. With such a protector, and a gun well loaded, who shall dare treat us with disrespect? Make haste, Fritz, and tie up Flora, that she may not follow us; and have your eyes on Turk, that he may be at hand to accompany us; and see the guns are ready."

At the word guns, the colour rose in the cheeks of my poor boy. His gun was bent so as to be of no use; he took it up and tried in vain to straighten it: I let him alone for a short time, but at length I gave him leave to take another, perceiving with pleasure that the vexation had produced a proper feeling in his mind. A moment after, he attempted to lay hold of Flora to tie her up; but the dog, recollecting

some blows she had lately received from him, began to snarl, and would not go near him. Turk behaved the same, and I found it necessary to call with my own voice, to induce them to approach us. Fritz, then, in tears entreated for some biscuit of his mother, declaring that he would willingly go without his breakfast to make his peace with the dogs. He accordingly carried them some biscuit, stroked and caressed them, and in every motion seemed to ask their pardon. As of all animals, without excepting man, the dog is least addicted to revenge, and at the same time is the most sensible of kind usage, Flora instantly relented, and began to lick the hands which fed her; but Turk, who was of a more fierce and independent temper, still held off, and seemed to feel a want of confidence in Fritz's advances. "Give him a claw of my lobster," cried Jack, "for I mean to give it all to you for your journey."

"I cannot think why you should give it all," interrupted Ernest, "for you need not be uneasy about their journey. Like Robinson Crusoe, they will be sure enough to find some coco-nuts, which they will like much better than your miserable lobster: only think, a fine round nut, Jack, as big as my head, and with at least a teacupful of delicious sweet milk in it!"

"Oh! brother Fritz, pray do bring me some," cried little Francis.

We now prepared for our departure: we took each a bag for game, and a hatchet. I put a pair of pistols in the leather band round Fritz's waist, in addition to the gun, and provided myself with the same articles, not forgetting a stock of biscuit and a flask of fresh river water. My wife now called us to breakfast, when all attacked the lobster;

but its flesh proved so hard that there was a great deal left when our meal was finished, and we packed it for our journey without further regret from any one. The sea-lobster is an animal of considerable size, and its flesh is much more nutritious, but less delicate, than the common lobster.

Fritz urged me to set out before the excessive heat came on. "With all my heart," said I, "but we have forgot one thing." "What is that?" asked Fritz, looking round him; "I see nothing to do but to take leave of my mother and my brothers." "I know what it is," cried Ernest; "we have not said our prayers this morning." "That is the very thing, my dear boy," said I. "We are too apt to forget God, the Giver of all, for the affairs of this world: and yet never had we so much need of his care, particularly at the moment of undertaking a journey on an unknown soil."

Upon this our pickle, Jack, began to imitate the sound of church bells, and to call, "Bome! bome! bidi bome, bidiman, bome! To prayers, to prayers, bome, bome!" "Thoughtless boy!" cried I, with a look of displeasure, "when, oh! when will you be sensible of that sacredness in devotion that banishes for the time every thought of levity or amusement? Recollect yourself, and let me not have again to reprove you on a subject of so grave a nature."

In about an hour we had completed the preparations for our departure. I had loaded the guns we left behind, and I now enjoined my wife to keep by day as near the boat as possible, which in case of danger was the best and most speedy means of escape.

We proceeded a short way along the rock we ascended

in landing, forcing ourselves a passage through tall grass, which twined with other plants, and were rendered more capable of resistance by being half dried by the sun. Perceiving, however, that walking on this kind of surface in so hot a sun would exhaust our strength, we looked for a path to descend and proceed along the river, where we hoped to meet with fewer obstacles, and perhaps to discover traces of our ship companions.

After a while we entered a forest and soon observed that some of the trees were of a singular kind. Fritz, whose sharp eye was continually on a journey of discovery, went up to examine them closely. "O heavens! father, what odd trees, with wens growing all about their trunks!" I had soon the surprise and satisfaction of assuring him that they were bottle gourds, the trunks of which bear fruit. Fritz, who had never heard of such a plant, could not conceive the meaning of what he saw, and asked me if the fruit was a sponge or a wen. "We will see," I replied, "if I cannot unravel the mystery. Try to get down one of them, and we will examine it minutely."

"I have got one," cried Fritz, "and it is exactly like a gourd, only the rind is thicker and harder."

"It then, like the rind of that fruit, can be used for making various utensils," observed I; "plates, dishes, basins, flasks. We will give it the name of the gourd-tree."

Fritz jumped for joy. "How happy my mother will be!" cried he in ecstasy; "she will no longer have the vexation of thinking, when she makes soup, that we shall all scald our fingers."

While we were walking we had not neglected the great object of our pursuit—the making every practicable search

for our ship companions. But our endeavours, alas! were all in vain.

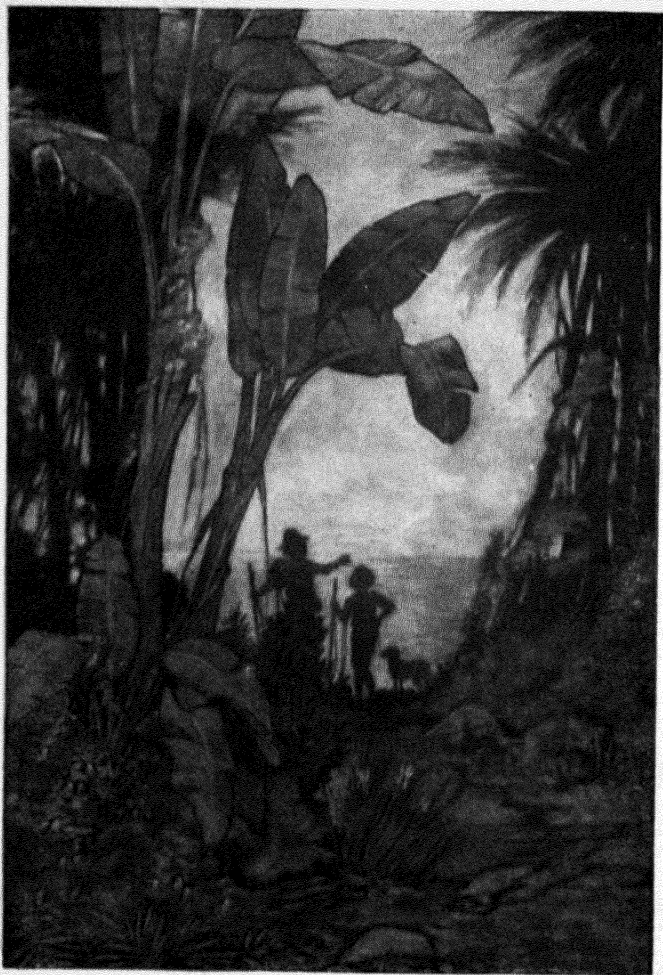
After a walk of about four leagues in all, we arrived at a spot where a slip of land reached far out into the sea, on which we observed a rising piece of ground or hill. On a moment's reflection we determined to ascend it, concluding we should obtain a clear view of all adjacent parts, which would save us the fatigue of further rambles. We accordingly accomplished the design, and beheld a scene of wild and solitary beauty. But it was in vain that we used our telescope in all directions. No trace of man appeared.

We descended the hill and made our way to a wood of palms, which I had just pointed out to Fritz: our path was clothed with reeds, entwined with other plants, which greatly obstructed our march. We advanced slowly and cautiously, fearing at every step to receive a mortal bite from some serpent that might be concealed among them. We made Turk go before, to give us timely notice of anything dangerous. I also cut a reed-stalk of uncommon length and thickness, for my defence against any enemy. It was not without surprise that I perceived a glutinous sap proceed from the divided end of the stalk. Prompted by curiosity, I tasted this liquid, and found it sweet and of a pleasant flavour, so that not a doubt remained that we were passing through a plantation of sugar-canes. I again applied the cane to my lips, and sucked it for some moments, and felt singularly refreshed and strengthened. I determined not to tell Fritz immediately of the fortunate discovery I had made, preferring that he should find it out for himself. As he was at some distance before

me, I called out to him to cut a reed for his defence. This he did, and without any remark, used it simply for a stick, striking lustily with it on all sides to clear a passage. The motion occasioned the sap to run out abundantly upon his hand, and he stopped to examine so strange a circumstance. He lifted it up, and still a larger quantity escaped. He now tasted what was on his fingers. Oh! then for the exclamations—"Father, father, I have found some sugar!—some syrup! I have a sugar-cane in my hand! Run quickly, father!" We were soon together, jointly partaking of the pleasure we had in store for his dear mother and the younger brothers. He persisted in cutting a dozen of the largest canes, tied them together, and put them under his arm.

We reached the wood of palms without accident; here we stretched our limbs in the shade, and finished our repast. We were scarcely settled when a great number of large monkeys, terrified by the sight of us and the barking of Turk, stole so nimbly and yet so quietly up the trees, that we scarcely perceived them till they had reached the topmost parts. From this height they fixed their eyes upon us, grinding their teeth, making horrible grimaces, and saluting us with screams of hostile import. Being now satisfied that the trees were palms, bearing coco-nuts, I conceived the hope of obtaining some of this fruit in a milky state, through the monkeys.

I now began to throw some stones at the monkeys; and though I could not make them reach to half the height at which they had taken refuge, they showed every mark of excessive anger. With their accustomed trick of imitation, they furiously tore off, nut by nut, all that grew upon the



We beheld a scene of wild and solitary beauty

trunk near them, to hurl them down upon us; so that it was with difficulty we avoided the blows; and in a short time a great number of coco-nuts lay on the ground round us. Fritz laughed heartily at the excellent success of our stratagem; and as the shower of coco-nuts began to subside, we set about collecting them. We chose a place where we could repose at our ease, to feast on this rich harvest. We opened the shells with a hatchet, but first enjoyed the sucking of some of the milk through the three small holes, where we found it easy to insert the point of a knife. The milk of the coco-nut has not a pleasant flavour; but it is excellent for quenching thirst. What we liked best was a kind of solid cream which adheres to the shell and which we scraped off with our spoons. We mixed with it a little of the sap of our sugar-canes, and it made a delicious repast.

Our meal being finished, we prepared to leave the wood of palms. I tied all the coco-nuts which had stalks together, and threw them across my shoulder. We divided the rest of the things between us, and continued our way towards home.

Scarcely had we passed through the little wood in which we breakfasted, when Turk sprang away to seize a troop of monkeys, who were skipping about and amusing themselves without observing our approach. They were thus taken by surprise; and before we could get to the spot, our ferocious Turk had already seized one of them; it was a female, who held a young one in her arms, which she was caressing almost to suffocation, and which incumbrance deprived her of the power of escaping. The poor creature was killed, and afterwards devoured; the young

one hid himself in the grass, and looked on, grinding his teeth all the time that this horrible feat was performing. Fritz flew like lightning to make Turk let go his hold. He lost his hat, threw down his tin bottle, canes, etc., but all in vain; he was too late to prevent the murder of the interesting mother.

The next scene that presented itself was of a different nature, and comical enough. The young monkey sprang nimbly on Fritz's shoulders, and fastened his feet in the stiff curls of his hair; nor could the squalls of Fritz, nor all the shaking he gave him, make him let go his hold. I ran to them, laughing heartily, for I saw that the animal was too young to do him any injury, while the panic visible in the features of the boy made a ludicrous contrast with the grimaces of the monkey, whom I in vain endeavoured to disengage. "There is no remedy, Fritz," said I, "but to submit quietly and carry him; he will furnish an addition to our stock of provisions, though less alluring, I must needs confess, than for your mother's sake we could wish. The conduct of the little creature displays a surprising intelligence; he has lost his mother, and he adopts you for his father; perhaps he discovered in you something of the air of a father of a family."

We reached the bank of the river, near our family, before we were aware. Flora from the other side announced our approach by a violent barking. Shortly after our much-loved family appeared in sight with demonstrations of unbounded joy at our safe return. Scarcely had the young ones joined their brother, than they again began their joyful exclamations: "A monkey, a live monkey! Papa, ~~mamma~~, a live monkey! Oh, how delightful! how happy

shall we be! How did you catch him? What a droll face he has!" "He is very ugly," said little Francis, half afraid to touch him. "He is prettier than you," retorted Jack; "only see, he is laughing: I wish I could see him eat." "Ah! if we had but some coco-nuts!" cried Ernest; "could you not find any? Are they nice?" "Have you brought me any milk of almonds?" asked Francis. "Have you met with any unfortunate adventure?" interrupted my wife. In this manner, questions and exclamations succeeded to each other with such rapidity as not to leave us time to answer them.

When the sun retired from our view we all lay down upon the grass, and soon fell into a profound sleep, but were awakened by a violent barking of our dogs. We each took a gun and sallied forth. A dozen jackals had surrounded the dogs, who defended themselves with the bravest courage. We fired, and two of the intruders fell dead upon the sands. The others made their escape, pursued by Turk and Flora. The next morning I observed to my wife that I could not but view with alarm the many cares and exertions to be made. "In the first place, a journey to the vessel. This is of absolute necessity; at least, if we would not be deprived of the cattle and other useful things, all of which from moment to moment we risk losing by the first heavy sea. What ought we to resolve upon? For example, should not our very first endeavour be the contriving a better sort of habitation, and a more secure retreat from wild beasts, also a separate place for our provisions? I own I am at a loss what to begin first."

"All will fall into the right order by degrees," observed my wife; "patience and regularity in our plans will go as

far as actual labour. I cannot, I confess, help shuddering at the thought of this voyage to the vessel; but if you judge it to be of absolute necessity, it cannot be undertaken too soon. In the meanwhile, nothing that is immediately under my own care shall stand still, I promise you. Let us not be over-anxious about to-morrow: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. These were the words of the true Friend of mankind, and let us use so wise a counsel for our own benefit."

"I will follow your advice," said I, "and without further loss of time. You shall stay here with the three youngest boys; and Fritz, being so much stronger and more intelligent than the others, shall accompany me in the undertaking."

While Fritz was getting the boat ready, I looked about for a pole, and tied a piece of white linen to the end of it: this I drove into the ground, in a place where it would be visible from the vessel; and I concerted with my wife, that in case of any accident that should require my prompt assistance, they should take down the pole and fire a gun three times as a signal of distress, in consequence of which I would immediately turn back. But I gave her notice, that there being so many things to accomplish on board the vessel, it was probable that we should not, otherwise, return at night; in which case I, on my part, also promised to make signals. My wife had the good sense and the courage to consent to my plan.

We embarked in silence. Fritz rowed steadily, and I did my best to second his endeavours, by rowing from time to time, on my part, with the oar which served me for a rudder. A little afterwards we found ourselves safely

arrived at the cleft of the vessel, and fastened our boat securely to one of its timbers.

"But now, father," said Fritz, looking kindly on me as he spoke, "as you have eased me of the labour of rowing, it is *my* turn to take care of *you*. I am thinking to make you a better contrived rudder; one that would enable you to steer the boat both with greater ease and greater safety." "Your thought would be a very good one," said I, "but that I am unwilling to lose the advantage of being able to proceed this way and that, without being obliged to veer. I shall therefore fix our oars in such a manner as to enable me to steer the raft from either end." Accordingly, I fixed bits of wood to the stem and stern of the machine, in the nature of grooves, which were calculated to spare us a great deal of trouble.

During these exertions the day advanced, and I saw that we should be obliged to pass the night in our tubs, without much progress in our task of emptying the vessel. We had promised our family to hoist a flag as a signal, if we passed the night from home, and we found the streamer precisely the thing we wanted for this purpose.

We employed the remnant of the day in emptying the tubs of the useless ballast of stones, and putting in their place what would be of service, such as nails, pieces of cloth, and different kinds of utensils, etc. The vessel, which was now a wreck, had been sent out as a preparation for the establishment of a colony in the South Seas, and had been provided with a variety of stores not commonly included in the loading of a ship. Among the rest, care had been taken to have on board considerable numbers of European cattle: but so long a voyage had proved

unfavourable to the oxen and horses, the greatest part of which had died, and the others were in so bad a condition, that it had been found necessary to destroy them. The quantity of useful things which presented themselves in the store-chambers made it difficult for me to select among them, and I much regretted that circumstances compelled me to leave some of them behind. Fritz, however, already meditated a second visit; but we took good care not to lose the present occasion for securing knives and forks, and spoons, and a complete assortment of kitchen utensils. In the captain's cabin we found some services of silver, dishes and plates of high-wrought metal, and a little chest filled with bottles of many sorts of excellent wine. Each of these we put into our boat. We next descended to the kitchen, which we stripped of gridirons, kettles, pots of all kinds, a small roasting-jack, etc. Our last prize was a chest of choice eatables, intended for the table of the officers, containing Westphalia hams, Bologna sausages, and other savoury food. I took good care not to forget some little sacks of maize, of wheat, and other grain, and some potatoes. We next added such implements for husbandry as we could find; shovels, hoes, spades, rakes, harrows, etc. Fritz reminded me that we had found sleeping on the ground both cold and hard, and prevailed upon me to increase our cargo by some hammocks, and a certain number of blankets; and as guns had hitherto been the source of his pleasures, he added such as he could find of a particular costliness or structure, together with some sabres and clasp-knives. The last articles we took were a barrel of sulphur, a quantity of ropes, some small string, and a large roll of

sail-cloth. The vessel appeared to us to be in so wretched a condition, that the least tempest must make her go to pieces. It was then quite uncertain whether we should be able to approach her any more.

It will easily be imagined that the day had been laboriously employed. Night suddenly surprised us, and we lost all hope of returning to our family the same evening. A large blazing fire on the shore soon after greeted our sight—the signal agreed upon for assuring us that all was well, and to bid us close our eyes in peace. We returned the compliment, by tying four lanterns, with lights in them, to our mast-head. This was answered, on their part, by the firing of two guns; so that both parties had reason to be satisfied and easy.

After offering up our earnest prayers for the safety of all, and not without some apprehension for our own, we resigned ourselves to sleep in our tubs, which appeared to us safer than the vessel. Our night passed tranquilly enough: my boy Fritz slept as soundly as if he had been in a bed: while I, haunted by the recollection of the nocturnal visit of the jackals, could neither close my eyes, nor keep them from the direction of the tent. I had, however, great reliance that my valiant dogs would do their duty, and was thankful to Heaven for having enabled us to preserve so good a protection.

Early the next morning, though scarcely light, I mounted the vessel, hoping to gain a sight of our beloved companions through a telescope. Fritz prepared a substantial breakfast of biscuit and ham; but, before we sat down, we recollected that in the captain's cabin we had seen a telescope of a much superior size and power, and we

speedily conveyed it to the deck. While this was doing, the brightness of the day had come on. I fixed my eye to the glass, and discovered my wife coming out of the tent, and looking attentively towards the vessel, and at the same moment perceived the motion of the flag upon the shore. A load of anxiety was thus taken from my heart; for I had the certainty that all were in good health, and had escaped the dangers of the night. "Now that I have had a sight of your mother," said I to Fritz, "my next concern is for the animals on board; let us endeavour to save the lives of some of them at least, and to take them with us."

"Would it be possible to make a raft, to get them all upon it, and in this way get them to shore?" asked Fritz.

"But what a difficulty in making it! and how could we induce a cow, an ass, and a sow, either to get upon a raft, or, when there, to remain motionless and quiet? The sheep and goats one might perhaps find means to remove, they being of a more docile temper: but for the larger animals, I am at a loss how to proceed."

"My advice, father, is to tie a long rope round the sow's neck, and throw her without ceremony into the sea: her immense bulk will be sure to sustain her above water; and we can draw her after the boat."

"Your idea is excellent: but unfortunately it is of no use but for the pig; and she is the one I care the least about preserving."

"Then here is another idea, father: let us tie a swimming-jacket round the body of each animal, and contrive to throw one and all into the water; you will see that they

will swim like fish, and we can draw them after us in the same manner."

"Right, very right, my boy; your invention is admirable: let us therefore not lose a moment in making the experiment."

We hastened to the execution of our design: we fixed a jacket on one of the lambs, and threw it into the sea; and, full of anxious curiosity, I followed the poor beast with my eyes. He sunk at first, and I thought him drowned; but he soon reappeared, shaking the water from his head, and in a few seconds he had learned completely the art of swimming. After another interval, we observed that he appeared fatigued, gave up his efforts, and suffered himself to be borne along by the course of the water, which sustained and conducted him to our complete satisfaction. "Victory!" exclaimed I, hugging my boy with delight: "these useful animals are all our own; let us lose not a moment in adopting the same means with those that remain; but take care not to lose our little lamb." Fritz now would have jumped into the water to follow the poor creature, who was still floating safely on the surface; but I stopped him till I had seen him tie on a swimming-jacket. He took with him a rope, first making a slip-knot in it, and soon overtaking the lamb, threw it round his neck, and drew him back to our boat: and then took him out of the water.

We next got four small water-butts. I emptied them, and then carefully closed them again. I united them with a large piece of sail-cloth, nailing one end to each cask. I strengthened this with a second piece of sail-cloth, and this contrivance I destined to support the cow and the

ass, two casks to each, the animal being placed in the middle, with a cask on either side. I added a thong of leather, stretching from the casks across the breast and haunches of the animal, to make the whole secure; and thus, in less than an hour, both my cow and my ass were equipped for swimming.

It was next the turn of the smaller animals: of these, the sow gave us the most trouble; we were first obliged to put a muzzle on her to prevent her biting; and then we tied a large piece of cork under her body.

We had now not a moment to lose. Our last act was to put on our cork-jackets; and then we descended without accident through the cleft, took our station in the boat, and were soon in the midst of our troop of quadrupeds. We carefully gathered all the floating bits of wood, and fastened them to the stern of the machine, and thus drew them after us. When everything was adjusted, and our company in order, we hoisted our sail, which soon filling with a favourable wind, conducted us all safe to the land.

We now perceived how impossible it would have been for us to have succeeded in our enterprise without the aid of a sail; for the weight of so many animals sunk the boat so low in the water, that all our exertions to row to such a distance would have been ineffectual; while, by means of the sail, she proceeded completely to our satisfaction, bearing in her train our company of animals; nor could we help laughing heartily at the singular appearance we made. Proud of the success of so extraordinary a feat, we were in high spirits, and seated ourselves in the tubs, where we made an excellent dinner.

I had already been surprised and uneasy at finding

none of my family looking out for us on the shore: we could not, however, set out in search of them till we had disencumbered our animals of their swimming apparatus. Scarcely had we entered upon this employment, when I was relieved by the joyful sounds which reached our ears, and filled our hearts with rapture. It was my wife and the youngest boys who uttered them, the latter of whom were soon close up to us, and their mother followed not many steps behind, each and all of them in excellent health, and eager for our salutations. When the first burst of happiness at meeting had subsided, we all sat down on the grass, and I began to give them an account of our occupations in the vessel, of our voyage, and of all our different plans and their success, in the order in which they occurred. My wife could find no words to express her surprise and joy at seeing so many useful animals round us; and the hearty affection she expressed for them, in language the most simple and touching, increased my satisfaction at the completion of our enterprise.

"You pretend," said my wife, with a little malicious smile, "to be curious about my history, yet you have not let me speak a single word in all this time: but the longer a torrent is pent up, the longer it flows when once let loose. Now, then, that you are in the humour to listen, I shall give vent to a certain little movement of vanity which is fluttering at my heart. This morning, when I was made happy by the sight of your signal, and had set up mine in return, I looked about, before the boys were up, in hopes to find a shady place where we might now and then retire from the heat of the sun; but I found not a single tree. This made me reflect a little seriously on our

situation. It will be impossible, said I to myself, to remain in this place with no shelter but a miserable tent, under which the heat is even more excessive than without. Courage, then! pursued I. I will try to find out some well shaded agreeable spot, in which we may all be settled. I now cast another look towards the vessel; but perceiving no sign of your return, I determined to share a slight dinner with the boys, and then we set out resolutely on a journey of discovery for a habitation better sheltered from the sun.

“We reached a little wood; and here our son Ernest had an opportunity of recognising many of the originals of the engravings in his books of natural history, and of displaying his knowledge, or his ignorance, to his heart’s content. A prodigious quantity of unknown birds were skipping and warbling on the branches of the trees, without betraying the least alarm at our vicinity. The boys wanted to fire on them; but this I absolutely forbade, and with the less scruple, as the trees were of so enormous a height as to be out of gun-shot reach. No, my dear husband, you cannot possibly form an idea of the trees we now beheld! You must somehow have missed this wood; or so extraordinary a sight could not have escaped your observation. What appeared to us at a distance to be a wood was only a group of about fourteen of them, the trunks of which seemed to be supported in their upright position by arches on each side, these arches being formed by the roots of the tree.

“Jack climbed with considerable trouble upon one of these arch-formed roots, and with a pack-thread in his hand measured the actual circumference of the tree itself.

He found that it measured more than fifteen braches (the brache is equal to twenty-two inches and a half). I made thirty-two steps in going round one of those giant productions at the roots; and its height from the ground to the place where the branches begin to shoot may be about thirty-six braches. The twigs of the tree are strong and thick; its leaves moderately large in size and bearing some resemblance to the hazel-tree of Europe; but I was unable to discover that it bore any fruit. For my own part, I felt that I could never tire of beholding and admiring this enchanting spot; it occurred to me, that if we could but contrive a kind of tent that could be fixed in one of the trees, we might safely come and make our abode here. I had found nothing in any other direction that suited us so well in every respect; and I resolved to look no further."

"And you think we could set up a tent in one of those giant trees at a distance of sixty-six feet from the ground! And by what means are we to ascend this tree? for at present I have no clear view of this important part of the subject."

I perceived a tear stealing into my wife's eye, that she could not prevail upon me to think as she wished of her discovery, and that I treated the subject of her giant trees with so little respect: I therefore endeavoured to soothe and relieve her somewhat wounded sensibility.

"Do you recollect," said she, "the large lime-tree in the public walk of the town we lived in; and the pretty little room which had been built among its branches, and the flight of stairs which led to it? What should hinder us from effecting such a contrivance in one of my giant

trees, which afford even superior facilities in the enormous size and strength of their branches, and the peculiar manner of their growth?"

We now performed our devotions, and retired to rest, grateful to find ourselves once more together, and in health. We soon closed our eyes, and enjoyed tranquil slumbers till break of day.

CHAPTER III

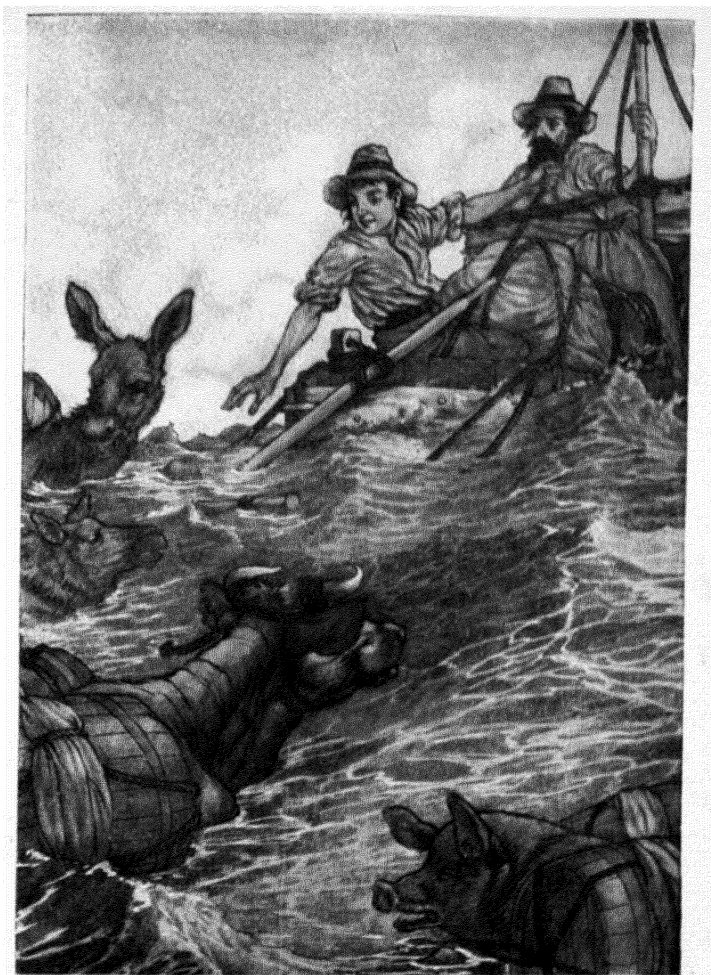
CHANGE OF ABODE

A FEW mornings later, as soon as we were up and had breakfasted, I assembled all the members of my family together, to take with them a solemn farewell of this our first place of reception from the awful disaster of the shipwreck. I confess that for my own part I could not leave it without regret; it was a place of greater safety than we were likely again to meet with; it was also nearer to the vessel. I thought it right to represent strongly to my sons the danger of exposing themselves along the river. "We are now going," continued I, "to inhabit an unknown spot, which is not so well protected by Nature as that we are leaving: we are unacquainted both with the soil and its inhabitants, whether human creatures or beasts: much caution is therefore necessary, and take care not to remain separate from each other." Having unburdened my mind of this necessary charge, we prepared for setting out.

At last we arrived at the place of the giant trees. Such indeed we found them, and our astonishment exceeded all description. "Good heavens! what trees! what a height! what trunks! I never heard of any so prodigious!" exclaimed one and all. "Nothing can be more rational than your admiration," answered I, measuring them with my

eyes as I spoke. "I must confess I had not myself formed an idea of the reality. To you be all the honour, my dear wife, for the discovery of this agreeable abode, in which we shall enjoy so many comforts and advantages. The great point we have to gain is the fixing a tent large enough to receive us all in one of these trees, by which means we shall be perfectly secure from the invasion of wild beasts. I defy even one of the bears, who are so famous for mounting trees, to climb up by a trunk so immense and so destitute of branches."

I singled out the highest fig-tree, and while my wife was preparing our dinner, I made the boys try how high they could throw a stone into it; but the lowest branches were so far from the ground that none of us could touch them. I perceived, therefore, that we should want some new inventions for fastening the ends of a ladder to them. After dining heartily on some slices of ham and bread and cheese I observed to my wife that we should be obliged to spend the night on the ground. I suspended our hammocks to some of the arched roots of the trees and then hastened with the two eldest boys to the sea-shore, to choose out such pieces of wood as were most proper for the steps of a ladder. Ernest discovered some bamboo canes, which I found to my joy to be precisely what I wanted. On returning to our trees I found that the height of the lower branches was forty feet. In a very short time I formed a ladder of forty rounds in length. I tied it with strong knots to the end of a rope, which I had thrown over one of the branches of the tree with the help of a bow and arrow and a ball of pack-thread. It was not long before we saw Jack and Fritz



We carefully collected all the floating bits of wood

side by side forty feet above our heads, and both saluting us with cries of exultation.

The next morning we constructed an aerial palace in the tree. The sail-cloth roof was supported by the thick branches above; the hammocks were hung on the branches; the floor was formed of beams and planks placed on other branches and surrounded by a wall of staves. We also contrived a large table to be placed between the roots of the tree and surrounded with benches; and this place we said should be called our dining-parlour.

Two mornings later we heard the firing of a gun, and two birds at the same time fell dead at our feet. We were at once surprised and alarmed, and all eyes were turned upward to the place. Then we saw Ernest standing, a gun in his hand, and heard him triumphantly exclaiming, "Catch them! catch them there! I have hit them."

He descended the ladder joyfully, and ran with Francis to take up the two birds; while Fritz and Jack mounted to our castle, hoping to meet with the same luck.

One of the dead birds proved to be a sort of thrush, and the other was a very small kind of pigeon, very fat, and of a delicious taste. We now observed for the first time, that the wild figs began to ripen, and that they attracted these birds. I foresaw, in consequence, that we were about to have our table furnished with a dish which even a nobleman might envy us. I gave the boys leave to kill as many of them as they liked. I knew that, half roasted, and put into barrels with melted butter thrown over them, they would keep a long time, and might prove an excellent resource. My wife set about stripping off the

feathers of the birds, to dress them for our dinner. I seated myself by her side, and proceeded in my work of arrow-making.

Thus finished another day. Supper ended, and prayers said, we ascended the ladder in procession; and each got into his hammock to taste the sweets of a tranquil sleep.

On awaking next morning we were all sensible of a new activity of mind.

"What think you, my good friends," said I, "of giving a name to the place of our abode, and to the different parts of the country which are known to us? We shall naturally begin with the bay by which we entered this country. What shall we call it? What say you, Fritz? You must speak first, for you are eldest."

Fritz. Let us call it *Oyster Bay*: you remember what quantity of oysters we found in it.

Jack. Oh, no; let it rather be called *Lobster Bay*: for you cannot have forgot what a large one it was that caught hold of my leg, and which I carried home to you.

Ernest. Why then we may as well call it the *Bay of Tears*, for you must remember that you blubbered loud enough for all of us to hear you.

My Wife. My advice would be, that, out of gratitude to God, who conducted us hither in safety, we ought to call it *Providence Bay*, or the *Bay of Safety*.

Father. These words are both appropriate and sonorous, and please me extremely. But what name shall we give to the spot where we first set up our tent?

Fritz. Let us simply call it *Tent House*.

Father. That will do very well. And the little islet at

the entrance of *Providence Bay*, in which we found so many planks and beams, how shall it be named?

Ernest. It may be called *Sea-Gull Island*, or *Shark Island*; for it was here we saw those animals.

Father. What name shall we give to our present abode?

Ernest. It ought to be called simply, *Tree Castle*.

Father. Will you let me decide the question for you? I think our abode should be called *The Falcon's Nest*.

All exclaimed, clapping their hands, "Yes, yes; we will have it *The Falcon's Nest*! the sound is quite chivalrous; so health to *Falcon's Nest Castle*!" cried they, all looking up at the tree, and making low bows. I poured out a small quantity of sweet wine, and presented it to each, to solemnise our baptism. "Now then," said I, "for the promontory, where Fritz and I in vain wearied our eyes, in search of our companions of the vessel—I think it may properly be called *Cape Disappointment*."

All. Yes, this is excellent. And the river——

Father. If you wish to commemorate one of the greatest events of our history, it ought to be called *The Jackal's River*; for these animals crossed it when they came and attacked us, and it was there that one of them was killed.

In this pleasing kind of chat, the time of dinner passed agreeably away. We settled the basis of a geography of this our new country; and amused ourselves with saying it must go by the first post to Europe.

As the evening advanced, and the intense heat of the day began to diminish, I invited all my family to take a walk.

CHAPTER IV

USEFUL OCCUPATIONS—THE PINNACE

NEXT day, breakfast over, Fritz and I returned to the sea-side to complete the unloading of the raft, that it might be ready for sea on the ebbing of the tide. Instead of steering for Safety Bay, to moor our vessels there securely, I was tempted by a fresh sea-breeze to go out again to the wreck. I determined to bring away only what could be obtained with ease and speed; we searched hastily through the ship for any trifling articles that might be readily removed.

But Fritz next disclosed still better news, which was, that he had discovered behind the bulk-head, amid-ship, a pinnace (i.e. a small craft, the fore part of which is square), taken to pieces, with all its appurtenances, and even two small guns for its defence. This intelligence so delighted me that I quitted everything else to run to the bulk-head, when I was convinced of the truth of the lad's assertion; but I instantly perceived that to put it together, and launch it, would be an Herculean task. I collected various utensils, a copper boiler, some plates of iron, tobacco-graters, two grinding-stones, a small barrel of gunpowder, and another full of flints, which I much valued.

We then steered gently towards shore.

But from the time of discovering the pinnace, my desire of returning to the vessel grew every moment more irresistible; but one thing I saw was absolutely necessary, which was, to collect all my hands to get her out of the situation where we had found her. I therefore thought of taking with me the three boys: I even wished that my wife should accompany us; but she had been seized with such a horror of the perfidious element, as she called it, the sea, that she assured me the very attempt would make her ill and useless. I had some difficulty to prevail upon her to let so many as three of the children go: she made me promise to return the same evening, and on no account to pass another night on board the wreck; and to this I was, though with regret, obliged to consent.

After breakfast, then, we prepared for setting out. The boys were gay and on the alert, in the expectation of the pleasure that awaited them, particularly Ernest, who had not yet made a single voyage with us to the vessel. We took with us an ample provision of boiled roots and cassave; and, in addition, arms and weapons of every kind. We reached Safety Bay without any remarkable event: here we thought it prudent to put on our cork-jackets; we then scattered some food for the geese and ducks which had taken up their abode there, and soon after stepped gaily into our tub-raft, at the same time fastening the new boat by a rope to her stern, so that she could be drawn along. We put out for the current, though not without considerable fear of finding that the wreck had disappeared. We soon, however, perceived that it still remained firm between the rocks.

We passed an entire week in this arduous undertaking

of the pinnacle. I embarked every morning with my three sons, and returned every evening, and never without some small addition to our stores. We were now so accustomed to this manner of proceeding that my wife bade us good-bye without concern. When night returned we had a thousand interesting things to tell each other, and the pleasure of being together was much increased by these short separations.

At length the pinnacle was completed, and in a condition to be launched: the question now was, how to manage this remaining difficulty. She was an elegant little vessel, perfect in every part: she had a small neat deck; and her masts and sails were no less exact and perfect than those of a little brig. It was probable she would sail well, from the lightness of her construction, and in consequence drawing but little water. We had pitched and towed all the seams, that nothing might be wanting for her complete appearance: we had even taken the pains of further embellishing, by mounting her with two small cannon of about a pound weight; and, in imitation of larger vessels, had fastened them to the deck with chains. But in spite of the delight we felt in contemplating a work, as it were, of our own industry, the great difficulty still remained: the said commodious, charming little vessel still stood fast, enclosed within four walls, nor could I conceive a mode of getting her out. To effect a passage through the outer side of the vessel, by means of our united industry in the use of all the utensils we had secured, seemed to present a prospect of exertions beyond the reach of man, even if not attended with dangers the most alarming. We examined if it might be practicable to cut away all

intervening timbers, to which, from the nature of the breach, we had easier access: but should we even succeed in this attempt, the upper timbers being, in consequence of the inclined position of the ship, on a level with the water, our labour would be unavailing: besides, we had neither strength nor time for such a proceeding; from one moment to another, a storm might arise and engulf the ship, timbers, pinnace, ourselves, and all. Despairing, then, of being able to find means consistent with the sober rules of art, my impatient fancy inspired the thought of a project, which could not however be tried without hazards and dangers of a tremendous nature.

I had found on board a strong iron mortar, such as is used in kitchens. I took a thick oak plank, and nailed to different parts of it some large iron hooks: with a knife I cut a groove along the middle of the plank. I sent the boys to fetch some matchwood from the hold, and I cut a piece sufficiently long to continue burning at least two hours. I placed this train in the groove of my plank: I filled the mortar with gunpowder, and then laid the plank thus furnished upon it, having previously pitched the mortar all round; and, lastly, I made the whole fast to the spot with strong chains, crossed by means of the hooks in every direction. Thus I accomplished a sort of cracker, from which I expected to effect a happy conclusion. I hung this machine of mischief to the side of the bulk-head next to the sea, having taken previous care to choose a spot in which its action could not affect the pinnace. When the whole was arranged, I set fire to the match, the end of which projected far enough beyond the plank to allow us sufficient time to escape.

On our arrival at Tent House, I immediately put the raft in a certain order, that she might be in readiness to return speedily to the wreck, when the noise produced by the cracker should have informed me that my scheme had taken effect. We set busily to work in emptying her; and during the occupation, our ears were assailed with the noise of an explosion of such violence that my wife and the boys, who were ignorant of the cause, were so dreadfully alarmed as instantly to abandon their employment. "What can it be? what is the matter? what can have happened?" cried all at once. "It must be cannon. It is perhaps the captain and the ship's company who have found their way hither! Or can it be some vessel in distress? Can we go to its relief?"

Mother. The sound comes in the direction of the wreck: perhaps she has blown up.

From the bottom of her heart she made this suggestion, for she desired nothing more earnestly than that the vessel should be annihilated, and thus an end be put to our repeated visits.

Father. If this is the case, said I, we had better return immediately, and convince ourselves of the fact? Who will be of the party?

"I, I, I," cried the boys; and the three young rogues lost not a moment in jumping into their tubs, whither I soon followed them, after having whispered a few words to my wife, somewhat tending to explain, but still more to tranquillise her mind during the trip we had now to engage in.

We rowed out of the bay with more rapidity than on any former occasion; curiosity gave strength to our arms.

When the vessel was in sight, I observed with pleasure that no change had taken place in the part of her which faced Tent House, and that no sign of smoke appeared: we advanced, therefore, in excellent spirits; but instead of rowing, as usual, straight to the breach, we proceeded round to the side, on the inside of which we had placed the cracker. The horrible scene of devastation we had caused now broke upon our sight. The greater part of the ship's side was shattered to pieces; innumerable splinters covered the surface of the water; the whole exhibited a scene of terrible destruction, in the midst of which presented itself our elegant pinnace, entirely free from injury! I could not refrain from the liveliest exclamations of joy, which excited the surprise of the boys, who had felt the disposition such a spectacle naturally inspired, of being dejected. They fixed their eyes upon me with the utmost astonishment. "Now then she is ours!" cried I; "the elegant little pinnace is ours! for nothing is now more easy than to launch her. Come, boys, jump upon her deck, and let us see how quickly we can get her down upon the water."

Two whole days were spent in completely equipping and loading the beautiful little barge we had now secured. When she was ready for sailing, I found it impossible to resist the earnest importunity of the boys, who, as a recompense for the industry and discretion they had employed, claimed my permission to salute their mother, on their approach to Tent House, with two discharges of cannon. These accordingly were loaded, and the two youngest placed themselves, with a lighted match in hand, close to the touch-holes, to be in readiness. Fritz stood at the

mast, to manage the ropes and cables, while I took my station at the rudder. These matters being adjusted, we put off with sensations of lively joy, which was demonstrated by loud huzzas and suitable gesticulation. The wind was favourable, and so brisk, that we glided with the rapidity of a bird along the mirror of the waters; and while my young ones were transported with pleasure by the velocity of the motion, I could not myself refrain from shuddering at the thought of some possible disaster.

Our old friend the tub-raft had been deeply loaded, and fastened to the pinnace, and it now followed as an accompanying boat to a superior vessel. We took down our large sails as soon as we found ourselves at the entrance of Safety Bay, to have the greater command in steering the pinnace; and soon the smaller ones were lowered one by one, that we might the more securely avoid being thrown with violence upon the rocks so prevalent along the coast; thus, proceeding at a slower rate, we had greater facilities for managing the important affair of the discharge of the cannon. Arrived within a certain distance—"Fire!" cried Commander Fritz. The rocks behind Tent House returned the sound. "Fire!" said Fritz again. Ernest and Jack obeyed and the echoes again majestically replied. Fritz at the same moment had discharged his two pistols, and all joined instantly in three loud huzzas.

"Welcome! welcome! dear ones," was the answer from the anxious mother, almost breathless with astonishment and joy! "Welcome!" cried also little Francis, with his feeble voice, as he stood clinging to her side, and not well knowing whether he was to be sad or merry! We now tried to push to shore with our oars in a particular direction,

that we might have the protection of a projecting mass of rocks, and my wife and little Francis hastened to the spot to receive us. "Ah, dear deceitful ones!" cried she, throwing herself upon my neck, and heartily embracing me, "what a fright have you, and your cannon, and your little ship thrown me into! I saw it advancing rapidly towards us, and was unable to conceive from whence it could come, or what it might have on board: I stole with Francis behind the rocks, and when I heard the firing, I was near sinking to the ground with terror; if I had not the moment after heard your voices, God knows where we should have run to—but come, the cruel moment is now over, and thanks to Heaven I have you once more in safety! But tell me where you got so unhopèd-for a prize as this neat, charming little vessel! In good truth, it would almost tempt me once more to venture on a sea-voyage, especially if she would promise to convey us back to our dear country! I foresee of what use she will be to us, and for her sake I think that I must try to forgive the many sins of absence which you have committed against me."

Fritz now invited his mother to get on board, and gave her his assistance. When they had all stepped upon the deck, they entreated the permission to salute, by again discharging the cannon, and at the same moment to confer on the pinnacle the name of their mother—*The Elizabeth*.

We employed six whole weeks in effecting laborious household arrangements; but the exercise of mind and body they imposed contributed to the physical and moral health of the boys, and to the support of cheerfulness and serenity in ourselves. The more we embellished our abode

by the work of our own hands, the more it became dear to our hearts. The constant and strict observance of the Sabbath-day afforded such an interval of rest as could not fail to restore our strength, and inspire us with the desire of new exertions. The sentiment of gratitude which filled our minds towards the Supreme Being, who had saved us from destruction, and supplied us with all things needful, demanded utterance, and on Sundays we might allow ourselves the indulgence of pouring out our hearts in thankfulness.

By this time we had nearly exhausted our stock of clothes, and we were compelled once more to have recourse to the vessel, which we knew still contained some chests fit for our use. To this motive we added an earnest desire to take another look at her, and, if practicable, to bring away a few pieces of cannon, which might be fixed on the new bastions at Tent House, and thus we should be prepared for the worst.

The first fine day I assembled my three eldest sons, and put my design into execution. We reached the wreck without any striking adventure, and found her still fixed between the rocks, but somewhat more shattered than when we had last seen her. We secured the chests of clothes, and whatever remained of ammunition-stores: powder, shot, and even such pieces of cannon as we could remove, while those that were too heavy we stripped of their wheels, which might be extremely useful.

But to effect our purpose it was necessary to spend several days in visits to the vessel, returning constantly in the evening, enriched with everything of a portable nature which the wreck contained; doors, windows, locks,

bolts—nothing escaped our grasp: so that the ship was now entirely emptied, with the exception of the large cannon, and three or four immense copper caldrons. We by degrees contrived to tie the heaviest articles to two or three empty casks well pitched, which would thus be sustained above water. I supposed that the wind and tide would convey the beams and timbers ashore, and thus with little pains we should be possessed of a sufficient quantity of materials for erecting a building at some future time. When these measures were taken, I came to the resolution of blowing up the wreck, by a process similar to that which had so well succeeded with the pinnace. We accordingly prepared a cask of gunpowder, which we left on board for the purpose: we rolled it to the place most favourable for our views: we made a small opening in its side, and, at the moment of quitting the vessel, we inserted a piece of matchwood, which we lighted at the last moment, as before. We then sailed with all possible expedition for Safety Bay, where we arrived in a short time. We could not, however, withdraw our thoughts from the wreck, and from the expected explosion, for a single moment. I had cut the match a sufficient length for us to hope that she would not go to pieces before dark. I proposed to my wife to have our supper carried to a little point of land from whence we had a view of her, and here we waited for the moment of her destruction with lively impatience.

About the time of nightfall, a majestic rolling sound, like thunder, accompanied by a column of fire and smoke, announced that the ship so awfully concerned with our peculiar destiny, which had brought us to our present

abode in a desert, and furnished us there with such vast supplies for general comfort, was that instant annihilated and withdrawn for ever from the face of man! At this moment, love for the country that gave us birth, that most powerful sentiment of the human heart, sunk with a new force into ours. The ship had disappeared for ever! Could we then form a hope ever to behold that country more? We had made a sort of jubilee of witnessing the spectacle: the boys had clapped their hands and skipped about in joyful expectation; but the noise was heard—the smoke and sparks were seen!—while the sudden change which took place in our minds could be compared only to the rapidity of these effects of our concerted scheme against the vessel. We all observed a mournful silence, and all rose, as it were by an impulse of mutual condemnation, and with our heads sinking on our bosoms, and our eyes cast upon the ground, we took the road to Tent House.

My wife was the only person who was sensible of motives for consolation in the distressing scene which had been passing; she was now relieved from all the cruel fears for our safety in our visits to a shattered wreck that was liable to fall to pieces during the time we were on board. From this moment she conceived a stronger partiality for our island and the modes of life we had adopted.

CHAPTER V

THE WILD ASS—A HOUSE IN A ROCK

WE were scarcely up one morning, and had got to work in putting the last hand to a winding staircase, which we had constructed in the hollow trunk of our tree, when we heard at a distance two strange kinds of voices, that resembled the howlings of wild beasts mixed with hissings and sounds of some creature at its last gasp; and I was not without uneasiness: our dogs too pricked up their ears, and seemed to whet their teeth for a sanguinary combat with a dangerous enemy.

From their looks we judged it prudent to put ourselves in a state of defence; we loaded our guns and pistols, placed them together within our castle in the tree, and repaired to repel vigorously any hostile attack from that quarter. The howlings having ceased an instant, I descended from our citadel, well armed, and put on our two faithful guardians their spiked collars and side-guards: I assembled our cattle about the tree to have them in sight, and I re-ascended to look around for the enemy's approach. Jack wished they might be lions—"I should like," said he, "to have a near view of the king of beasts, and should not be in the least afraid of him."

At this instant the howlings were renewed, and almost close to us. Fritz got as near the spot as he could, listened

attentively, and with eager looks, then threw down his gun, and burst into a loud laughter, exclaiming, "Father, it is our ass! the deserter comes back to us, chanting the hymn of return: listen! do you not hear his melodious brayings in all the varieties of the gamut?" I listened, and a fresh roar, in sounds unquestionable, raised loud peals of laughter amongst us; and then followed the usual train of jests and mutual banter of the alarm we had one and all betrayed. Shortly after, we had the satisfaction of seeing among the trees our old friend Grizzle, who some time before had, while grazing, suddenly thrown his head in the air, kicked and pranced about, and then set off at a full gallop and not, until now, returned. He was moving towards us leisurely, and stopping now and then to browse; but, to our great joy, he was accompanied by one of his own species, of very superior beauty; and when it was nearer, I knew it to be a fine onager, or wild ass, which I conceived a strong desire to possess, though at the same time aware of the extreme difficulty there would be in taming and rendering him subject to the use of man. Some writers, who have described it under the name of the *Oeigitai* (or long-eared horse), given it by the Tartars, affirm that the taming it has been ever found impracticable; but my mind furnished an idea on the subject, which I was resolved to act on if I got possession of the handsome creature. Without delay I descended the ladder with Fritz, desiring his brothers to keep still; and I consulted my privy-counsellor on the means of surprising and taking the stranger captive.

Fritz, holding in his hand a noose, kept open by a little stick slightly fixed in the opening, moved softly on



A troop of large-sized Flamingoes

from behind the tree where we were concealed, and advanced as far as the length of the rope allowed him: the onager started on perceiving a human figure; it sprang some paces backward, then stopped, as if to examine the unknown form; but as Fritz now remained quite still, the animal resumed its composure, and continued to browse. Soon after he approached the old ass, hoping that the confidence that would be shown by it would raise a similar feeling in the stranger; he held out a handful of oats mixed with salt; our ass instantly ran up to take its favourite food, and greedily devoured it: this was quickly perceived by the other. It drew near, raised its head, breathed strongly, and came up so close, that Fritz, seizing the opportunity, succeeded in throwing the rope round its neck; but the motion and stroke so affrighted the beast that it instantly sprang off. It was soon checked by the cord, which, compressing the neck, almost stopped its breath: it could go no further, and, after many exhausting efforts, it sunk panting for breath upon the ground. I hastened to loosen the cord, and prevent its being strangled. I then quickly threw our ass's halter over its head; I fixed the noose in my split cane, which I secured at the bottom with packthread. Thus I succeeded in subduing the first alarm of this wild animal, as farriers shoe a horse for the first time. I wholly removed the noose that seemed to bring the creature into a dangerous situation; I fastened the halter with two long ropes to two roots near us, on the right and left, and let the animal recover itself, noticing its actions, and devising the best way to tame it in the completest manner.

The weather changed sooner than we had expected, and

the winds blew so furiously and the rain fell in such heavy torrents that we had to remove our aerial abode to the bottom of the tree. Such was our discomfort that we unanimously resolved that we would not pass another rainy season exposed to the same evils. The choice of a fresh abode now engrossed our attention, and Fritz, in the midst of consultation, came forward triumphantly, with a book he had found in the bottom of our clothes-chest. "Here," said he, "is our best counsellor and model, *Robinson Crusoe*; so far as I remember he cut himself a habitation out of the solid rock. We will do the same." The final result of our deliberations was to go and survey the rocks round Tent House, and to examine whether any of them could be excavated for our purpose. When the spring came, Fritz and Jack were constant in their endeavours to make me undertake the excavation of the rock, but I had no hopes of success. *Robinson Crusoe* found a spacious cavern that merely required arrangement: no such cavity was apparent in our rock, which bore the aspect of extreme solidity and impenetrableness; so that with our limited powers, three or four summers would scarcely suffice to execute the design. When I had cut about a foot in depth into the rock, we could loosen it with a spade like dried mud; this determined me to proceed with double ardour, and my boys assisted me with a spirit and zeal beyond their years.

After a few days of assiduous labour, we measured the opening, and found we had already advanced seven feet into the rock. Fritz removed the fragments in a barrow, and discharged them in a line before the place, to form a sort of terrace; I applied my own labour to the upper

part, to enlarge the aperture; Jack, the smallest of the three, was able to get in and cut away below. He had with him a long iron bar sharpened at the end, which he drove in with a hammer, to loosen a piece at a time; suddenly he bawled out, "It is pierced through, father! Fritz, I have pierced it through!"

"Hah, hah, master Jack at his jokes again! But let us hear, what have you pierced? Is it the mountain? Not peradventure your hand or foot, Jack?" cried I.

Jack. No, no, it is the mountain (the rocks resounding with his usual shout of joy); huzza, huzza! I have pierced the mountain!

Fritz now ran to him. "Come, let us see then: it is no doubt the globe at least you have pierced," said he, in a bantering tone: "you should have pushed on your tool boldly, till you reached Europe, which they say is under our feet; I should have been glad to peep into that hole."

Jack. Well, then, peep you may, but I hardly know what you will see; come and look how far the iron is gone in, and tell me if it is all my boasting.

"Come hither, father," said Fritz, "this is really extraordinary: his iron bar seems to have got to a hollow place; see, it can be moved in every direction." I approached, thinking the incident worth attention. I took hold of the bar, which was still in the rock, and working it about, I made a sufficient aperture for one of my sons to pass, and I observed that in reality the rubbish fell within the cavity, which I judged from the falling of the stones was not much deeper than the part we stood on. My two lads offered to go in together and examine it; this, however, I forbade. I even made them remove from the opening, as

I smelled the mephitic air that issued abundantly from it, and began myself to feel giddiness in consequence of having gone too near; so that I was compelled to withdraw quickly, and inhale a purer air. "Beware, my dear children," said I, in terror, "of entering such places, for the loss of life might be the consequence."

Jack. How can that be, father?

Father. Because the air is mephitic, that is, foul, and therefore unfit for breathing in.

Fritz. And by what is good air known? How judge that one may respire freely at a few paces from this mephitic cave?

Father. This becomes evident when inspiration and expiration are performed with ease; besides, there is an infallible test; fire does not burn in foul air, yet it is made the means of correcting it. We must light a fire of sufficient strength in this hole to purify the air within, and render it friendly to respiration: at first the bad air will extinguish the fire, but by degrees the fire in its turn will expel the bad air and burn freely.

Fritz. Oh! that will be an easy matter.

The boys now hastened to gather some dry moss, which they made into bundles: they then struck a light and set fire to them, and threw the moss blazing into the opening; but, as I had described, the fire was extinguished at the very entrance, thus proving that the air within was highly mephitic. I now saw that it was to be rarefied by another and more effectual method; I recollected that we had brought from the vessel a chest that was full of grenades, rockets, and other fireworks, which had been shipped for the purpose of making signals, as well as for amusement.

I sought it hastily, and took some of these, together with an iron mortar for throwing; out of it I laid a train of gunpowder, and set fire to the end which reached to where we stood: a general explosion took place, and an awful report reverberated through the dark recess; the lighted grenades flew about on all sides like brilliant meteors. We then sent in the rockets, which hissed in the cavity like flying dragons, disclosing to our astonished view its vast extent.

After having played off our fireworks, I tried lighted straw; to our great satisfaction, the bundles thrown in were entirely consumed; we could then reasonably hope nothing was to be feared from the air; but there still remained the danger of plunging into some abyss, or of meeting with a body of water. From these considerations, I deemed it more prudent to defer our entrance into this unknown recess till we had lights to guide us through it. I dispatched Jack on a buffalo, which we had captured and tamed, to Falcon's Stream, to tell his mother and brothers of our discovery, directing him to return with them, and bring all the tapers that were left: my intention was to tie them together to the end of a stick, and proceed with it lighted to examine the cavity. I had not sent Jack on this embassy without a meaning; the boy possessed from nature a lively imagination; I knew he would tell his mother such wonders of the enchanted grotto, of the fireworks, and all they had brought to our view, that he would induce her to accompany him without delay, and bring us lights to penetrate the obscure sanctuary.

The astonishment of my family was so great as to be

almost ludicrous; they were all in a kind of dumb stupor, half imagining it was a dream.

We at length felt confident that in point of solidity there was nothing to fear, and that we might proceed without dread of accident. Loud acclamations, projects, consultations, now succeeded to our mute astonishment! Many schemes were formed for converting this magnificent grotto into a convenient and agreeable mansion for our abode. We had possession of the most eligible premises: the sole business was to turn them to the best account; and how to effect this was our unceasing theme: some voted for our immediate establishment there, but they were opposed by more sagacious counsel, and it was resolved that Falcon's Stream should still be our headquarters till the end of the year.

CHAPTER VI

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS—WINTER

ONE morning, having arisen earlier than the rest of my young family, I occupied myself by counting up the time that had passed away since our shipwreck. I calculated the dates with the utmost exactness, and I found that the next day would be the anniversary of that event. It was just two years since the hand of God had been extended over us to save us from a watery grave. I felt my mind filled with thanksgiving, and I resolved to celebrate the day with all the pomp our situation would permit.

As I had not yet fixed upon the arrangements for our holiday, I said nothing about it to my family. Breakfast over, we proceeded to our different employments, and it was not until we were seated at supper, that I announced, in a pompous manner, the holiday for the morrow.

"Be ready," said I to my sons, "to celebrate the anniversary of the morrow; let each one prepare himself as is proper for so great a day."

Next day we rose and dressed as decently as our scanty means afforded, and proceeded to breakfast. After our daily prayer, I turned to my children, and said, "Two years have elapsed since we arrived here, and now is the moment to cast a glance upon the past." I then took the journal of the past, which I had always kept, and read it

aloud, dwelling on and explaining the principal circumstances of our life. When I had finished, we all again thanked our Almighty Father for the many blessings he had granted us. It was an interesting spectacle to see those four children kneeling upon the sea-shore, and, in their childish form of words, thanking the God who had preserved them.

After our devotions were over, I announced to my family that the amusements of the day would conclude with the exercises which always terminated our holidays.

I then organised the different combats which were to take place. First came firing at a mark; the materials for this were wood, with two bits of leather at each side of the top, which we called a kangaroo. Jack did wonders, either by chance or skill: he shot away one of the ears of our pretended kangaroo! Fritz just grazed the head, and Ernest lodged his ball in the middle of the body. The three shots were all worthy of praise. Another proof of skill was then made; it consisted in firing at a ball of cork which I threw up in the air; Ernest had the advantage here: he cut the ball to pieces. Fritz also shot well, but Jack could not hit it. We then tried the same thing with pistols, shortening the distance, and again I complimented my little boys upon the progress they had made since last year.

Slinging succeeded to the pistol exercise: Fritz carried off the prize. After that came archery; and here all—even little Francis—distinguished themselves. Next came the races; and I gave them for a course the distance between the bridge called Family Bridge, because all the family had helped to construct it, and "Falcon's Nest."

"The one that arrives first," said I to the runners, who were gathered about me, "will bring me, as proof of his victory, my knife, which I left on the table, under the tree." I then gave the signal, by clapping my hands three times. My three sons set out, Jack and Fritz with all the impetuosity that marked their character; on the contrary, Ernest, who never did anything without reflecting, set off slowly at first, but gradually augmented his pace. I perceived that he had his elbows pressed firmly against his body, and I augured well from this little mark of prudence.

The runners were absent about three-quarters of an hour. Jack returned first; but he was mounted on his buffalo, and the onager and the ass followed him.

"How now," said I; "is this what you call racing? It was your legs, and not those of the buffalo, that I wished to exercise."

"Bah!" cried he, jumping from the back of his courser, "I knew I would never get there, so I left the course; and, as the trial of horsemanship comes next, I thought that, as I was near Falcon's Nest, I would bring our coursers back with me."

Fritz came next, all out of breath and covered with sweat; but he had not the knife, and it was Ernest who brought it me.

"How came you to have the knife," said I, "when Fritz got here before you?"

"The thing is simple," answered Ernest; "in going, he could not long keep up the pace he started with, and soon stopped to breathe, while I ran on and got the knife; but in coming back, Fritz pressed his arms against

his sides, and held his mouth shut, as he had seen me do, and then the victory depended upon our relative strength; Fritz is sixteen, while I am but thirteen, and of course he arrived first." I praised the two boys, and declared Ernest conqueror.

But now Jack, mounted on his buffalo, demanded that the equestrian exercises should commence. Fritz mounted his onager and Ernest took the ass, but Jack distanced them both. I was about to proclaim him the victor when little Francis rode into the arena mounted on his young bull, "Broumm," who was not more than three or four months old. The cavalier commenced to manœuvre his courser; but what I admired most was the docility of the animal.

After the horsemanship, the swimming occupied some time; they also climbed the trees; and, after we had finished our gymnastics, I announced that the rewards would now be distributed, and that the crowns would shade the brows of the victors.

Every one hastened to the grotto, which had been lighted up with all the torches we possessed; my wife, as queen of the day, was pompously installed in an elevated seat, decorated with flowers, and I called up the laureates to receive the rewards, which their mother distributed to each one as she impressed a tender kiss upon his forehead.

Fritz—conqueror at shooting and swimming—received a superb English rifle, and a hunting-knife, which he had long wished for. Ernest had for the reward of the race a splendid gold watch. Jack—the cavalier—obtained a magnificent pair of steel spurs and a whip of whalebone. Little Francis received a pair of stirrups and a box of colours, as

a reward for the industry he had displayed in educating his bull.

When this distribution was finished, I rose, and, turning to my wife, presented her with a beautiful English work-box, in which was contained all those little things that add so much to the comfort of an industrious woman, such as pins, needles, scissors, etc.

"Receive," said I, "my excellent companion, also a reward; for your services and endurance during the year well deserve one, even though the tender love of myself and children may be in itself a sufficient reward."

The day was finished as it had begun—with songs and expressions of joy; we were all happy, all contented: we all enjoyed that pure felicity which a life free from reproach had given us; and we all thanked in our hearts the Lord who had been so merciful toward us.

The season of rains was fast approaching, and we used all possible expedition to get in everything necessary. The grain, the fruits of all sorts which surrounded our habitation, potatoes, rice, guavas, sweet acorns, pine-apples, anise, manioc, bananas, nothing in short was forgotten. We sowed our seeds as we had done the year before, hoping that the European sorts would sprout quicker, and more easily, on account of the moisture of the atmosphere.

But the rains had already commenced; several times we had been visited by heavy showers, which hastened our remaining occupations. By degrees the horizon became covered with thick clouds, the winds swept fearfully along the coast, the billows rose, and for the space of fifteen days we were witnesses of a scene whose majesty and terrific grandeur man cannot form an idea. Nature seemed

overturned, the trees bent to the terrible blasts, the lightning and the thunder were mingled with the wind and the storm; in one word, it was a concert of Nature's many voices, where the deep tones of the thunder served for the bass, and harmoniously blended with the sharp whistlings of the storm. It seemed to us that the storm of last year had been nothing in comparison to it. Nevertheless, the winds began to calm, and the rain, instead of beating down upon us in torrents, began to fall with that despair-inspiring uniformity, which we felt would last for twelve long weeks. The first moments of our seclusion were sad enough, but necessity reconciled us to our situation, and we began as cheerfully as possible to arrange the interior of our subterranean habitation.

We had only taken a few of our animals in with us: the cow, on account of her milk, the ass to take care of the little foal, and Lightfoot and Storm, as we called the onager and the buffalo, because we would need them in the excursions which might become necessary.

We all knew a little of French, for this is as much in use as German throughout Switzerland. Fritz and Ernest had commenced to learn English at Zurich, and I had myself paid some attention to the language, in order to superintend their education. I now urged them to continue their studies, as English was the language of the sea, and there were very few ships that did not contain someone who understood it. Jack, who knew nothing at all, began to pay some attention to Spanish and Italian, the pomp and melody of these two languages according with his character. As for myself, I laboured hard to master the Malay tongue; for the inspection of charts and maps

convinced me that we were in the neighbourhood of these people.

It was agreed that we should cultivate the French in common, while I taught English to my wife and Francis, and that the others should learn it for themselves. Our study was not a bad resemblance of Babel, on a small scale, especially when we recited aloud, in order to break the learned silence that reigned there, passages from our favourite authors. This exercise, strange as it may appear, was productive of great advantages: it brought on questions and answers, and taught the little family many a foreign phrase that otherwise they would not have understood. Ernest reigned chief of literature among us. Memory, intelligence, and perseverance were all united in him; not content with studying English, he continued Latin, which his passion for natural history rendered almost necessary to him; and so constant was his application that I was often obliged to tear him from his book, and force him to take some exercise necessary to his health.

I have as yet said nothing of the thousand little comforts we found in the boxes we had saved from the vessel, and which we now looked over. We found all sorts of furniture: mirrors, several very handsome toilet-cases and bureaux-tables, in which we found everything necessary for writing. We even found a splendid clock, with an automaton figure, which, if I could have put in order, would have sounded the hours; as it was it made a very handsome show on the marble table in our saloon. Our grotto grew every day so comfortable that the children could not think of any name suitable to call it by: some wanted it called *The Fairy Palace*, others *The Resplendent Grotto*; but after a long

discussion, we came to the conclusion that it should be called simply "Felsenheim," or the dwelling in the rock. Time rolled away so rapidly in all these occupations, that two months of the rainy season had elapsed, and I had not yet found time to make a new pair of carding-combs, that my wife had teased me for for a long time.

CHAPTER VII

A DANGEROUS VISITOR

MY sons had made a large basket to put manioc roots in, and, in a fit of mischief, Jack and Ernest had passed a bamboo cane through the handles, and, putting little Francis in the basket, set off on a full run, while the poor fellow endeavoured in vain to stop them.

Fritz, who had been looking at them, turned to me, saying, "An idea has struck me, papa; why cannot we make a litter of rushes for mamma, and then she will be able to accompany us in our distant excursions?"

"Really," I replied, "a litter would be much more convenient than the back of the ass, and much easier than the cart: we will try what can be done."

My children were delighted at the plan; but my wife laughingly observed, that she "would make but a poor figure seated in a wicker basket."

We then all returned to our basket-making; but we had scarcely recommenced, when Fritz, whose eagle eye was always making discoveries, suddenly started up, as if frightened at a cloud of dust which had arisen on the other side of the river, in the direction of Falcon's Nest.

"There is some large animal there," said he, "to judge from the dust it has raised; besides, it is plainly coming in this direction."

"I cannot imagine what it is," I answered; "our large animals are in the stable."

"Probably two or three sheep, or, perhaps, our sow, frolicking in the sand," observed my wife.

"No, no," replied Fritz, quickly; "it is some singular animal: I can perceive its movements: it rolls and unrolls itself alternately; I can see the rings of which it is formed. See, it is raising itself up, and looks like a huge mast in the dust; it advances—stops—marches on; but I cannot distinguish either feet or legs."

I ran for the spy-glass we had saved from the wreck, and directed it toward the dust.

"I can see it plainly," said Fritz; "it has a greenish-coloured body. What do you think of it, papa?"

"That we must fly as fast as possible, and entrench ourselves in the grotto."

"What do you think it is?"

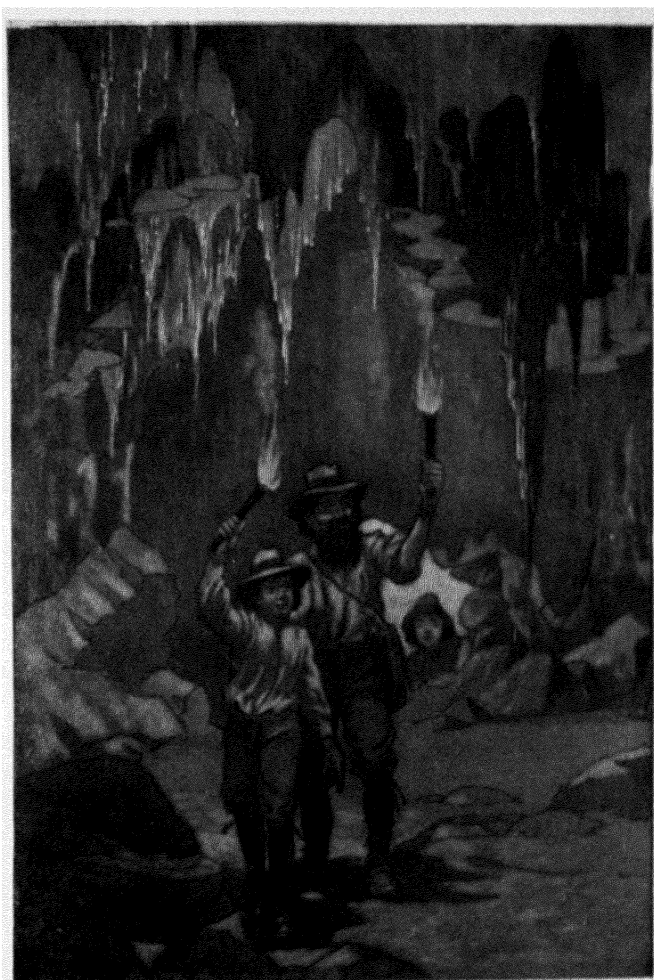
"A serpent—a huge serpent, advancing directly for us."

"Shall I run for the guns, to be ready to receive him?"

"Not here. The serpent is too powerful to permit of our attacking him, unless we are ourselves in a place of safety."

We hastened to gain the interior of the grotto, and prepared to receive our enemy. It was a boa-constrictor; and he advanced so quickly that it was too late to take up the boards on Family Bridge.

We watched all his movements, and saw him stretching out his enormous length along the bank of the river. From time to time the reptile would raise up the forepart of his body twenty feet from the ground, and turn his head gently from right to left, as if seeking for his prey, while



The most beautiful and magnificent spectacle presented itself

he darted a triple-barbed tongue from his half-open jaws. He crossed the bridge, and directed his course straight for the grotto: we had barricaded the door and the windows as well as we were able, and ascended into the dove-cot, to which we had made an interior entrance; we passed our muskets through the holes in the door, and waited silently for the enemy—it was the silence of terror.

But the boa, in advancing, had perceived the traces of man's handiwork, and he came on hesitatingly, until at last he stopped, about thirty paces directly in front of our position. He had scarcely advanced thus far when Ernest, more through fear than through any warlike ardour, discharged his gun, and thus gave a false signal. Jack and Francis followed his example; and my wife, whom the danger had rendered bold, also discharged her gun.

The monster raised his head; but either because none of the shots had touched him, or because the scales of his skin were impenetrable to balls, he appeared to have received no wound. Fritz and I then fired, but without any effect, and the serpent glided away with inconceivable rapidity toward the marsh which our ducks and geese inhabited, and disappeared in the rushes.

A general exclamation accompanied his disappearance. We were inexpressibly relieved. We commenced to speak. Every one was sure that they had hit him; but all agreed he was as yet unwounded. We also concurred as to his immense proportions; but as for the colour of his skin, every one embroidered it according to his own taste.

The neighbourhood of the boa threw me into the most

unenviable state of mind; for I could think of no way to rid ourselves of him, and our united forces were as nothing against such an enemy. I expressly commanded my whole family to remain in the grotto, and forbade them opening the door without my permission.

The fear of our terrible neighbour kept us shut up three days in our retreat—three long days of anguish and alarm—during which time I suffered no one to break the rule I had established; the interior service of the grotto was the only consideration that could induce me to break it, and even then I allowed no one to go beyond the reservoir of the fountain.

The monster had given us no signs of his presence, and we would have supposed him departed, either by traversing the marsh, or by some unknown passage in the rock, if the agitation which reigned among our aquatic animals had not assured us of his presence. Every evening the whole colony of ducks and geese would direct their course to the bay, making a terrible noise, and sail away for an island, where they found a safe asylum.

My embarrassment daily increased; and the immovability of the enemy rendered our position very painful. I was afraid that a direct attack might cost us the lives of one or more of our little family. Our dogs could do nothing against such a foe; and to have exposed any one of our beasts of burden would have been certain destruction to it. On the other hand, our provisions daily diminished, as the season was not yet far enough advanced to have laid in any winter stores. In a word we were in a most deplorable situation, when Heaven came to our aid. The instrument that effected our deliverance was our poor

old jackass, the companion of our wanderings, and faithful servant.

The fodder that we happened to have in the grotto had diminished frightfully: it was necessary to nourish the cow, as she contributed in great part to our subsistence, and some must be taken from the other animals. In this dilemma I resolved to set them at liberty, and let them provide for their own nourishment.

I thought that if we could get them on the other side of the river they would find a plentiful supply of food, and be in safety as long as the boa remained in the rushes. I was afraid to cross the bridge lest I should arouse the monster and I decided to ford at the spot where our first crossing was made. My plan was to attach the animals together. Fritz, mounted on his onager, would direct the front of the procession, while I would take care that the march was effected in good order.

I then loaded all our arms; my sons were placed as videttes in the dove-cot, with orders to observe the movements of the enemy, while Fritz and I arranged our beasts as aforesaid. But a little misunderstanding put an end to all my plans. My wife, who had charge of the door, did not wait for the signal, and opened it before the animals were attached together. The ass, who had grown very lively, considering his age, by his three days' rest and good feed, no sooner saw a ray of light than he shot out of the door like an arrow, and was away in the open plain before we could stop him. It was a comical sight to see him kicking his heels in the air; and Fritz would have mounted his onager, and rode out after him, but I restrained him, and contented myself by trying every manner of

persuasion to induce the poor animal to come back. We called him by his name; we made use of our cow-horn; but all was useless—the unruly fellow exulted in his liberty, and, as if urged on by some fatality, he advanced direct to the marsh. But what horror froze our veins when, suddenly, we saw the horrid serpent emerging from the rushes. He elevated his head above ten feet from the ground, darted out his forked tongue, and crawled swiftly on toward the ass. The poor fellow soon saw his danger, and began to run, braying with all his might; but neither his cries nor his legs could save him from his terrible enemy, and in a moment he was seized, enveloped, and crushed in the monstrous rings that the serpent threw around him.

My wife and sons uttered a cry of terror, and we fled in haste to the grotto, from whence we could view the horrible combat between the boa and the ass. My children wanted to fire, and deliver, said they, the poor jackass; but I forbade them to do it.

“What can you do,” said I, “with firearms? The boa is too much occupied with his prey to abandon it, and, besides, if you wound him, perhaps we may become the victims of his fury.” The loss of our ass was great, it was true, but I hoped that it would save us from a greater. “Let us remain here, and the enemy will fall an easy prey to us; only wait until he has swallowed the victim he is now strangling.”

“But,” said Jack, “we shall have to wait a long time; for it will be a great while before the snake can tear in pieces and swallow our poor ass.”

“No; the serpent never tears his prey in pieces, and the

teeth with which he is armed serve but to seize it; and when he has prepared it, he makes but one mouthful of it."

"What!" asked Francis, in a tone stifled with terror; "a single mouthful! Is it venomous?"

"No," replied I; "the boa is not venomous, but it is not the less terrible: he is endowed with extraordinary strength, and when he has become master of an animal, he crushes it, and, mixing the bones and flesh together, buries the whole in his body."

"Impossible!" answered Jack; "the boa can never break the bones of our ass; and as for swallowing him whole—why, the ass is larger than the serpent."

"Impossible!" interrupted Fritz. "Look, the monster is already at his work; do you not see how he is torturing our poor animal?—look how he fashions it to the dimensions of his throat!"

In fact, the boa proceeded with horrible avidity to his repast. My wife would not behold the mournful spectacle, and she retired to the interior of the grotto, taking little Francis with her. I was glad of this, as the sight became so horrible I could scarcely bear it myself. The ass was dead; we had heard his last bray half stifled by the pressure of the boa, and we could now distinctly hear the cracking of his bones. The monster, to give himself more power, had wound his tail about a piece of rock, which gave it the force of a lever, and we saw him kneading like dough the deformed mass of flesh, among which we could distinguish nothing but the head, dripping with blood and covered with wounds. When the monster judged his preparation sufficient, he commenced to swallow the prey

he had secured. He placed before him the mass of flesh, and extending his immense length along the ground, by a sudden effort distended his body frightfully; then, squirting a stream of saliva over the carcass, he began. Seizing the ass by the hind feet, by little and little we saw the whole body buried in the insatiate maw of the monster. Every few moments he would eject a flood of saliva over his prey, as if to render the operation of swallowing it more easy. We observed that as he advanced the animal lost his strength; and when all had been swallowed he remained perfectly torpid and insensible.

The operation had been long: at seven o'clock it had commenced, and at noon had just finished.

I saw that the time had now arrived, and I exclaimed, "Now, my children, now the serpent is in our power!"

I then set out from the grotto, carrying my loaded gun in my hand; Fritz followed close by my side; Jack came next, but the more timid Ernest lingered behind. I thought it best to pay no attention to him until all was over. Francis and his mother remained at home.

On approaching the reptile, I found that my suppositions were right, and that it was the giant boa of the naturalists. The serpent raised his head, and darting on me a look of powerless anger, again let it fall.

Fritz and I fired together, and both our shots entered the skull of the animal; but they did not produce death, and the eyes of the serpent sparkled with rage. We advanced nearer, and, firing our pistols directly through the eye, we saw his rings contract, a slight quiver ran through his body, and he lay dead upon the sand before us, stretched out like the mast of a ship.

We set up a shout of victory, and we huzzaed so long and loud, that Ernest, Francis, and my wife came running down toward us, trembling with fright, for fear a band of howling savages had landed on the coast.

"Let us rejoice," said I, "after such a victory. Once more we owe our lives to the providence of God."

CHAPTER VIII

BEARS! BEARS!

ONE day, while on an exploring expedition, we heard a cry of distress; it was the voice of Ernest, followed by two terrible howls, mingled with the barking of the dog. A moment after, Ernest reappeared; he was running at full speed, his face deadly pale, and he cried out in a voice stifled with fear:

“Bears! bears! they are following me”; and the poor boy fell into my arms more dead than alive. I had not time to reassure him, and I felt myself seized with a sudden shiver, as an enormous bear appeared, immediately followed by a second.

“Courage, children,” was all I could say. I seized my gun, and prepared to receive the enemy. Fritz did the same; and, with a courage and coolness far above his years, he took his place by my side. Jack also took his gun, but remained in the rear; while Ernest, who had no arms—for in his fright he had let his gun fall—took to his heels and ran away.

But our dogs were already at the attack, and they had commenced to measure themselves with their terrible adversaries. We fired together; and, although our shots did not bring down the enemy, they nevertheless told well: one of the bears had a jaw broken, the other a

shoulder fractured. But the combat was not yet finished: they were only partially disabled. Our faithful servants did prodigies of valour; they fought most desperately, rolling in the dust with their enemies, while their blood poured in streams on the sand. We would have fired again, but we were afraid that we should kill the dogs, it being impossible, during the changing contest, to take any aim. We resolved to advance nearer, and, at about four paces from the bears, we discharged our pistols direct at their heads. The huge animals gave a groan that caused us to shudder, and then fell back motionless on the sand.

"Oh," cried I, "we are saved; thank God that once more he has preserved us!"

We remained some time dumb with astonishment and terror before our two horrible adversaries. Our dogs, covered with bleeding wounds, were still tearing the bears as if they were alive; and, fearing a feint, I again discharged my pistols at the heads of the two beasts. Jack was the first to sing out victory, and he brought back poor Ernest, who yet trembled all over. I asked him how he had happened to discover these terrible enemies. He answered, with tears in his eyes, that he had run on before us in order to frighten Jack, by imitating the growling of bears. "I thought I should perish with fear," said he, "when I found my imitation transformed into a reality, and so agitated was I that I cannot tell how I ever got back."

I then reprimanded him severely for his conduct, and tried to impress on his memory that all such attempts to frighten people were generally attended with evil

consequences, and the safer plan was never to indulge in them.

It was too late to meddle with the animals, and we took the precaution, before leaving, to draw the two carcasses into a cave, and cover them with thorn-bushes, to keep off all carnivorous beasts and birds of prey; we also buried in the sand two ostrich-eggs which we had taken from a nest, as their weight retarded our march greatly, and we could leave them here until the morrow.

The sun was set when we rejoined my dear companion and our little Francis, who received us with demonstrations of the most lively joy. A good fire and a well-cooked supper refreshed our weary bodies, and my little heroes commenced a long narration of the exploits of the day, Master Jack making up for the small share he had had in our victory by boasting and swaggering enough for all. My wife was so frightened at the recital of our danger that she could not restrain her tears; and, although I assured her that the flesh of the bears would make as good provision as some peccaries we had shot shortly before, she begged me not to return into the desert.

We devoted a whole day to the preparation of the bears' flesh. After having skinned them with the utmost care and precaution, I cut off the hams, and then divided the rest of the meat into long strips, about an inch in thickness, and we exposed the whole to a good current of smoke, as the ancient buccaneers used to do. The grease was collected in bamboo canes, and carefully preserved; for, besides its use in the kitchen, my wife said it was excellent on bread in lieu of butter. We had about a hundred pounds of fat, together with that which the

peccaries had afforded us a few days before; we abandoned the carcasses to our dogs, and they, aided by the birds of prey, soon picked the bones so clean, that there remained nothing but two perfectly white, dry skeletons, which we carried home with us for our museum. As for the skins, they were carefully washed with salt water, and rubbed with sand and ashes; and although our talents in the art of currying were poor enough, we rendered the skins sufficiently soft for all purposes, without having recourse to the Greenlanders' process, who, it is said, chew them in order to render them soft.

Our labours had been too peaceful for the restless, turbulent character of my boys. I could see that they were tired and fretful, and I thought that the best plan would be to diversify our work with some amusement. I proposed to them to make an excursion alone in the desert; my proposition, as one may suppose, was joyfully received, and the perspective of an unchecked course rallied the flagging spirits of my little companions. Ernest refused to accompany them, preferring to remain at home with us. On the other hand, Francis was so eager to accompany his brothers, that I at last permitted him to go.

Fritz, Jack, and Francis were soon in the saddle, and, after having gaily saluted us, galloped off through a defile, which led into the savanna. It was not without a painful sentiment that I saw them set off alone, abandoned to their own resources; but I felt that it was necessary to familiarise the children to provide for themselves, as some accident might deprive them of their father and mother, and thus they might be prepared to meet the loss. I rested my hopes in the prudence and intelligence of Fritz; I was sure that

he would watch over his brothers; and the remembrance of the coolness he had so often evinced reassured me. I turned to God, and prayed to him, in humble assurance that the Hand which had brought the sons of Jacob back to their father, would also bring mine back to me.

CHAPTER IX

DISPATCHES FROM THE INTERIOR—THE TEA-PLANT

A FEW mornings later, Ernest rose before me, and paid a visit to the dove-cot; I said nothing; and after breakfast I saw him coming in, holding in his hand a piece of paper, folded and sealed like a government letter, which he presented to me on bended knees, saying, as he did so, "Noble and gracious lord of these lands, I beg you to excuse the postmaster of Felsenheim for the delay that the dispatches from Sydney and New Holland have experienced; the packet was retarded, and did not arrive till very late last evening."

His mother and I burst into a laugh at this ridiculous speech.

"Well," replied I, continuing the jest, "what are our subjects in Sydney and New Holland engaged in? Will the secretary open and read the dispatches?"

At these words, Ernest broke the seal of the paper, and, elevating his voice, commenced:

"The Governor-General of New Holland, to the Governor of Felsenheim, Falcon's Nest, Waldegg, the Field of the Sugar-Canes, and the surrounding country.

"GREETING,

"Noble and faithful ally! We learn with displeasure that three men, whom we suppose to be part of your colony, are making inroads into our savannas, and doing

much damage to the animals of the province; we have also learned that frightful hyenas have broken through the limits of our quarter, and killed many of the domestic animals of our colonists. We therefore beg you, on one part, to call back your starving huntsmen; on the other, to provide measures to purge the country of the hyenas and other ferocious beasts that infest it. Especially I pray God, my Lord Governor, that he will keep you under his holy protection.

“Done under our hand and seal at Sydney Cove, Port Jackson, the twelfth day of the eighth month of the thirty-fourth year of the colony.

“PHILIP PHILLIPSON, Governor.”

Ernest stopped in laughter at the effect the letter produced on us. I felt that there was some mystery, and I was anxious to get at the bottom of it. Ernest enjoyed my evident embarrassment, and, jumping up and down as children do, he let fall a new paper from his pocket. I caught it up, and was going to read it, when he laid his hand on my arm, saying:

“Those also are dispatches; they came from Waldegg, and, although less pompous than General Phillipson’s, perhaps they are more truthful. Listen, then, to a letter from Waldegg——”

“Oh, do explain to us,” said I, “this prolonged enigma. Did your brothers leave a letter before they went? Is the news of the hyena true? Did they act so rashly as to attack the animal?”

“Here is a letter from Fritz,” replied Ernest; “my pigeon brought it to me last night.”

"Thanks, many thanks, my dear child, for your idea," said his mother; "but this hyena! oh, quick, read me the letter."

He opened the paper and read the following words:

"DEAR PARENTS, and you, my good ERNEST,—I will inform you of our arrival at Waldegg; we there found a hyena, who had devoured several of our sheep. Francis alone has all the honour of having killed the monster, and he deserves much praise for his intrepidity: we have passed the whole day in preparing the skin, which is very fine, and will be very useful. The pemmican is the most detestable stuff I ever tasted. Adieu! we embrace you tenderly in spirit.

"FRITZ."

"A true hunter's letter," cried I. "But this hyena, how could it have found its way into our domains? Has the palisade been overturned?"

"My poor children!" said my wife, with tears in her eyes; "may God watch over them, and return them safely to my arms!"

"We shall probably receive another letter this evening," said Ernest, "and that will give us further details of the expedition."

After dinner a new pigeon was seen to enter the dove-cot. Ernest, who had not remained quiet one moment during the day, immediately shut the door of the dove-cot, removed from the wing of the aerial messenger the dispatch he had brought, and delivered it to us; it read as follows:

"The night has been fine—the weather beautiful—

excursion in cajak on lake—capture of some black swans—several new animals—apparition and sudden flight of an aquatic beast, entirely unknown to us—to-morrow at Prospect Hill.

“Be of good cheer;

“Your sons,

“FRITZ, JACK, and FRANCIS.”

“It is almost a telegraphic dispatch,” said I, laughing; “it could not be more concise. Our huntsmen would rather fire a gun than write a sentence; nevertheless, their letter tranquillises me; but I really hope that the hyena which they killed is the only one in the country.”

My wife was more contented, and we retired to rest, praying that God would continue to watch over and protect our absent ones.

Our huntsmen returned safely, and had acquired a most ferocious appetite after all their exertions; and although their repast was frugal, yet they did it ample justice. The cold meat of the peccary, guavas, cinnamon apples, and potatoes cooked in the ashes, were all devoured with thankfulness. The pemmican alone was disdained, and declared unworthy of its reputation.

The hope, although feeble, which we entertained, that one day some ship would visit our coast, was never forgotten; and we collected all that the country afforded as precious or useful, so that in case a vessel should arrive we could exchange with them, or, if an occasion offered to quit the island, we should have something wherewith to pay our passage. For that purpose we gathered, every year, a quantity of cotton, dried different sorts of fruits,



Crushed in the monstrous rings that the Serpent threw
around him

preserved others in sugar, such as cinnamon, ginger, vanilla, etc. One day Fritz discovered a plant we had not hitherto noticed. It had numerous small white flowers, and very much resembled the myrtle. He brought home specimens, which I recognised as a sort of Chinese tea-plant. One can suppose, then, that the discovery of tea was of the highest importance; and, as I examined the shrub, I related all I knew concerning the tea-plant. "This shrub, which grows in China and Japan, is cultivated with the greatest care, especially that destined for the consumption of the imperial family; the fields in which it grows are divided into compartments, like a vast garden, intersected by canals of running water, and straight walks which are carefully swept every day. Those who gather the imperial tea, which is composed of the first and smallest leaves, are obliged to cover their hands with gloves; they must abstain from eating fish and certain meats, and must bathe twice a day, so that nothing impure can mingle with the precious harvest, over which is placed a guard of soldiers who watch with the strictest scrutiny. In China, and generally in India, the tea is prepared by the hands of women. About the month of May, the mothers of families, the children, and the female slaves, leave their homes and visit the tea-plants every hour of the day, so that they may gather the leaves before they are fully developed. At evening the leaves they have gathered are taken home and spread on plates of polished iron, heated to different degrees of temperature; they are stirred continually with the hand until they begin to curl, and are then spread on rush mats, fanned until cool, and then again submitted to the heated plates. These operations are

repeated four times, the women rolling the tea-leaves until they take the form which we see them under. When the tea is perfectly dry, it is enclosed in porcelain vases hermetically sealed, but more commonly in boxes lined with lead. The consumption of tea increases considerably every year; and in Europe, where it is almost universally used, many millions of pounds are annually consumed. The Dutch, English, all the people of the North, use considerable quantities; and in France, where, forty years ago, tea was used but as a medicine, it is now an article of general consumption. The Americans have always had a sort of passion for tea, and the trade in this article was one of the indirect causes of their Revolution."

These details vividly interested us, and it was determined that the following year we should have a regular gathering of the tea, and preserve it for our use.

CHAPTER X

AFTER TEN YEARS

It is with dismay that I cast my eyes over the number of pages I have filled, and which every day grow more numerous.

Although I should like to mention the minutest details of our domestic life, yet I have some consideration for my readers, who would throw down the book in disgust and grow weary of the monotony of the design; therefore, I must content myself with merely describing our principal occupations.

Ten years have passed away since we were thrown on this coast, each year resembling the preceding one in the similarity of its works: we had our fields to sow, our harvests to gather, and our domestic cares to attend to. These formed the almost unbroken circle of our existence. My only desire is, that the end I intended in writing this journal may be fulfilled, and that my readers, if I ever have any, may learn how, with God's blessing, to provide for their necessities when thrown, as we have been, entirely on their own resources.

God had willed that the land of our exile should be in one of the most favoured quarters of the globe: and

every day we offered up our thanks to him for his goodness and beneficent kindness toward us.

The ten years we had passed were but years of conquest and establishment. We had constructed three habitations, built a solid wall across the defile, which would secure us against invasion from the wild beasts which infested the savanna. The part of the country in which we dwelt was defended by high mountains on one side, and the ocean on the other; we had traversed the whole extent, and rested in perfect surety that no enemy lurked within it. Our principal habitations were beautiful, commodious, and especially very healthy. Felsenheim was a safe retreat for us during the storms of winter, while Falcon's Nest was our summer residence and country villa; Waldegg, and Prospect Hill, were like the quiet farm-houses that the traveller finds in the mountains of our own dear Switzerland. My good Elizabeth made the comparison, and pointing to the mountains in the distance, she would say, "Do you see the Alps, and their white summits? Those tall trees that seem to touch the skies are the firs of the Black Forest; and there, behind the farm-house, extends the Lake of Constance, with its clear calm surface."

The remembrance of our native land is never obliterated from the mind; the love of one's birthplace is a love that survives youth, and exists in all its ardour in the bosom of the old man.

Of all our resources, the bees had prospered most; experience had taught me how to manage them, and the only trouble that I had was to provide new hives each year for the increasing swarms: and, in truth, so great was

the number of our hives that they attracted a considerable flock of those birds called *merops*, or bee-eaters, who are extremely fond of these insects.

The family of Turk and Flora had each year been increased by a certain number of young dogs, which, notwithstanding the brilliant qualities they displayed, we were obliged to throw into the water, as to have allowed them to live would have been our own destruction. To this rule there was but one exception, and on the earnest entreaty of Jack, I permitted the canine family to retain one new member, which we called *Coco*, "because," said Jack, "the vowel *o* is the most sonorous, and will sound so fine in the forests."

The female buffalo and the cow had each year produced us a scion from their race; but we had only raised one heifer and a second bull. We had called the cow *Blanche*, on account of her pale yellow colour, and the bull *Thunder*, as his voice was so powerful. We also possessed two more asses, which we named *Arrow* and *Alert* on account of the swiftness of their course.

Our pigs were as wild as ever. The old sow had been dead many years; but she had bequeathed to her posterity a spirit of savage independence that all our exertions could not modify. Our other beasts had multiplied in the same proportion, so that we could often kill one without any fear of impoverishing ourselves. Such was the state of the colony ten years after our arrival on the coast: our resources had multiplied as our industry increased; abundance reigned around us; we were as familiar with our part of the island as a farmer with his farm. It was a perfect paradise. It would have been an Eden, but there

was one great void—oh! if we could but have looked upon men, our brothers!

For ten years had we watched both by sea and land for some traces of man's existence, but all in vain; and yet we hoped on, hoped ever, and still gathered up all our treasures of cotton, and spices, and ostrich-plumes, etc., in earnest hope that some day we might again see the blessed face of man.

My sons were no longer children. Fritz had become a strong and vigorous man; although not tall, yet his limbs had been developed by exercise: he was twenty-four years of age.

Ernest was twenty-three, and although of a good constitution, he was not so strong as his brother; his reflective mind had ripened; reason now aided his studious disposition; he had conquered his habit of idleness, and was, in a word, a well-informed young man, of a sound judgment, and unquestionably the light of the family.

Jack had but little changed: he was as headlong at twenty as at ten; but he excelled in corporeal exercises.

Francis was eighteen: he was stout and tall; his character, without any predominant trait, was estimable. He was reflective, without being as deep as Ernest; agile and skilful, but without surpassing Jack or Fritz. In general my sons were good and honest men, with sound principles, and a deep sense of religion.

My dear Elizabeth had not grown very old. As for me, my hair had become whitened by age, or, to speak more justly, there were but a few scattering locks left; the heat of the climate and excessive fatigue had taken them all away, although I still felt young and vigorous.

There was one bitter, sad thought that always haunted my mind, and turning my eyes to heaven, I would often say, "My God, who didst save us from shipwreck, and has surrounded us with so many blessings, still watch over us, I pray thee, and do not let those perish in solitude whom thy hand has saved."

CHAPTER XI

FRITZ'S ADVENTURES—OUR ADOPTED SISTER AND HER STORY

ONE can easily imagine that my young family was not so easy to govern now as it was during the first few years of our stay.

My children would often absent themselves whole days, hunting in the forest, or clambering over the rocks; but when they retired at evening, fatigued and wearied, if I had intended to reproach them for their wandering life, they would have so much to tell me concerning the rare and curious things that they had seen, that I never had resolution enough to scold them.

Fritz one day went off in this manner, and caused us the greatest disquietude. He had taken with him some provisions, and—as if the land was not large enough for him—also his cajack, and gone out to sea. He had set out before daylight, and night was approaching, but nothing could be seen of him. My wife was in a state of the greatest suspense; and, to alleviate her distress, I launched the canoe, and we set out for Shark Island. There, from the top of the flag-staff, we displayed our flag and fired an alarm-cannon. A few moments after, we saw a black spot in the far distance, and, by the aid of a spy-glass, we discovered our beloved Fritz. He advanced

slowly toward us, beating the sea with his oars, as if his canoe was charged with a double load.

"Fire!" cried Ernest, in his capacity as commander of the fort, "fire!" and Jack touched off the cannon. We descended to the shore, and were soon in the arms of our adventurer Fritz. His boat was loaded with different things, and some kind of marine animal was towing behind.

"It appears," said I, "my dear Fritz, that your day has not been an unprofitable one; and blessed be God that he has returned you safe and sound."

"Yes," replied Fritz, "blessed be God; for, besides the booty which you see, I think I have made a discovery which is worth more to us than all the treasures of the earth."

These words, half-whispered in my ear, excited my curiosity: but I thought I would say nothing until the voyager had taken breath.

"I advanced boldly through the passage," said Fritz, "and came out into a magnificent bay, whose low and fertile shores stretched out into a savanna of vast extent; trees and shrubs everywhere varied the beauty of the scene: on the right, a vast mass of rocks rose up, being a prolongation of those that I had passed through; on the left rolled a calm and limpid river; and beyond this was a thick swamp, which terminated in a dense forest of cedars. While I was coasting along the shores of the bay, I perceived at the bottom of the transparent waters beds of shells resembling large oysters. 'Here,' said I to myself, 'is something that is much better than our little oysters at Felsenheim; if they taste good, I will take some home with me.' I detached some with my hook and threw them on the sand, without getting out of my canoe, and

set to work to obtain more. When I returned with a new load, I found that the oysters I had first deposited on the sand were opened, and the sun had already begun to corrupt them. I took up one or two; but instead of finding the nice fat oyster I expected, I found nothing but a hard, gritty meat. In trying to detach this from the shell, I felt some little round, hard stones, like peas, under my knife; I took them out, and found them so brilliant, that I filled a little box with them which I happened to have with me. Do you think, my father," added Fritz, "that they are really pearls?"

"See, see!" said the boys, catching hold of the box. "How beautiful, how brilliant, how regular!"

I took the box in my hand. "They are really pearls," cried I, "oriental pearls of the greatest beauty. You have, in truth, discovered a treasure, my son, which one day will be, I hope, of immense value to us."

When Fritz and I were alone he said: "A very singular circumstance happened on my voyage. In examining an albatross which I had knocked down, judge my surprise when I saw a piece of linen around one of its feet. I untied it, and read the following words written upon it in good English: '*Save the poor shipwrecked sailor on the smoking rock.*' I cannot express to you, my father, what I felt on seeing this linen. I read and re-read the line to assure myself that it was not an optical illusion. I cried aloud to the Almighty, that it might but be true. From this moment my only thought shall be to search the coast in quest of the smoking rock, to save the sufferer—my brother—my friend. Oh! once more perhaps I may see a human being. An idea occurred to me to attach the linen again to the

foot of the albatross, and to write upon a second piece, which I fastened to the other foot, the following sentence in English: '*Have confidence in God: succour is near.*' If the bird returns to the place from whence it came, thought I, the person can read the answer: at all events there will be no harm in trying this experiment. The albatross had been stunned, and I poured some hydromel down its throat to reanimate it. I attached my note to its foot, and let it go, earnestly praying that its mission might be successful. The bird flew up, hesitated for a moment, and then darted rapidly away in an easterly direction, which decided me to take that route in my search. And now, my father," continued Fritz with emotion, "what do you think of this event? If we could find a new friend, a new brother—for certainly we will go in search of the stranger, oh yes, we will go—what joy! what happiness! But, alas! what despair if we should not succeed! The reason I did not communicate this to my brothers and my mother was to spare them the agonies of a hope which, after all, might never be realised."

My son pronounced these last words with sadness.

"You have acted very prudently," said I, "and I am glad that you have sufficient strength of mind to resist the temptation of immediately flying to the assistance of the sufferer. Only consider for a moment into what terrible anxiety we should all have been thrown if you had not returned as you did. As for the result of any expedition of discovery, I cannot say much; the albatross is a traveller-bird, and it flies extremely swiftly: the linen might have been put on its foot thousands of miles from here; and even if near, perhaps years ago, and now succour may be too

late. But continue to keep the secret, and I will try to imagine whether some way cannot be devised to save the poor unfortunate, if in our vicinity."

These cold, positive words were dictated by a desire to appease the ardent imagination of the young man, and prevent him from rashly undertaking any precipitate enterprise. I knew that pirates often made a smoke behind some rock to deceive, and I was afraid that this might be a case of the kind. We now returned to the rest of the family, who were occupied in looking at the pearls.

"We have a large fortune there," said Ernest to his brothers, and they all importuned me to start immediately on an expedition to the newly discovered fishery. We spent an entire day in preparing our cargo. Francis and his mother were left to guard the shore, and we gaily put off and in due course arrived at the rocky bank where Fritz had found the pearl-oysters. The day was too far advanced to commence our pearl-fishing, and we appeased our hungry stomachs with ham, fried potatoes, and some cassava cakes, drew the sail over our heads, and wrapping ourselves in our bear-skins, soon sank to rest. We rose at daylight and with the aid of rakes, hooks, nets and poles soon brought in a large quantity of the precious oysters: we heaped them all up in a pile on the shore, so that the heat of the sun would cause them to open. At night we lighted our watch-fires, retired to the canoe, and were soon asleep. Early in the morning we set sail to return to Felsenheim.

Fritz set off before us, as if to serve as pilot; but when he had conducted us through the vault, and over the shoals, he rowed up to our canoe, and, handing me a letter, shot

off again like an arrow. I opened the paper quickly, and imagine my surprise when I found that, instead of having forgotten the albatross and the smoking rock, he informed me in the letter that he was going in search of the unfortunate being! I had a thousand objections to make to this romantic project; but Fritz rowed so fast, I could barely halloo through the speaking-trumpet—"Return soon, and be prudent," before he was out of sight. We gave to the cape where he left us, the name of the "Adieu Cape." We prayed that our adventurer might return safe, and I begged my rowers to redouble their endeavours, so that we could arrive early at Felsenheim, for I suspected that my good Elizabeth would be worried at our long absence of three days.

We finally arrived without accident, and the different treasures we had brought were joyfully received, and became the objects of a thousand questions, but they could not drive away the thoughts of Fritz; and my wife said she would willingly give up all our cargo of pearls, etc., if she could only see her beloved son.

I had not yet spoken to my wife concerning the reason of Fritz's absence, as I did not wish to give rise to hopes which were so unlikely to be realised; but now I thought that it was my duty to do so. I therefore confided to her the secret of the albatross; and the dear woman, to my surprise, was calm and resigned, she only prayed with me that he might be successful. Five days passed and still Fritz had not returned, and his mother was so anxious and worried that I proposed to launch the pinnace and make a new excursion to the Bay of Pearls. Early the next day we started, and were nearly capsized by running

against a black mass which proved to be a whale. I instantly pointed the cannons of the pinnace at him, and a discharge of artillery stunned him. Just then Ernest suddenly uttered a loud scream. "A man! a savage!" said he, and he pointed out to us in the distance a sort of canoe dancing over the waves. The person who conducted it seemed to have perceived us, for he advanced and then disappeared behind a projecting point, as if to communicate his discovery to his companions. I leave our sensations to the imagination of the reader. I had not the slightest doubt that we had fallen in with a band of savages, and we began to fortify our boat against their arrows, by making a bulwark of the stalks of maize and corn we had brought with us. We loaded our cannons, guns, and pistols, and, everything arranged, we stood ready behind our rampart, resolved to defend it as long as we were able. We dared not advance, for there was the savage; and Ernest, growing tired of the pantomime, observed that, if we used the speaking-trumpet, possibly our savage might understand some words of the half-dozen languages we were familiar with.

The advice appeared good. I took up the speaking-trumpet and bellowed out with all my force, some words of Malay; but still the canoe remained immovable, as if its master had not comprehended us.

"Instead of Malay," said Jack, "suppose we try English." So saying, he caught up the trumpet, and in his clear, loud tone pronounced some common-sailor-phrases, well known to all who have ever been on board ship. The device succeeded, and we saw the savage advancing toward us, holding a green branch in his hand. Nearer and nearer

he came, and at last we recognised in the painted savage our own dear Fritz.

"Fritz! 'tis Fritz, 'tis Fritz; there is his cajack and the walrus's head in front; it is Fritz disguised like a savage," exclaimed Jack.

We soon received our intrepid adventurer; he was naked to the waist, and painted white and black, just like a Caribbee Indian. We embraced him tenderly, and tears of joy streamed down his mother's cheeks as she gazed on her first-born again.

When we had freed Fritz from our oft-repeated embraces, we commenced asking him all manner of questions; and, speaking all together, the poor fellow was so confused he did not know what to do. I demanded an answer on two points only—whether his excursion had been satisfactory, and why he had played this farce of dressing himself like a savage, and causing us such anxiety.

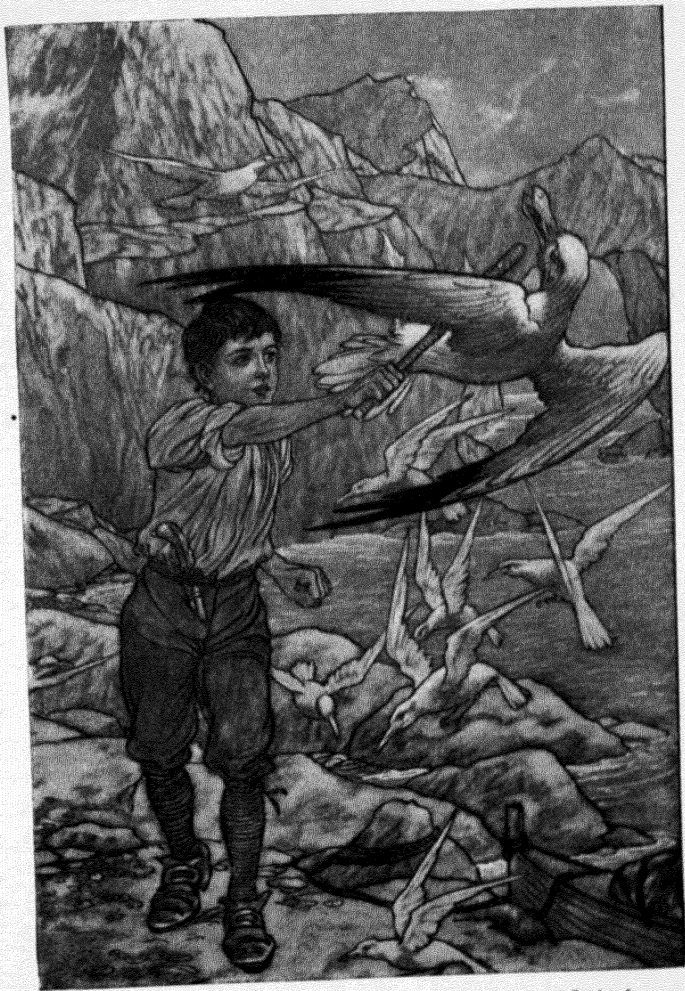
"As to the purpose of my excursion," said he, with a joy he could scarcely conceal, "I have attained it"; and the young man, as he said these words, pressed my hand, which he held in his. "As for my costume, I mistook you for a tribe of Malays, or some other nation, and, in the fear that you were enemies, I endeavoured to disguise myself by painting the upper part of my body with powder, soaked in water. The two reports of the cannon that I heard convinced me more and more that you were enemies; the Malay words that you addressed to me confirmed me, and I should still have been endeavouring to deceive you, and you would still have been in fear of me, if Jack had not bawled out those sailor-phrases in his unmistakable voice."

We all began to laugh over the farce we had been enacting; and Fritz, drawing me aside, said, in an eager joyous tone, "I have succeeded, papa: the hand of God conducted me to the dwelling - place of the poor shipwrecked girl—for it was a woman that had written those lines. Three years has she lived on that smoking rock, all alone! destitute of everything! Can you believe it, but the poor girl has conjured me not to betray her sex, except to you and my mother, for she is afraid of my brothers, although I assured her that none would welcome her more gladly. I have brought her with me: she is near by, on a little island just beyond the Bay of Pearls; come and see her. Oh! do not say anything to my brothers. I want to enjoy their surprise when they find I have brought them back a sister, for I am sure she will allow them to call her so."

It was such a long time since we had seen a man—ten years!—society had become so strange a thing to us, that we remained stupefied; our hearts felt for the young stranger, but our tongues remained dumb.

The silence was broken by Fritz, who, taking the young sailor by the hand, advanced toward us. "My father, my mother, and you, my brothers," said he, in a voice broken by emotion, "behold a friend—a brother—that I present you, a new companion in misfortune—Sir Edward Montrose, who, like ourselves, has been shipwrecked on the coast."

"He is welcome among us," was the general cry; and, approaching the young sailor, whom I easily recognised as being a woman, and taking her by the hand I comforted and encouraged her, assuring the seeming man, that among



I knocked down a very large bird, an Albatross, I think

us he would always find food and sustenance; my wife and myself would be his parents, and my sons his brothers. My wife, moved by compassion, opened her arms, and the young sailor rushed into them, bursting into a flood of tears, as he thanked us for our kindness. The most lively joy now reigned in our little circle, and his brothers poured question after question upon Fritz, who joyfully replied, "I will tell you all afterward; let us attend now to our new brother." Supper was served, and my wife brought out a bottle of her spiced hydromel to add to the feast. Everybody spoke at once, and my sons addressed their new companion with such vivacity as to embarrass the timid stranger: my wife saw his distress, and, as it was late, she gave the signal for retreat, taking the sailor with her on the pinnace, where she said she intended to provide a bed for him that would amply console him for the uncomfortable nights he had hitherto passed. We then separated, my wife and the stranger retiring to the boat, while my sons and I stopped to light and arrange our watch-fires.

The new-comer naturally became the subject of conversation.

"I should like to know," said Francis, addressing himself to Fritz, "what put it into your head to go to the succour of our new brother. How did you know there was a man shipwrecked on the coast?"

Fritz smiled without answering.

"Are you endowed with second sight, after the manner of the Scotch?" said Ernest.

"No," added Jack; "I think Sir Edward must have written him a letter by the carrier pigeons."

"A good idea—you almost guessed right," said Fritz;

and he then recounted to his brothers the whole history of the albatross; he spoke of his thoughts and actions, but he became so excited in his narration, that he forgot himself and the secret he had to keep. A word escaped him, and he called the young sailor "Emily."

"Emily!—Emily!" repeated his brothers, who had begun to doubt the mystery, "Emily!—Fritz has deceived us, and Sir Edward is a girl!—our adopted brother turned into a sister!"

I leave to the imagination to picture the embarrassment of Fritz when he discovered his imprudence. In vain he endeavoured to bring back his words: it would not do, and the girl could no longer hide her sex by the sailor's hat and pantaloons she wore.

This discovery changed the conversation. Fritz explained to his brothers the motives which had induced Emily to conceal her sex, for she was afraid to trust herself among four young men, whose character and manners she was utterly unacquainted with; but the boys declared that nothing pleased them better than to have a new sister, and that this change would not lower Emily at all in their esteem.

The next morning, when all the family were assembled for breakfast, the enterprise and courage of Fritz became the subject of conversation; this naturally brought on the story of last night, and I was obliged to consent that Emily's history should open the day. I wanted the dear girl herself to tell it; but she was so timid, though at the same time so lively, busied in her domestic occupations, that I could do nothing with her. Fritz was therefore entreated to act as her proxy, and resume his recital.

"As soon as I was able to understand my new sister," said he, "I asked her by what course of events she had been thrown on the desert coast where I now found her.

"She told me that she was born in India, of English parents, and that her father, after having served as major in a British regiment, obtained the command of an important English colony. The commandant, Montrose, for that was the name of Emily's father—had the misfortune to lose his wife only three years after his marriage; and, profoundly afflicted by this loss, all his affections centred in their only child. He took charge of her education, and devoted all the time he could spare from his official duties, in developing the precious qualities which nature had endowed his dear daughter with. Not content with providing her with every means for mental improvement, he endeavoured to make her a strong, healthy woman, capable of facing and resisting danger. Such was Emily's education up to the age of sixteen; she managed a fowling-piece as well as a needle, and rode as gracefully and firmly as the best cavalry officer, and shone resplendent in her father's brilliant saloons.

"Major Montrose, having been appointed colonel, was ordered to return with part of his regiment to England. This circumstance forced him to separate himself from his daughter, as naval discipline did not allow women on board a line-of-battle ship in time of war. It was arranged, however, that she should sail the same day that he did, in another ship, the captain of which was an old friend of her father's, and who would take every care of his daughter. The old soldier wept bitterly at parting with his dear child; he foresaw all the dangers of the long

and tedious voyage, and it was not without a great deal of self-command that he resolved to entrust his beloved Emily to the treacherous waves of the ocean. The voyage at its commencement was prosperous and agreeable, but before many days a terrible tempest arose. The ship was thrown off her course, and a furious wind drove her down upon our rocky coast; two shallops were launched upon the angry waves, and a chance of safety offered to the shipwrecked. Emily found a place in the smallest—the captain was in the other. The storm continuing, the boats were soon separated, and the one that contained Emily was broken in pieces, and the poor girl alone, of all the crew, was fortunate enough to escape death. The waves carried her, half fainting, to the foot of the rock where I discovered her. She crawled under the shade of a projecting rock, and, sinking on the sand, slept for four-and-twenty hours. There she passed several days, abandoned to dark despair, with no nourishment but some birds' eggs, which she found on the rocks. At the end of that time, the sun reappearing and the sea growing calm, the poor castaway thought of the crew in the large shallop; and, in the hope that they might see her, she resolved to establish signals of distress. As she wore a midshipman's uniform on board ship, by order of her father, she had a box in her pocket, containing a flint, knife, and other articles. She picked up some pieces of wood which the sea had thrown on the sand, carried them to the summit of the rock, and there kindled a fire, which she never allowed to go out. You can easily imagine how drearily passed the first days of Emily's exile; she had to contend against all the horrors of hunger and the desert. How thankful she felt for the semi-masculine education

that her father had given her: it had endowed her with courage and resolution far beyond her sex. She comprehended the whole extent of her situation, and turning to heaven, she placed her trust in God and hoped on. She built a hut, fished, hunted, tamed birds—among others a cormorant, which she taught to catch fish—in one word, she lived alone, with no earthly succour, for three long dreary years.”

Fritz stopped; his eyes fell upon the heroine of his story, who could hardly conceal her embarrassment.

“My child,” said I, “you are but another proof that God never withholds his aid from those who desire it. That which you have done for three years a poor Swiss family have done for ten, and heavenly aid has never been withheld from them.”

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

It is with a thousand different sensations that I write the word *conclusion*. It recalls to my mind all that has passed. God is good! God is merciful! is the reigning sentiment in my heart: I have so many reasons for heartfelt gratitude to a gracious Providence, that I hope the reader will pardon me for the disorder in which I finish my story.

It was toward the end of the rainy season, the wind had lost its violence, and a patch of blue sky could now and then be seen; our pigeons had quitted the dove-cot, and we ourselves ventured to open the door of the grotto, and taste the fresh air.

Our first care was for our gardens, which had suffered injury; we took account of the damage as well as we were able, and then set out for our more distant possessions. Fritz and Jack proposed to make an excursion to Shark Island, to inspect our fort and colony there. I consented, and they set off in the cajack.

My sons, on their arrival, having examined the interior of the fort, and assured themselves that nothing of importance was damaged, began to look round and see if anything appeared on the horizon, but all was blank. Wishing to see whether the cannons were in good order, they began firing away, as if they had all the powder in

the world at their command. But what was their astonishment and emotion when, a moment after, they heard distinctly three reports of a cannon in the distance! They could not be mistaken, for a faint light toward the east preceded each report. After a short consultation as to what should be done, the two brothers resolved to hasten home and recount their adventure to us. To jump into the canoe and put off was the work of an instant; the boat appeared scarcely to touch the surface, so rapidly did they impel her over the waves.

We had heard the reports of the cannons they had fired, and we could not imagine why they were hurrying back so fast. I called out, as loud as I could, "Halloo, there! what is the matter?" On they came, and, jumping on shore, fell into my arms, faintly articulating, "Oh, papa, papa, did you not hear them?"

"Hear what?" said I. "We have heard nothing but the noise your waste of powder made."

"You have not heard three other reports in the distance?"

"No."

"Why, we heard them plainly and distinctly."

"It was the echo," said Ernest.

This remark nettled Jack a little, and he replied rather sharply:

"No, Mr. Doctor, it wasn't the echo; I think I have fired cannons enough in my lifetime to know whether that was an echo or not. We distinctly heard three reports of a cannon, and we are certain that some ship is sailing in this part of the world."

There was something so decided and truthful in the young man's voice, that it was impossible to disbelieve

the news he had brought. The discovery of a ship was a weighty matter in the history of our existence, and all felt the necessity of calm deliberation in regard to an event the consequences of which might be so important.

"If there is really a ship on our coasts," said I, "who knows whether it is manned by Europeans or by Malay pirates—who knows whether we ought to rejoice, or be sorry at its presence, and that, instead of preparing for deliverance, we should make preparations for defence?"

My first resolution was to organise a system of defence, and provide for our safety. We watched alternately under the gallery of the grotto, so that we could be ready in case of surprise; but the night passed quietly away, and in the morning the rain commenced, and continued so violently during two long days that it was impossible for us to go out.

On the third day the sun reappeared. Fritz and Jack, full of impatience, resolved to return to Shark Island, and try a new signal. I consented; but, instead of the cajack, we took the canoe, and I went with them. My wife, Emily, Ernest, and Francis, remained in the grotto. On arriving at the fort we hoisted our flag, while Jack, ever impatient, loaded a cannon and fired it; but scarcely had the report died away in the distance, when we distinctly heard a louder answering report in the direction of Cape Disappointment.

Jack could not contain himself for joy. "Men, men," cried he, dancing about us; "men, papa; are you sure of it now?" And his enthusiasm communicating itself to us, we hoisted another and a larger flag on our flag-staff. Six other reports followed the first one we had heard.

Overpowered with emotion, we hastened to our boat, and were soon in the presence of the family. They had not heard the seven reports, but they had seen our two flags flying, and they were eagerly waiting for circumstantial news.

“Quick, tell us,” cried they, all at one time, “are they Europeans?—English?—is it a merchant vessel?—a corvette?”

We could not answer half these questions; we could only positively announce the presence of a ship on our coast. My children were half wild with joy; and Emily especially, giving loose rein to her lively imagination, assured me that it was certainly her father, come in search of her, and that God had mercifully brought him to this spot.

I ordered that everything in the grotto should be put in a place of safety. My three youngest sons, my wife, and Emily, set off for Falcon’s Nest with our cattle, and I embarked in the cajack with Fritz, to reconnoitre. This separation pained us exceedingly; my good Elizabeth, whom age had rendered less confident, could not restrain her tears, and she enjoined us to be particularly prudent during our expedition.

It was near midday when we set out; we coasted along without discovering anything, and the illusion of the moment began to dissipate. On more calm reflection, however, the certainty that we had heard the seven reports of the cannon kept up our courage, when suddenly, on doubling a little promontory which had hitherto concealed it from us, we beheld a fine European ship majestically reposing at anchor, with a long-boat at the side, and an English flag floating at the mast-head.

I seek in vain to find words that will express the sentiments which filled our soul. We elevated our hands and eyes toward heaven, and thus returned our thanks to God for his great beneficence. If I had permitted it, Fritz would have thrown himself into the sea, and swum off to the ship; but I was afraid that, notwithstanding the English flag, the vessel before us might be a Malay corsair, which had assumed false colours in order to deceive other vessels. We remained at a distance, not liking to venture nearer without being more certain what they were. We could see all that was passing on board the vessel. Two tents had been raised on the shore, tables were laid for dinner, quarters of meat were roasting before blazing fires, men were running to and fro, and the whole scene had the appearance of an organised encampment. Two sentinels were on the deck of the vessel, and when they perceived us they spoke to the officer on duty who stood near, and who turned his telescope toward us.

"They are Europeans," cried Fritz; "you can easily judge from the face of the officer. Malays certainly would be more dusky than that."

Fritz's remark was true; but yet I did not like to go too near. We remained in the bay, manœuvring our canoe with all the dexterity of which we were capable. We sang a Swiss mountain song, and when we had finished I cried out through my speaking-trumpet these three words, *Englishmen, good men!* But no answer was returned: our song, our cajack, and more than all our costume, I expect, marked us for savages, from the officer making signs to us to approach, and holding up knives, scissors, and glass

beads, of which the savages of the New World are generally so desirous. This mistake made us laugh; but we did not approach, as we wished to present ourselves before them in better trim. We contented ourselves with exclaiming once more, *Englishmen*, and then darted off as fast as our boat could carry us. The joy that we felt redoubled our strength, and we instinctively knew that the morrow would be a new era in our existence, and that our ties with mankind might again be renewed.

We landed near Falcon's Nest, where our dear ones were anxiously awaiting us. Our prudence was approved; Emily alone thought that we should have gone and discovered who the strangers were. My wife, on the contrary, praised us exceedingly for not presenting ourselves before people in such a machine as a miserable cajack.

"Truly," said she, laughingly, "it would give too small an idea of the importance of our establishment. We must take the best of our boats when we go, or else the captain of the ship will think we are nothing but poor shipwrecked creatures."

We passed a whole day in preparing the pinnace, and loading it with presents for the captain, as we wished him to see that those whom he had taken for savages were beings far advanced in the arts of civilisation. We set off at sunrise; the weather was magnificent, and we sailed gallantly along, Fritz preceding us as pilot.

When we could clearly distinguish the ship, a sensation of vivid joy was experienced by us all: my sons were dumb with pleasure and eagerness.

"Hoist the English flag," cried I in the voice of a Stentor; and a second after, a flag similar to the one on the ship fluttered from our masthead.

If we were filled with extraordinary emotions on seeing a European ship, the English were not less astonished to see a little boat with flowing sails coming toward them. Guns were now fired from the ship and answered from our pinnace, and joining Fritz in his cajack, we approached the English ship to welcome the captain to our shores.

The captain received us with that frankness and cordiality that always distinguish sailors; and conducted us to the cabin, where a flask of Cape wine cemented the alliance between us.

I recounted to the captain, as briefly as possible, the history of our shipwreck, and our sojourn of ten years on this coast. I spoke to him of Emily, and asked him if he had ever heard of Sir Edward Montrose. The captain not only knew him, but it was a part of his instructions to explore these latitudes, where, three years before, the ship *Dorcas*, which had on board the daughter of Commander Montrose, was supposed to be wrecked, and to try to discover whether any tidings of the vessel or crew could be ascertained. In consequence, he manifested the greatest desire to see her, and assure her that her father was alive.

The captain brought with him an English family, that the fatigues of the passage had rendered ill; consisting of Mr. Wolston, a distinguished machinist, his wife, and two daughters. My wife offered Mrs. Wolston her assistance, and promised her that her family should find every comfort and convenience at Felsenheim, if they would return with us. They gladly consented, and we set out with them, taking leave of the captain, who did not like to pass the night away from his ship.

My readers can form an idea of the astonishment which was evinced by the Wolston family on seeing all our establishments. We ostentatiously pointed out to them Felsenheim with its rocky vault, the giant-tree of Falcon's Nest, Prospect Hill, and all the marvels which were comprised in our domains. A frugal repast in the evening united both families under the gallery of the grotto, and my wife prepared, in the interior, apartments and beds to receive the new-comers.

The next morning Mr. Wolston came up to me, and tenderly stretching out his hand spoke as follows:

• "Sir," said he, "I cannot express all the admiration that I feel on regarding the wonders with which you are surrounded. The hand of God has been with you, and here you live happily, far away from the strife of the world, among the works of creation, alone with your family. I came from England to seek repose: where can I find it better than here? and I shall esteem myself the happiest of men if you will allow me to establish myself in a corner of your domains."

This proposition of Mr. Wolston filled me with joy, and I immediately assured him that I would willingly share with him the half of my patriarchal empire.

Mr. Wolston hastened to communicate to his wife the success of his application, and the morning was devoted to the joy and pleasure that this news caused. But considerations of a painful nature occupied my mind: the ship which now presented itself was the second only we had seen in ten years, and probably as long a period might elapse before another appeared, should we let Captain Littleton and his ship leave us without any

addition to his crew. These questions affected the dearest interests of our family. My wife did not wish to return to Europe; I was myself too much attached to my new life to leave it, and we were both at an age when hazards and dangers have no attraction, and ambition has resolved itself into a desire for repose. But our children were young, their life was but just commencing, and I did not think it right to deprive them of the advantages which civilisation and a contact with the world presented: and then again, Emily, since she had heard that her father was in England, did not conceal her desire to return; and although we regretted losing this amiable girl, yet it was impossible to detain her. So at last I decided to call my children together, and ascertain their sentiments. I spoke to them of civilised Europe, of the resources of every kind which society offered to its members, and I asked them if they would depart with Captain Littleton, or be content to pass the remainder of their lives upon this coast.

Jack and Ernest declared that they would rather remain. Ernest, the philosopher, had no need of the world to interrupt his studies; and Jack, the hunter, found the domain of Falcon's Nest large enough for his excursions. Fritz was silent, but I saw by his countenance that he had decided to go; I encouraged him to speak; he confessed that he had a great desire to return to Europe, and his younger brother, Francis, declared that he would willingly accompany him.

At last, our family was to be dismembered; two of our sons were about to leave us, and perhaps we should never again see them. My good Elizabeth submitted to

the sad necessity; she had a mother's objections, but she studied the advantage of her children.

Mr. Wolston also dismembered his family: he kept but one of his daughters; the other went on to New Holland. These family arrangements were very painful, and when they were finished I hastened to inform the captain of the *Unicorn*. He readily consented to take our three passengers.

"I resign three persons," said he, "Mr. and Mrs. Wolston and one of their daughters; I take three more, and my complement will not be affected."

. The *Unicorn* remained eight days at anchor, and we employed them in preparing the cargo which was to be the fortune of our voyagers on arriving in Europe. All the riches that we had amassed—pearls, ivory, spices, furs, and all our rare productions—were carefully packed and put on board the ship, which we also furnished with meat and fruits.

On the eve of their departure, after having exhausted myself in a last conversation, in which I advised my sons always to carry out the principles in which they had been instructed, and so to live in this world that we might, through the merits of our Saviour, be united in the next, I gave Fritz this narration of our shipwreck and establishment on the desert coast, enjoining him expressly to have it published as soon after his arrival as he possibly could; and this desire on my part, exempt from all vanity of authorship, had for its only object and hope that it might be useful to others as a lesson of morality, patience, courage, perseverance, and of Christian submission to the will of God. Perhaps some day a father may take

courage from the manner in which we supported our tribulations; perhaps some young person will see, in the course of this narrative, the value of a varied education and the importance of becoming acquainted with first principles.

I have not written this as a learned man would have done, and all my results may not have been arrived at according to the correct theory; but we were in an extraordinary position, and were obliged to depend on our own resources. We placed our entire trust in the mercy of God; and he ever watched over and protected us.

We none of us slept much during the last night. At the dawn of day the cannon of the ship announced the order to go on board. We conducted our children to the shore; there they received our last embraces and benedictions.

The anchor has been weighed, the sails unfurled, the flag run up to the mast-head, and a rapid wind promises speedily to separate us from our children.

I will not attempt to paint the grief of my dear Elizabeth—it is the grief of a mother, silent and profound. Jack and Ernest are weeping bitterly, and my own grief and heartfelt sorrow is, I must confess, but badly concealed.

I finish these few lines whilst the ship's boat is waiting. My sons will thus receive my last blessing. May God ever be with you. Adieu, Europe! adieu, dear Switzerland! Never shall I see you again! May your inhabitants be always happy, pious, and free!