CHAPTER XVII.

VOYAGE TO ITALY.

Reasons of the author's voyage to Italy.—Desiderata in accounts of voyagers.—Gunpowder.—Setting off.—Noisy navigation of small vessels.—Cabin and berths.—Sea-captains.—Deal pilots and boatmen.—Putting in at Ramsgate.—Condorcet's "Progress of Society."—A French vessel and its occupants.—Setting off again.—Memorable stormy season.—Character of the captain and mate.—Luigi Rivarola.—Notices of the sailors.—Watching at night.—Discomforts of sea in winter.—A drunken cook.—A goat and ducks.—Hypochondria.—Dullness and superstition of sailors.—A gale of fifty-six hours.

It was not at Hampstead that I first saw Keats. It was in York-buildings, in the New-road (No. 8), where I wrote part of the Indicator; and he resided with me while in Mortimer-terrace, Kentish-town (No. 13), where I concluded it. I mention this for the curious in such things; among whom I am one.

I proceed to hasten over the declining fortunes of the Examiner. Politics different from ours were triumphant all over Europe; public sympathy (not the most honourable circumstance of its cha-
racter) is apt to be too much qualified by fortune. Shelley, who had been for some time in Italy, had often invited me abroad; and I had as repeatedly declined going, for the reason stated in my account of him. That reason was done away by a proposal from Lord Byron to go and set up a liberal periodical publication in conjunction with them both. I was ill; it was thought by many I could not live; my wife was very ill too; my family was numerous; and it was agreed by my brother John, that while a struggle was made in England to reanimate the Examiner, a simultaneous endeavour should be made in Italy to secure new aid to our prospects, and new friends to the cause of liberty. My family, therefore, packed up such goods and chattels as they had a regard for, my books in particular, and we took, with strange new thoughts and feelings, but in high expectation, our journey by sea.

It was not very discreet to go many hundred miles by sea in winter-time with a large family; but a voyage was thought cheaper than a journey by land. Even that, however, was a mistake. It was by Shelley’s advice that I acted: and, I believe, if he had recommended a balloon, I should have been inclined to try it. “Put your music and your books on board a vessel” (it was thus that he wrote to us), “and you will have no more trouble.” The sea was to him a pastime; he fancied us bounding over the
waters, the merrier for being tossed; and thought that our will would carry us through anything, as it ought to do, seeing that we brought with us nothing but good things,—books, music, and sociality. It is true, he looked to our coming in autumn, and not in winter; and so we should have done, but for the delays of the captain. We engaged to embark in September, and did not set off till November the 16th.

I have often thought that a sea-voyage, which is generally the dullest thing in the world, both in the experiment and the description, might be turned to different account on paper, if the narrators, instead of imitating the dulness of their predecessors, and recording that it was four o'clock p.m. when they passed Cape St. Vincent, and that on such-and-such-a-day they beheld a porpoise or a Dutchman, would look into the interior of the floating-house they inhabited, and tell us about the seamen and their modes of living; what adventures they have had,—their characters and opinions,—how they eat, drink, and sleep, &c.; what they do in fine weather, and how they endure the sharpness, the squalidness, and inconceivable misery of bad. With a large family around me to occupy my mind, I did not think of this till too late: but I am sure that this mode of treating the subject would be interesting; and what I remember to such purpose, I will set down.
Our vessel was a small brig of a hundred and twenty tons burden, a good tight sea-boat, nothing more. Its cargo consisted of sugar; but it took in also a surreptitious stock of gunpowder, to the amount of fifty barrels, which was destined for Greece. Of this intention we knew nothing, till the barrels were sent on board from a place up the river; otherwise, so touchy a companion would have been objected to, my wife, who was in a shattered state of health, never ceasing to entertain apprehensions on account of it, except when the storms that came upon us presented a more obvious peril. There were nine men to the crew, including the mate. We numbered as many souls, though with smaller bodies, in the cabin, which we had entirely to ourselves; as well we might, for it was small enough.

On the afternoon of the 15th of November (1821), we took leave of some friends, who accompanied us on board; and next morning were awakened by the motion of the vessel, making its way through the shipping in the river. The new life in which we thus, as it were, found ourselves enclosed, the clanking of iron, and the cheerily cries of the seamen, together with the natural vivacity of the time of day, presented something animating to our feelings; but while we thus moved off, not without encouragement, we felt that the friend whom we were going to see was at a great distance, while
others were very near, whose hands it would be a long while before we should touch again, perhaps never. We hastened to get up and busy ourselves; and great as well as small found a novel diversion in the spectacle that presented itself from the deck, our vessel threading its way through the others with gliding bulk.

The next day it blew strong from the south-east, and even in the river (the navigation of which is not easy) we had a foretaste of the alarms and bad weather that awaited us at sea. The pilot, whom we had taken in over-night (and who was a jovial fellow with a whistle like a blackbird, which, in spite of the dislike that sailors have to whistling, he was always indulging), thought it prudent to remain at anchor till two in the afternoon; and at six, a vessel meeting us carried away the jib-boom, and broke in one of the bulwarks. My wife, who had had a respite from the most alarming part of her illness, and whom it was supposed that a sea-voyage, even in winter, might benefit, again expectorated blood with the fright; and I began to regret that I had brought my family into this trouble.—Even in the river we had a foretaste of the sea; and the curse of being at sea to a landman is, that you know nothing of what is going forward, and can take no active part in getting rid of your fears. You cannot "lend a hand." The business of these small vessels is not
carried on with the orderliness and tranquillity of greater ones, or of men-of-war. The crew are not very wise; the captain does not know how to make them so; the storm roars; the vessel pitches and reels; the captain, over your head, stamps and swears, and announces all sorts of catastrophes. Think of a family hearing all this, and parents in alarm for their children!

On Monday, the 19th, we passed the Nore, and proceeded down Channel amidst rains and squalls. We were now out at sea; and a rough taste we had of it. I had been three times in the Channel before, once in hard weather; but I was then a bachelor, and had only myself to think of. Let the reader picture to his imagination the little back-parlour of one of the shops in Fleet-street or the Strand, attached or let into a great moving vehicle, and tumbling about the waves from side to side, now sending all the things that are loose this way, and now that. This will give him an idea of a cabin at sea, such as we occupied. It had a table fastened down in the middle; places let into the walls on each side, one over the other, to hold beds; a short, wide, sloping window, carried off over a bulk, and looking out to sea; a bench, or locker, running under the bulk from one side of the cabin to the other; and a little fireplace opposite, in which it was impossible to keep a fire on account of the wind. The weather,
at the same time, was bitterly cold, as well as wet. On one side of the fireplace was the door, and on the other a door leading into a petty closet dignified with the title of the state-room. In this room we put our servant, the captain sleeping in another closet outside. The berths were occupied by the children, and my wife and myself lay, as long as we could manage to do so, on the floor. Such was the trim, with boisterous wet weather, cold days, and long evenings, on which we set out on our sea-adventure.

At six o'clock in the evening of the 19th, we came to in the Downs, on a line with Sandown Castle. The wind during the night increasing to a gale, the vessel pitched and laboured considerably; and the whole of the next day it blew a strong gale, with hard squalls from the westward. The day after, the weather continuing bad, the captain thought proper to run for Ramsgate, and took a pilot for that purpose.

Captains of vessels are very unwilling to put into harbour, on account of the payment they have to make, and the necessity of supporting the crew for nothing while they remain. Many vessels are lost on this account; and a wonder is naturally expressed, that men can persist in putting their lives into jeopardy, in order to save a few pounds. But when we come to know what a seaman's life is, we see that nothing but the strongest love of gain could induce a
man to take to such a mode of existence; and he is naturally anxious to save what he looks upon as the only tangible proof that he is not the greatest fool in existence. His life, he thinks, is in God's keeping; but his money is in his own. To be sure, a captain who has been to sea fifty times, and has got rich by it, will go again, storms or vows to the contrary notwithstanding; for he does not know what to do with himself on shore; but unless he had the hope of adding to his stock, he would blunder into some other way of business, rather than go, as he would think, for nothing. Occupation is his real necessity, as it is that of other money-getters; but the mode of it, without the visible advantage, he would assuredly give up. I never met with a seaman (and I have put the question to several) who did not own to me that he hated his profession. One of them, a brave and rough subject, told me that there was not a "pickle" of a midshipman, not absolutely a fool, who would not confess that he had rather eschew a second voyage, if he had but the courage to make the avowal.

I know not what the Deal pilot, whom we took on board in the Downs, thought upon this point. If ever there was a bold fellow, it was he; and yet he could eye a squall with a grave look. I speak not so much from what he had to do on the present occasion, though it was a nice business to get us into
Ramsgate harbour; but he had the habit of courage in his face, and was altogether one of the most interesting-looking persons I have seen.

The Deal boatmen are a well-known race; revered for their matchless intrepidity, and the lives they have saved. Two of them came on board the day before, giving opinions of the weather, which the captain was loth to take, and at the same time insinuating some little contraband notions, which he took better. I thought how little these notions injured the fine manly cast of their countenances, than which nothing could be more self-possessed and even innocent. They seemed to understand the first principles of the thing, without the necessity of inquiring into it; their useful and noble lives standing them instead of the pettier ties and sophisms of the interested.

Our pilot was a prince, even of his race. He was a tall man, in a kind of frock-coat, thin but powerful, with high features, and an expression of countenance fit for an Argonaut. When he took the rudder in hand, and stood alone, guiding the vessel towards the harbour, the crew being all busied at a distance from him, and the captain, as usual, at his direction, he happened to put himself into an attitude the most graceful as well as commanding; and a new squall coming up in the horizon, just as we were going to turn in, he gave it a look of lofty sullenness—threat,
as it were, for threat—which was the most magnificent aspect of resolution I ever beheld. Experience and valour assumed their rights, and put themselves on a par with danger. In we turned, to the admiration of the spectators who had come down to the pier, and to the satisfaction of all on board, except the poor captain, who, though it was his own doing, seemed, while gallantly congratulating the lady, to be eyeing, with sidelong pathos, the money that was departing from him.

We stopped for a change of weather nearly three weeks at Ramsgate, where we had visits from more than one London friend, to whom I only wish we could give a tenth part of the consolation when they are in trouble, which they afforded to us. At Ramsgate I picked up Condorcet’s View of the Progress of Society, which I read with a transport of gratitude to the author, though it had not entered so deeply into the matter as I supposed. But the very power to persevere in hopes for mankind, at a time of life when individuals are in the habit of reconciling their selfishness and fatigue, by choosing to think ill of them, is a great good to any man, and achieves a great good if it act only upon one other person. A few such instances of perseverance would alter the world.

For some days we remained on board, as it was hoped that we should be able to set sail again. Ramsgate harbour is very shallow; and though we
lay in the deepest part of it, the vessel took to a new and ludicrous species of dance, grinding and thumping upon the chalky ground. The consequence was, that the metal pintles of the rudder were all broken, and new ones obliged to be made; which the sailors told us was very lucky, as it proved the rudder not to be in a good condition, and it might have deserted us at sea.

We lay next a French vessel, smaller than our own, the crew of which became amusing subjects of remark. They were always whistling, singing, and joking. The men shaved themselves elaborately, cultivating heroic whiskers; and they strutted up and down, when at leisure, with their arms folded, and the air of naval officers. A woman or two, with kerchiefs and little curls, completed the picture. They all seemed very merry and good-humoured.

At length, tired of waiting on board, we took a quiet lodging at the other end of the town, and were pleased to find ourselves sitting still, and secure of a good rest at night. It is something, after being at sea, to find oneself not running the fork in one's eye at dinner, or suddenly sliding down the floor to the other end of the room. My wife was in a very weak state; but the rest she took was deep and tranquil, and I resumed my walks.

Few of the principal bathing-places have anything worth looking at in the neighbourhood, and Ramsgate
has less than most. Pegwell Bay is eminent for shrimps. Close by was Sir William Garrow, and a little farther on was Sir William Curtis. The sea is a grand sight, but it becomes tiresome and melancholy,—a great monotonous idea; at least one thinks so, when not happy. I was destined to see it grander, and dislike it more. With great injustice; for all the works of nature are beautiful, and their beauty is not to be subjected to our petty vicissitudes.

On Tuesday the 11th of December, we set forth again, in company with nearly a hundred vessels, the white sails of which, as they shifted and presented themselves in different quarters, made an agreeable spectacle, exhibiting a kind of noble minuet. My wife was obliged to be carried down to the pier in a sedan; and the taking leave, a second time, of a dear friend, rendered our new departure a melancholy one. I would have stopped and waited for summer-time, had not circumstances rendered it advisable for us to persevere; and my wife herself fully agreed with me, and even hoped for benefit, as well as a change of weather.

Unfortunately, the promise to that effect lasted us but a day. The winds recommenced the day following, and there ensued such a continuity and vehemence of bad weather as rendered the winter of 1821 memorable in the shipping annals. It strewed the whole of the north-western coast of Europe with
wrecks. Some readers may remember that winter. It was the one in which Mount Hecla burst out into flame, and Dungeness lighthouse was struck with lightning. The mole at Genoa was dilapidated. Next year there were between fourteen and fifteen thousand sail less upon Lloyd's books; which, valued at an average at £1,500, made a loss of two millions of money;—the least of all the losses, considering the feelings of survivors. Fifteen hundred sail (colliers) were wrecked on the single coast of Jutland.

Of this turmoil we were destined to have a sufficient experience; and I will endeavour to give the reader a taste of it, as he sits comfortably in his chair. He has seen what sort of cabin we occupied. I will now speak of the crew and their mode of living, and what sort of trouble we partook in common. The reader may encounter it himself afterwards if he pleases, and it may do him good; but again I exhort him not to think of taking a family with him, if he can go by land.

Our captain, who was also proprietor of the vessel, had been master of a man-of-war; and he was more refined in his manners than captains of small merchantmen are used to be. He was a clever seaman, or he would not have occupied his former post; and I dare say he conducted us well up and down Channel. The crew, when they were exhausted, accused him of a wish of keeping us out at sea, to save
charges,—perhaps unjustly; for he became so alarmed himself, or was so little able to enter into the alarms of others, that he would openly express his fears before my wife and children. He was a man of connections superior to his calling; and the consciousness of this, together with success in life, and a good complexion and set of features which he had had in his time, rendered him, though he was getting old, a bit of a coxcomb. When he undertook to be agreeable, he assumed a cleaner dress, and a fidgety sort of effeminacy, which contrasted ludicrously with his old clothes and his dolcful roughness during a storm. While it was foul weather, he was roaring and swearing at the men, like a proper captain of a brig, and then grumbling and saying, "Lord bless us and save us!" in the cabin. If a glimpse of promise re-appeared, he put on a coat and aspect to correspond, paid compliments to the lady, and told stories of other fair passengers whom he had conveyed charmingly to their destination. He wore powder; but this not being sufficient to conceal the colour of his hair, he told us it had turned grey when he was a youth, from excessive fright in being left upon a rock. This confession made me conclude that he was a brave man, in spite of his exclamations. I saw him among his kindred, and he appeared to be an object of interest to some respectable maiden sisters, whom he treated kindly, and for whom all the money,
perhaps, that he scraped together, was intended. He was chary of his "best biscuit," but fond of children; and he was inclined to take me for a Jonah for not reading the Bible, while he made love to the maid-servant. Of such incongruitities are people made, from the great captain to the small!

Our mate was a tall handsome young man, with a countenance of great refinement for a seaman. He was of the humblest origin: yet a certain gentility was natural in him, as he proved by a hundred little circumstances of attention to the women and children, when consolation was wanted, though he did not do it ostentatiously or with melancholy. If a child was afraid, he endeavoured to amuse him with stories. If the women asked him anxiously how things were going on, he gave them a cheerful answer; and he contrived to show by his manner, that he did not do so in order to make a show of his courage at their expense. He was attentive without officiousness, and cheerful with quiet. The only fault I saw in him, was a tendency to lord it over a Genoese boy, an apprentice to the captain, who seemed ashamed of being among the crew, and perhaps gave himself airs. But a little tyranny will creep into the best natures (if not informed enough), under the guise of a manly superiority; as may be seen so often in boys at school.

The little Genoese was handsome, and had the
fine eyes of the Italians. Seeing he was a foreigner, when we first went on board, we asked him whether he was not an Italian. He said, No; he was a Genoese. It is the Lombards, I believe, that are more particularly understood to be Italians, when a distinction of this kind is made; but I never heard it afterwards. He complained to me one day, that he wanted books and poetry; and said that the crew were a "brutta gente" (a vulgar set). I afterwards met him in Genoa, when he looked as gay as a lark, and was dressed like a gentleman. His name was a piece of music,—Luigi Rivarola.

There was another foreigner on board, a Swede, as rough a subject and northern, as the Genoese was full of the "sweet south." He had the reputation of being a capital seaman, which enabled him to grumble to better advantage than the others. A coat of the mate's hung up to dry in a situation not perfectly legal, was not to be seen by him without a comment. The fellow had an honest face withal, but brute and fishy, not unlike a Triton's in a picture. He gaped up at a squall, with his bony look, and the hair over his eyes, as if he could dive out of it in case of necessity.

Very different was a fat, fair-skinned carpenter, with a querulous voice, who complained openly on all occasions, and in private was very earnest with the passengers to ask the captain to put into port.
And very different again from him was a jovial straightforward seaman, a genuine Jack Tar, with a snub nose and an under lip thrust out, such as we see in caricatures. He rolled about with the vessel, as if his feet had suckers; and he had an oath and a jest every morning for the bad weather. He said he would have been "d—d" before he had come to sea this time, if he had known what sort of weather it was to be; but it was not so bad for him as for the gentlefolks with their children.

The crew occupied a little cabin at the other end of the vessel, into which they were tucked in their respective cribs, like so many herrings. The weather was so bad, that a portion of them, sometimes all, were up at night, as well as the men on watch. The business of the watch is to see that all is safe, and to look out for vessels ahead. He is very apt to go to sleep, and is sometimes waked with a pail of water chucked over him. The tendency to sleep is very natural, and the sleep in fine weather delicious. Shakspeare may well introduce a sailor boy sleeping on the top-mast, and enjoying a luxury that kings might envy. But there is no doubt that the luxury of the watcher is often the destruction of the vessel. The captains themselves, glad to get to rest, are careless. When we read of vessels run down at sea, we are sure to find it owing to negligence. This was the case with regard to a steam-vessel, the
Comet, which excited great interest at this time. A passenger, anxious and kept awake, is surprised to see the cagerness with which every seaman, let the weather be what it may, goes to bed when it comes to his turn. Safety, if they can have it; but sleep at all events. This seems to be their motto. If they are to be drowned, they would rather have the two beds together, the watery and the worsted. Dry is too often a term inapplicable to the latter. In our vessel, night after night, the wet penetrated into the seamen’s berths; and the poor fellows, their limbs stiff and aching with cold, and their hands blistered with toil, had to get into beds, as wretched as if a pail of water had been thrown over them.

Such were the lives of our crew from the 12th till the 22nd of December, during which time we were beaten up and down Channel, twice touching the Atlantic, and driven back again like a hunted ox. One of the gales lasted, without intermission, fifty-six hours; blowing all the while as if it would “split its cheeks.” The oldest seaman on board had never seen rougher weather in Europe. In some parts of the world, both east and west, there is weather of sudden and more outrageous violence; but none of the crew had experienced tempests of longer duration, or more violent for the climate.

The worst of being at sea in weather like this, next to your inability to do anything, is the multi-
tude of petty discomforts with which you are surrounded. You can retreat into no comfort, great or small. Your feet are cold; you can take no exercise, on account of the motion of the vessel; and a fire will not keep in. You cannot sit in one posture. You lie down, because you are sick; or if others are more sick, you must keep your legs as well as you can, to help them. At meals, the plates and dishes slide away, now to this side, now that; making you laugh, it is true; but you laugh more out of spleen than merriment. Twenty to one you are obliged to keep your beds, and chuck the cold meat to one another; or the oldest and strongest does it for the rest, desperately remaining at table, and performing all the slides, manoeuvres, and sudden rushes, which the fantastic violence of the cabin's movements has taught him. Tea (which, for the refreshment it affords in toil and privation, may be called the traveller's wine) is taken as desperately as may be, provided you can get boiling water; the cook making his appearance, when he can, with his feet asunder, clinging to the floor, and swaying to and fro with the kettle.

By the way, I have not mentioned our cook; he was a Mulatto, a merry knave, constantly drunk. But the habit of drinking, added to a quiet and sly habit of uttering his words, had made it easy to him to pretend sobriety when he was most intoxicated; and I believe he deceived the whole of the people on
board, except ourselves. The captain took him for a special good fellow. He felt particularly grateful for his refusals of a glass of rum; the secret of which was, that the man could get at the rum whenever he liked, and was never without a glass of it in his head. He stood behind you at meals, kneading the floor with his feet, as the vessel rolled; drinking in all the jokes, or would-be jokes, that were uttered; and laughing like a goblin. The captain, who had eyes for nothing but what was right before him, seldom noticed his merry devil; but if you caught his eye, there he was, shaking his shoulders without a word, while his twinkling eyes seemed to run over with rum and glee.

This fellow, who swore horrid oaths in a tone of meekness, used to add to my wife’s horrors by descending, drunk as he was, with a lighted candle into the “Lazaret,” which was a hollow under the cabin, opening with a trap-door, and containing provisions and a portion of the gunpowder. The portion was small, but sufficient, she thought, with the assistance of his candle, to blow us up. Fears for her children occupied her mind from morning till night, when she sank into an uneasy sleep. While she was going to sleep I read, and did not close my eyes till towards morning, thinking (with a wife by my side, and seven children around me) what I should do in case of the worst. My imagination,
naturally tenacious, and exasperated by ill health, clung, not to every relief, but to every shape of ill that I could fancy. I was tormented with the consciousness of being unable to divide myself into as many pieces as I had persons requiring assistance; and must not scruple to own that I suffered a constant dread, which appeared to me very unbecoming a man of spirit. However, I expressed no sense of it to anybody. I did my best to do my duty and keep up the spirits of those about me; and your nervousness being a great dealer in your joke fantastic, I succeeded apparently with all, and certainly with the children.

The most uncomfortable thing in the vessel was the constant wet. Below it penetrated, and on deck you could not appear with dry shoes but they were speedily drenched. Mops being constantly in use at sea (for seamen are very clean in that respect, and keep their vessels as nice as a pet infant), the sense of wet was always kept up, whether in wetting or drying; and the vessel, tumbling about, looked like a wash-house in a fit.

We had a goat on board, a present from a kind friend, anxious that we should breakfast as at home. The storms frightened away its milk, and Lord Byron's dog afterwards bit off its ear. But the ducks had the worst of it. These were truly a sight to make a man hypochondriacal. They were
kept in miserable narrow coops, over which the sea constantly breaking, the poor wretches were drenched and beaten to death. Every morning, when I came upon deck, some more were killed, or had their legs and wings broken. The captain grieved for the loss of his ducks, and once went so far as to add to the number of his losses by putting one of them out of its misery; but nobody seemed to pity them otherwise.

This was not inhumanity, but want of thought. The idea of pitying live-stock when they suffer, enters with as much difficulty into a head uneducated to that purpose, as the idea of pitying a diminished piece of beef or a stolen pig.

I took care not to inform the children how much the creatures suffered. My family, with the exception of the eldest boy, who was of an age to acquire experience, always remained below; and the children, not aware of any danger (for I took care to qualify what the captain said, and they implicitly believed me), were as gay, as confinement and uneasy beds would allow them to be. With the poor ducks I made them very merry one night, by telling them to listen when the next sea broke over us, and they would hear an acquaintance of theirs laughing. The noise they made with their quacking, when they gathered breath after the suffocation of the salt water, was exactly like what I said: the children listened,
and at every fresh agony there was a shout. Being alarmed one night by the captain's open expression of his apprehension, I prepared the children for the worst that might happen, by telling them that the sea sometimes broke into a cabin, and then there was a dip over head and ears for the passengers, after which they laughed and made merry. The only time I expressed apprehension to anybody was to the mate one night, when we were wearing ship off the Scilly rocks, and everybody was in a state of anxiety. I asked him, in case of the worst, to throw open the lid of the cabin-stairs, that the sea might pour in upon us as fast as possible. He begged me not to have any sad thoughts, for he said I should give them to him, and he had none at present. At the same time, he turned and severely rebuked the carpenter, who was looking doleful at the helm, for putting notions into the heads of the passengers. The captain was unfortunately out of hearing.

I did wrong at that time not to "feed better," as the phrase is. My temperance was a little ultra-theoretical and excessive; and the mate and I were the only men on board who drank no spirits. Perhaps there were not many men out in those dreadful nights in the Channel, who could say as much. The mate, as he afterwards let me know, felt the charge upon him too great to venture upon an artificial state of courage; and I feared that what courage was left
me, might be bewildered. The consequence was, that from previous illness and constant excitation, my fancy was sickened into a kind of hypochondriacal investment and shaping of things about me. A little more, and I might have imagined the fantastic shapes which the action of the sea is constantly interweaving out of the foam at the vessel's side, to be sea-snakes, or more frightful hieroglyphics. The white clothes that hung up on pegs in the cabin, took, in the gloomy light from above, an aspect like things of meaning; and the winds and rain together, as they ran blind and howling along by the vessel's side, when I was on deck, appeared like frantic spirits of the air, chasing and shrieking after one another, and tearing each other by the hair of their heads. "The grandeur of the glooms" on the Atlantic was majestic indeed: the healthiest eye would have seen them with awe. The sun rose in the morning, at once fiery and sicklied over; a livid gleam played on the water, like the reflection of lead; then the storms would recommence; and during partial clearings off, the clouds and fogs appeared standing in the sky, moulded into gigantic shapes, like antediluvian wonders, or visitants from the zodiac; mammoths, vaster than have yet been thought of; the first ungainly and stupendous ideas of bodies and legs, looking out upon an unfinished world. These fancies were ennobling, from their
magnitude. The pain that was mixed with some of the others, I might have displaced by a fillip of the blood.

Two days after we left Ramsgate, the wind blowing violently from the south-west, we were under close-reefed topsails; but on its veering to westward, the captain was induced to persevere, in hopes that by coming round to the north-west, it would enable him to clear the Channel. The ship laboured very much, the sea breaking over her; and the pump was constantly going.

The next day, the 14th, we shipped a great deal of water, the pump going as before. The fore-top-sail and foresail were taken in; the storm staysail set; and the captain said we were "in the hands of God." We now wore ship to southward.

On the 15th, the weather was a little moderated, with fresh gales and cloudy. The captain told us to-day how his hair turned white in a shipwreck; and the mate entertained us with an account of the extraordinary escape of himself and some others from an American pirate, who seized their vessel, plundered and made it a wreck, and confined them under the hatches, in the hope of their going down with it. They escaped in a rag of a boat, and were taken up by a Greek vessel, which treated them with the greatest humanity. The pirate was afterwards taken and hung at Malta, with five of his men. This
story, being tragical without being tempestuous, and terminating happily for our friend, was very welcome, and occupied us agreeably. I tried to elicit some ghost stories of vessels, but could hear of nothing but the *Flying Dutchman*; nor did I succeed better on another occasion. This dearth of supernatural adventure is remarkable, considering the superstition of sailors. But their wits are none of the liveliest; the sea blunts while it mystifies; and the sailor’s imagination, driven in, like his body, to the vessel he inhabits, admits only the petty wonders that come directly about him in the shape of storm-announcing fishes and birds. His superstition is that of a blunted and not of an awakened ignorance. Sailors had rather sleep than see visions.

On the 16th, the storm was alive again, with strong gales and heavy squalls. We set the fore storm-staysail anew, and at night the jolly-boat was torn from the stern.

The afternoon of the 17th brought us the gale that lasted fifty-six hours, "one of the most tremendous," the captain said, "that he had ever witnessed." All the sails were taken in, except the close-reefed topsail and one of the trysails. At night, the wind being at south-west, and Scilly about fifty miles north by east, the trysail sheet was carried away, and the boom and sail had a narrow escape. We were now continually wearing ship.
The boom was unshipped, as it was; and it was a melancholy sight to see it lying next morning, with the sail about it, like a wounded servant who had been fighting. The morning was occupied in getting it to rights. At night we had hard squalls with lightning.

We lay-to under main-topsail until the next morning, the 19th, when at ten o'clock we were enabled to set the reefed foresail, and the captain prepared to run for Falmouth; but finding he could not get in till night, we hauled to the wind, and at three in the afternoon, wore ship to south-westward. It was then blowing heavily; and the sea, breaking over the vessel, constantly took with it a part of the bulwark. I believe we had long ceased to have a duck alive. The poor goat had contrived to find itself a corner in the long-boat, and lay frightened and shivering under a piece of canvass. I afterwards took it down in the cabin to share our lodging; but not having a berth to give it, it passed a sorry time, tied up and slipping about the floor. At night we had lightning again, with hard gales, the wind being west and north-west, and threatening to drive us on the French coast. It was a grand thing, through the black and turbid atmosphere, to see the great fiery eye of the lighthouse at the Lizard Point: it looked like a good genius with a ferocious aspect. Ancient mythology would have made dragons of these noble
structures,—dragons with giant glare, warning the seaman off the coast.

The captain could not get into Falmouth: so he wore ship, and stood to the westward with fresh hopes, the wind having veered a little to the north; but, after having run above fifty miles to the south and west, the wind veered again in our teeth, and at two o’clock on the 20th, we were reduced to a close-reefed main-topsail, which, being new, fortunately held, the wind blowing so hard that it could not be taken in without the greatest risk of losing it. The sea was very heavy, and the rage of the gale tremendous, accompanied with lightning. The children on these occasions slept, unconscious of their danger. My wife slept, too, from exhaustion. I remember, as I lay awake that night, looking about to see what help I could get from imagination, to furnish a moment’s respite from the anxieties that beset me, I cast my eyes on the poor goat; and recollecting how she devoured some choice biscuit I gave her one day, I got up, and going to the cupboard took out as much as I could find, and occupied myself in seeing her eat. She munched the fine white biscuit out of my hand, with equal appetite and comfort; and I thought of a saying of Sir Philip Sidney’s, that we are never perfectly miserable when we can do a good-natured action.

I will not dwell upon the thoughts that used to

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pass through my mind respecting my wife and children. Many times, especially when a little boy of mine used to weep in a manner equally sorrowful and good-tempered, I thought of Prospero and his infant Miranda in the boat,—"me and thy crying self;" and many times of a similar divine fragment of Simonides. It seemed as if I had no right to bring so many little creatures into such jeopardy, with peril to their lives and to all future enjoyment; but soe and tooble suggested other reflections too:—consolations, which even to be consoled with is calamity. However, I will not recall those feelings any more. Next to tragical thoughts like these, one of the modes of tormenting oneself at sea, is to raise those pleasant pictures of contrast, dry and firm-footed, which our friends are enjoying in their warm rooms and radiant security at home. I used to think of them one after the other, or of several of them together, reading, chatting, and laughing, playing music, or complaining that they wanted a little movement and must dance; then retiring to easy beds amidst happy families; and perhaps, as the wind howled, thinking of us. Perhaps, too, they thought of us sometimes in the midst of their merriment, and longed for us to share it with them. That they did so, is certain; but, on the other hand, what would we not have given to be sure of the instant at which they were making these reflections; and how im-
possible was it to attain to this, or to any other dry-ground satisfaction! Sometimes I could not help
smiling to think how Munden would have exclaimed,
in the character of Croaker, "We shall all be blown
up!" The gunpowder I seldom thought of; but it
seemed to give my feet a sting sometimes, as I
remembered it in walking the deck. The demand
for dry land was considerable. That is the point
with landsmen at sea;—something unwet, uncon-
fined, but, above all, firm, and that enables you to
take your own steps, physical and moral. Panurge
has it in Rabelais.

But I must put an end to this mirth; for "a large
vessel is coming right down upon us;—lights—
lights!" This was the cry at eleven o'clock at night,
on the 21st December, the gale being tremendous,
and the sea to match. Lanthorns were handed up
from the cabin, and, one after the other, put out.
The captain thought it was owing to the weather;
but it was the drunken steward, who jolted them out
as he took them up the ladder. We furnished more,
and contrived to see them kept in; and the captain
afterwards told me that we had saved his vessel.
The ship, discerning us just in time, passed ahead,
looking very huge and terrible. Next morning, we
saw her about two miles on our lee-bow, lying-to
under trysails. It was an Indiaman. There was
another vessel, a smaller, near us in the night. I
thought the Indiaman looked very comfortable, with its spacious and powerful body: but the captain said we were better off a great deal in our own sea-boat; which turned out to be too true, if this was the same Indiaman, as some thought it, which was lost the night following off the coast of Devonshire. The crew said, that in one of the pauses of the wind they heard a vessel go down. We were at that time near land. While drinking tea, the keel of our ship grated against something, perhaps a shoal. The captain afterwards very properly made light of it; but at the time, being in the act of raising a cup to his mouth, I remember he turned very grave, and, getting up, went upon deck.

Next day, the 22nd, we ran for Dartmouth, and succeeding this time, found ourselves, at twelve o'clock at noon, in the middle of Dartmouth harbour.—

“Magno telluris amore
Egressi, optata potiuntur Troës arena.”

“The Trojans, worn with toils, and spent with woes,
Leap on the welcome land, and seek their wish’d repose.”

Dryden had never been at sea, or he would not have translated the passage in that manner. Virgil knew better; and besides, he had the proper ancient hydrophobia to endear his fancy to the dry ground. He says, that the Trojans had got an absolute affection for terra firma, and that they now enjoyed what they had longed for. Virgil, it must be con-
fessed, talks very tenderly of the sea for an epic poet. Homer grapples with it in a different style. The Greek would hardly have recognised his old acquaintance Æneas in that pious and frightened personage, who would be designated, I fear, by a modern sailor, a psalm-singing milksop. But Homer, who was a traveller, is the only poet among the ancients who speaks of the sea in a modern spirit. He talks of brushing the waves merrily; and likens them, when they are dark, to his Chian wine. But Hesiod, though he relates with a modest grandeur that he had once been to sea, as far as from Aulis to Chalcis, is shocked at the idea of anybody venturing upon the water except when the air is delicate and the water harmless. A spring voyage distresses him, and a winter he holds to be senseless. Moschus confesses, that the very sight of the ocean makes him retreat into the woods; the only water he loves being a fountain to listen to, as he lies on the grass. Virgil took a trip to Athens, during which he may be supposed to have undergone all the horrors which he holds to be no disgrace to his hero. Horace’s distress at his friend’s journey, and amazement at the hard-hearted wretch who first ventured to look upon the sea on ship-board, are well known. A Hindoo could not have a greater dread of the ocean. Poor Ovid, on his way to the place of his exile, wonders how he can write a line. These were delicate gentlemen at
the court of Augustus; and the ancients, it may be said, had very small and bad vessels, and no compass. But their moral courage appears to have been as poor in this matter as their physical. Nothing could have given a Roman a more exalted idea of Cæsar’s courage, than his famous speech to the pilot:—“You carry Cæsar and his fortunes!”

The poets who take another road to glory, and think no part of humanity alien from them, spoke out in a different manner. Their office being to feel with all, and their nature disposing them to it, they seem to think themselves privileged to be bold or timid, according to circumstances; and doubtless they are so, imagination being the moving cause in both instances. They perceive, also, that the boldest of men are timid under circumstances in which they have no experience; and this helps the agreeable insolence of their candour. Rochester said, that every man would confess himself a coward, if he had but courage enough to do so:—a saying worthy of an ingenious debauchee, and as false with respect to individuals, as it is, perhaps, true with regard to the circumstances under which any one may find himself. The same person who shall turn pale in a storm at sea, shall know not what it is to fear the face of man; and the most fearless of sailors shall turn pale (as I have seen them do) even in storms of an unusual description. I have related a scuffle with
a party of fishermen on the Thames, when in the height of their rage they were checked and made civil by the mention of the word law. Rochester talked like the shameless coward that he had made himself; but even Sir Philip Sidney, the flower of chivalry, who would have gone through any danger out of principle (which, together with the manly habits that keep a man brave, is the true courage), does not scruple to speak, with a certain dread, of ships and their strange lodgings.

"Certainly," says he, in his Arcadia (Book II.), "there is no danger carries with it more horror, than that which grows in those floating kingdoms. For that dwelling-place is unnatural to mankind; and then the terribleness of the continual motion, the desolation of the being far from comfort, the eye and the ear having ugly images ever before them, doth still vex the mind, even when it is best armed against it."

Ariosto, a soldier as well as poet, who had fought bravely in the wars, candidly confesses that he is for taking no sea voyages, but is content to explore the earth with Ptolemy, and travel in a map. This, he thinks, is better than putting up prayers in a storm. (Satire 3. Chi vuol andar intorno, &c.) But the most amusing piece of candour on this point is that of Berni, in his Orlando Innamorato, one of the models of the Don Juan style. Berni was a
good fellow for a rake; and bold enough, though a courtier, to refuse aiding a wicked master in his iniquities. He was also stout of body, and a great admirer of achievements in others, which he dwells upon with a masculine relish. But the sea he cannot abide. He probably got a taste of it in the Adriatic, when he was at Venice. He is a fine describer of a storm, and puts a hero of his at the top of one in a very elevated and potent manner: (See the description of Rodomonte, at the beginning of one of his cantos.) But in his own person, he disclaims all partnership with such exaltations; and earnestly exhorts the reader, on the faith of his experience, not to think of quitting dry land for an instant.

"Se vi poteste un uomo immaginare,
Il qual non sappia quel che sia paura;
E se volete un bel modo trovare
Da spaventar ogni anima sicura;
Quando e fortuna, mettetel' in mare.
Se non lo teme, se non se ne cura,
Colui per pazzo abbiaite, e non ardito,
Perché è diviso da la morte un dito.

"È un'orribil cosa il mar crociato:
È meglio udirlo, che farne la prova.
Creda ciascun a chi dentro v' è stato;
E per provar, di terra non si mova."

_Canto 64, st. 4._

Reader, if you suppose that there can be,
In nature, one that's ignorant of fear;
And if you'd show the man, as prettily
As possible, how people can feel queer,—
When there’s a tempest, clap him in the sea.
If he’s not frightened, if he doesn’t care,
Count him a stupid idiot, and not brave,
Thus with a straw betwixt him and the grave.

A sea in torment is a dreadful thing:
Much better lie and listen to, than try it.
Trust one who knows its desperate pummelling;
And while on terra firma, pray stick by it.

Full of Signor Berni’s experience, and having, in
the shape of our children, seven more reasons than
he had to avail ourselves of it, we here bade adieu to
our winter voyage, and resolved to put forth again
in a better season. It was a very expensive change
of purpose, and cost us more trouble than I can ex-
press; but I had no choice, seeing my wife was so
ill. A few days afterwards, she was obliged to have
forty ounces of blood taken from her, to save her
life.

Dartmouth is a pretty, forlorn place, deserted of
its importance. Chaucer’s “Schippmann” was born
there, and it still produces excellent seamen; but,
instead of its former dignity as a port, it looks like a
petty town deserted of its neighbourhood, and left to
grow wild and solitary. The beautiful vegetation
immediately about it, added to the bare hills in the
background, completes this look of forlornness, and
produces an effect like that of the grass growing in
the streets of a metropolis. The harbour is land-
locked with hills and wood, and a bit of an old castle
at the entrance; forming a combination very picturesque. Among the old families remaining in that quarter, the Pridcaux, relations of the ecclesiastical historian, live in this town; and going up a solitary street on the hill-side, I saw on a door the name of Wolcot, a memorandum of a different sort. Peter Pindar's family, like the divine's, are from Cornwall.

We left Dartmouth, where no ships were in the habit of sailing for Italy, and went to Plymouth; intending to set off again with the beginning of spring, in a vessel bound for Genoa. But the mate of it, who, I believe, grudged us the room we should deprive him of, contrived to tell my wife a number of dismal stories, both of the ship and its captain, who was an unlucky fellow that seemed marked by fortune. Misery had also made him a Calvinist,—the most miserable of all ways of getting comfort; and this was no additional recommendation. To say the truth, having a pique against my fears on the former occasion, I was more bent on allowing myself to have none on the present; otherwise, I should not have thought of putting forth again till the fine weather was complete. But the reasons that prevailed before, had now become still more imperative; my wife being confined to her bed, and undergoing repeated bleedings: so, till summer we waited.

Plymouth is a proper commercial town, unpicturesque in itself, with an overgrown suburb, or dock,
which has become a town distinct, and other suburbs carrying other towns along the coast. But the country up the river is beautiful; and Mount-Edgecumbe is at hand, with its enchanted island, like a piece of old poetry by the side of new money-getting. Lord Lyttleton, in some pretty verses, has introduced the gods, with Neptune at their head, and the nymphs of land and sea, contesting for the proprietorship of it;—a dispute which Jupiter settles by saying, that he made Mount-Edgecumbe for them all. But the best compliment paid it was by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, admiral of the Spanish Armada, who, according to Fuller, marked it out from the sea as his portion of the booty. "But," says Fuller, "he had caught a great cold, had he had no other clothes to wear than those which were to be made of a skin of a bear not killed." In the neighbourhood is a seat of the Carews, the family of the historian of Cornwall, and kinsmen of the poet. Near it, on the other side of the river, was the seat of the Killigrews; another family which became celebrated in the annals of wit and poetry.* The tops of the two mansions looked at one another over the trees. In the grounds of the former is a bowling-green, the scene of a once fashionable amusement, now grown out of use; which is a pity. Fashion

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cannot too much identify itself with what is healthy; nor has England been "merry England" since late hours and pallid faces came into vogue. But our sedentary thoughts, it is to be hoped, will assist their own remedy, and in the end leave us better off than before.

The sea upon the whole had done me good, and I found myself able to write again, though by driblets. We lived very quietly at Stone-house, opposite Mount-Edgecumbe, nursing our hopes for a new voyage, and expecting one of a very different complexion, in sailing towards an Italian summer. My wife kept her bed almost the whole time, and lost a great deal of blood; but the repose, together with the sea-air, was of service to her, and enabled her to receive benefit on resuming our journey.

Thus quietly we lived, and thus should have continued, agreeably to both of our inclinations; but some friends of the Examiner heard of our being in the neighbourhood, and the privatist of all public men' (if I may be ranked among the number) found himself complimented by his readers, face to face, and presented with a silver cup. I then had a taste of the Plymouth hospitality, and found it friendly and cordial to the last degree, as if the seaman's atmosphere gave a new spirit to the love of books and liberty. Nor, as the poet would say, was music wanting; nor fair faces, the crown of welcome.
Besides the landscapes in the neighbourhood, I had the pleasure of seeing some beautiful ones in the painting-room of Mr. Rogers, a very clever artist and intelligent man, who has travelled, and can think for himself. But my great Examiner friend, who afterwards became a personal one, was Mr. Hinc, subsequently master of an academy near the metropolis, and the most attentive and energetic person of his profession that I ever met with. My principal visitors, indeed, at Plymouth consisted of schoolmasters;—one of those signs of the times, which has not been so ill regarded since the accession of a lettered and liberal minister to the government of this country, as they were under the supercilious ignorance, and (to say the truth) well-founded alarm of some of his predecessors.

The Devonshire people, as far as I had experience of them, were pleasant and good-humoured. Queen Elizabeth said of their gentry, that they were “all born courtiers with a becoming confidence.” I know not how that may be, though she had a good specimen in Sir Walter Raleigh. But the private history of modern times might exhibit instances of natives of Devonshire winning their way into regard and power by the force of a well-constituted mixture of sweet and strong; and it is curious that the milder climate of that part of England should have produced more painters, perhaps, of a superior kind, than any other
two counties can show. Drake, Jewell, Hooker, and old Fortescue, were also Devonshire-men; William Browne, the most genuine of Spenser's disciples; and Gay, the enjoying and the good-hearted, the natural man in the midst of the sophisticate.

We left Plymouth on the 13th of May 1822, accompanied by some of our new friends who would see us on board; and set sail in a fresh vessel, on our new summer voyage, a very different one from the last. Short acquaintances sometimes cram as much into their intercourse, as to take the footing of long ones; and our parting was not without pain. Another shadow was cast on the female countenances by the observation of our boatman, who, though an old sailor who ought to have known better, bade us remark how heavily laden our ship was, and how deep she lay in the water: so little can ignorance afford to miss an opportunity of being important.

Our new captain, and, I believe, all his crew, were Welsh, with the exception of one sailor, an unfortunate Scotchman, who seemed pitched among them to have his nationality put to the torture. Jokes were unceasingly cracked on the length of his person, the oddity of his dialect, and the uncouth manner in which he stood at the helm. It was a new thing to hear Welshmen cutting up the barbarism of the "Modern Athens"; but they had the advantage of the poor fellow in wit, and he took it with a sort of
sulky patience, that showed he was not destitute of one part of the wisdom of his countrymen. To have made a noise would have been to bring down new shouts of laughter; so he pocketed the affronts as well as he might, and I could not help fancying that his earnings lay in the same place more securely than most of those about him. The captain was choleric and brusque, a temperament which was none the better for an inclination to plethora; but his enthusiasm in behalf of his brother tars, and the battles they had fought, was as robust as his frame; and he surprised us with writing verses on the strength of it. Very good heart and impart verses they were too, and would cut as good a figure as any in the old magazines. While he read them, he rolled the r's in the most rugged style, and looked as if he could have run them down the throats of the enemy. The objects of his eulogy he called "our gallant herroes."

We took leave of Plymouth with a fine wind at north-east; and next day, on the confines of the Channel, spoke the Two Sisters of Guernsey, from Rio Janeiro. On a long voyage, ships lose their longitude; and our information enabled the vessel to enter the Channel with security. Ships approaching and parting from one another present a fine spectacle, shifting in the light, and almost looking conscious of the grace of their movements.
Sickness here began to prevail again among us, with all but myself, who am never sea-sick. I mention it in order to notice a pleasant piece of thanks which I received from my eldest boy, who, having suffered dreadfully in the former voyage, was grateful for my not having allowed him to eat butter in the interval. I know not whether my paternity is leading me here into too trifling a matter; but I mention the circumstance, because there may be intelligent children among my readers, with whom it may turn to account.

We were now on the high Atlantic, with fresh health and hopes, and the prospect of an easy voyage before us. Next night, the 15th, we saw, for the first time, two grampus, who interested us extremely with their unwieldy gambols. They were very large,—in fact, a small kind of whale; but they played about the vessel like kittens, dashing round, and even under it, as if in scorn of its progress. The swiftness of fish is inconceivable. The smallest of them must be enormously strong: the largest are as gay as the least. One of these grampus fairly sprang out of the water, bolt upright.

The same day, we were becalmed in the Bay of Biscay;—a pleasant surprise. A calm in the Bay of Biscay, after what we had read and heard of it, sounded to us like repose in a boiling cauldron. But a calm, after all, is not repose: it is a very unresting
and unpleasant thing, the ship taking a great gawky motion from side to side, as if playing the buffoon; and the sea heaving in huge oily-looking fields, like a carpet lifted. Sometimes it appears to be striped into great ribbons; but the sense of it is always more or less unpleasant, and to impatient seamen is torture.

The next day we were still becalmed. A small shark played all day long about the vessel, but was shy of the bait. The sea was swelling, and foul with putrid substances, which made us think what it would be if a calm continued a month. Coleridge has touched upon that matter, with the hand of a master, in his Ancient Mariner. (Here are three words in one sentence beginning with m and ending with r, to the great regret of fingers that cannot always stop to make corrections. But the compliment to Coleridge shall be the greater, since it is at my own expense.) During a calm, the seamen, that they may not be idle, are employed in painting the vessel:—an operation that does not look well, amidst the surrounding aspect of sickness and faintness. The favourite colours are black and yellow; I believe, because they are the least expensive. The combination is certainly the most ugly.

On the 17th, we had a fine breeze at north-east. There is great enjoyment in a beautiful day at sea. You quit all the discomforts of your situation for the
comforts; interchange congratulations with the seamen, who are all in good humour; seat yourself at ease on the deck, enjoy the motion, the getting on, the healthiness of the air; watch idly for new sights; read a little, or chat, or give way to a day-dream; then look up again, and expatiate on the basking scene around you, with its ripples of blue and green, or of green and gold,—what the old poet beautifully calls the innumerable smile of the waters.

"Ποντιῶν τε κυμάτων
Ανηρίζμον γέλασμα."

Prometheus Vinctus.

The appearance of another vessel sets conjecture alive: it is "a Dane," "a Frenchman," "a Portuguese," and these words have a new effect upon us, as though we suddenly became intimate with the country to which they belong. A more striking effect of the same sort is produced by the sight of a piece of land; it is Flamborough Head, Ushant, Cape Ortegal:—you see a part of another country, one perhaps on which you have never set foot; and even this is a great thing: it gives you an advantage; others have read of Spain or Portugal; you have seen it, and are a grown man and a traveller, compared with those little children of books. These novelties affect the duldest; but to persons of any imagination, and such as are ready for any pleasure or consolation that nature offers them, they are like pieces of a new
morning of life. The world seems begun again, and our stock of knowledge recommencing on a new plan.

Then at night-time, there are those beautiful fires on the water, by the vessel's side, upon the nature of which people seem hardly yet agreed. Some take them for animal decay, some for living animals, others for electricity. Perhaps all these causes have to do with it. In a fine blue sea, the foam caused by the ship at night seems full of stars. The white fermentation, with golden sparkles in it, is beautiful beyond conception. You look over the side of the vessel, and devour it with your eyes, as you would so much ethereal syllabub. Finally, the stars in the firmament issue forth, and the moon; always the more lovely the farther you get south. Or when there is no moon on the sea, the shadows at a little distance become grander and more solemn, and you watch for some huge fish to lift himself in the middle of them,—a darker mass, breathing and spouting water.

The fish appear very happy. Some are pursued indeed, and others pursue; there is a world of death as well as life going on. The mackerel avoids the porpoise, and the porpoise eschews the whale; there is the sword-fish, who runs a-muck; and the shark, the cruel scavenger. These are startling considerations; but it is impossible, on reflection, to separate the idea
of happiness from that of health and activity. The fishes are not sick or sophisticate; their blood is pure, their strength and agility prodigious; and a little peril, for aught we know, may serve to keep them moving, and give a relish to their vivacity. I looked upon the sea as a great tumbling wilderness, full of sport. To eat fish at sea, however, hardly looked fair, though it was the fairest of occasions: it seemed as if, not being an inhabitant, I had no right to the produce. I did not know how the dolphins might take it. At night-time, lying in a bed beneath the level of the water, I fancied sometimes that a fellow looked at me as he went by with his great side-long eyes, gaping objection. It was strange, I thought, to find oneself moving onward cheek by jowl with a porpoise, or yawning in concert with a shark.

On the 21st, after another two days of calm, and one of rain, we passed Cape Finisterre. There was a heavy swell and rolling. Being now on the Atlantic, with not even any other name for the part of it that we sailed over to interrupt the widest association of ideas, I thought of America, and Columbus, and the chivalrous squadrons that set out from Lisbon, and the old Atlantis of Plato, formerly supposed to exist off the coast of Portugal. It is curious, that the Portuguese have a tradition to this day, that there is an island occasionally seen off the
coast of Lisbon. The story of the Atlantis looks like some old immemorial tradition of a country that has really existed; nor is it difficult to suppose that there was formerly some great tract of land, or even continent, occupying these now watery regions, when we consider the fluctuation of things, and those changes of dry to moist, and of lofty to low, which are always taking place all over the globe. Off the coast of Cornwall, the mariner, it has been said, now rides over the old country of Lyones, or whatever else it was called; if that name be fabulous; and there are stories of doors and casements, and other evidences of occupation, brought up from the bottom. These, indeed, have lately been denied, or reduced to nothing: but old probabilities remain. In the eastern seas, the gigantic work of creation is visibly going on, by means of those little creatures, the coral worms; and new lands will as assuredly be inhabited there after a lapse of centuries, as old ones have vanished in the west.

"So, in them all, raignes mutabilitie."

22nd. Fine breeze to-day from the N.E. A great shark went by. One longs to give the fellow a great dig in the mouth. Yet he is only going "on his vocation." Without him, as without the vultures on land, something would be amiss. It is only moral pain and inequality which it is desirable to alter,—
that which the mind of man has an invincible tendency to alter.

To-day the seas reminded me of the "marmora pelagi," of Catullus (the "marbles of the ocean"). They looked, at a little distance, like blue water petrified. You might have supposed, that by some sudden catastrophe the mighty main had been turned into stone; and the huge animals, whose remains we find in it, fixed there for ever.

A shoal of porpoises broke up the fancy. Waves might be classed, as clouds have been; and more determination given to pictures of them. We ought to have waves and wavelets, billows, fluctuosities, &c., a marble sea, a sea weltering. The sea varies its look at the immediate side of the vessel, according as the progress is swift or slow. Sometimes it is a crisp and rapid flight, hissing; sometimes an interweaving of the foam in snake-like characters; sometimes a heavy weltering, shouldering the ship on this side and that. In what is called "the trough of the sea," which is a common state to be in during violent weather, the vessel literally appears stuck and labouring in a trough, the sea looking on either side like a hill of yeast. This was the gentlest sight we used to have in the Channel; very different from our summer amenities. I never saw what are called waves "mountains high." It is a figure of speech; and a very violent one.
A fine breeze all night, with many porpoises. Porpoises are supposed to portend a change of weather, bad or good: they are not prognosticators of bad alone. At night there was a "young May moon," skimming between the dark clouds, like a boat of silver. I was upon deck, and found the watcher asleep. A vessel might have tipped us all into the water, for anything that he knew, or perhaps cared. There ought to be watchers on board ship, exclusively for that office. It is not to be expected that sailors, who have been at work all day, should not sleep at night, especially out in the air. It is as natural to these children of the sea, as to infants carried out of doors. The sleeper in the present instance had had a pail thrown over him one night, which only put him in a rage, and perhaps made him sleep out of spite next time. He was a strong, hearty, Welsh lad, healthy and good-looking, in whose veins life coursed it so happily, that, in order to put him on a par with less fortunate constitutions, fate seemed to have brought about a state of warfare between him and the captain, who thought it necessary to be always giving him the rope's end. Poor John used to dance and roar with the sting of it, and take care to deserve it better next time. He was unquestionably "very aggravating," as the saying is; but, on the other hand, the rope was not a little provoking.
23rd. A strong breeze from the N. and N.E., with clouds and rain. The foam by the vessel's side was full of those sparkles I have mentioned, like stars in clouds of froth. On the 24th, the breeze increased, but the sky was fairer, and the moon gave a light. We drank the health of a friend in England, whose birthday it was; being great observers of that part of religion. The 25th brought us beautiful weather, with a wind right from the north, so that we ran down the remainder of the coast of Portugal in high style. Just as we desired it, too, it changed to N.W., so as to enable us to turn the Strait of Gibraltar merrily. Cape St. Vincent (where the battle took place), just before you come to Gibraltar, is a beautiful lone promontory jutting out upon the sea, and crowned with a convent. It presented itself to my eyes the first thing when I came upon deck in the morning,—clear, solitary, blind-looking; feeling, as it were, the sea air and the solitude for ever, like something between stone and spirit. It reminded me of a couplet, written not long before, of

"Ghastly castle, that eternally
Holds its blind visage out to the lone sea."

Such things are beheld in one's day-dreams, and we are almost startled to find them real.

Between the Cape and Gibraltar were some fishermen, ten or twelve in a boat, fishing with a singular
dancing motion of the line. These were the first "Southrons" we had seen in their own domain; and they interested us accordingly. One man took off his cap. In return for this politeness, the sailors joked them in bad Portuguese, and shouted with laughter at the odd sound of their language when they replied. A seaman, within his ship and his limited horizon, thinks he contains the whole circle of knowledge. Whatever gives him a hint of anything else, he looks upon as absurdity; and is the first to laugh at his own ignorance, without knowing it, in another shape. That a Portuguese should not be able to speak English, appears to him the most ludicrous thing in the world; while, on his part, he affects to think it a condescension to speak a few rascally words of Portuguese, though he is in reality very proud of them. The more ignorance and inability, the more pride and intolerance! A servant-maid whom we took with us to Italy, could not "abide" the disagreeable sound of Tuscan; and professed to change the word grazie into grochy, because it was prettier.

All this corner of the Peninsula is rich in ancient and modern interest. There is Cape St. Vincent, just mentioned; Trafalgar, more illustrious; Cadiz, the city of Geryon; Gibraltar, and the other pillar of Hercules; Atlantis, Plato's Island, which he puts hercabouts; and the Fortunate Islands, Elysian
Fields, or Gardens of the Hesperides, which, under different appellations, and often confounded with one another, lay in this part of the Atlantic, according to Pliny. Here, also, if we are to take Dante's word for it, Ulysses found a grave, not unworthy of his life in the *Odyssey*. Milton ought to have come this way from Italy, instead of twice going through France. He would have found himself in a world of poetry, the unaccustomed grandeur of the sea keeping it in its original freshness, unspoilt by the commonplaces that beset us on shore; and his descriptions would have been still finer for it. It is observable, that Milton does not deal much in descriptions of the ocean, a very epic part of poetry. He has been at Homer and Apollonius, more than at sea. In one instance, he is content with giving us an ancient phrase in one-half of his line, and a translation of it in the other:

"On the clear hyaline,—the glassy sea."

The best describer of the sea, among our English poets, is Spenser, who was conversant with the Irish Channel. Shakspeare, for an inland poet, is wonderful; but his astonishing sympathy with everything, animate and inanimate, made him lord of the universe, without stirring from his seat. Nature brought her shows to him like a servant, and drew back for his eye the curtains of time and place. Mil-
ton and Dante speak of the ocean as of a great plain. Shakspeare talks as if he had ridden upon it, and felt its unceasing motion.

“The still-vext Bermoothes.”

What a presence is there in that epithet! He draws a rocky island with its waters about it, as if he had lived there all his life; and he was the first among our dramatists to paint a sailor,—as he was to lead the way in those national caricatures of Frenchmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen.

“You by whose aid,”
says Prospero,—

“Weak masters though ye be, I have be-dimm’d
The noon-tide sun, call’d forth the mutinous winds,
And ’twixt the green sea and the azur’d vault
Set roaring war.”

He could not have said it better, had he been buffeted with all the blinding and shrieking of a Channel storm. As to Spenser, see his comparisons of “billows in the Irish sounds;” his

“World of waters, wide and deep,”
in the first book,—much better than “the ocean floor” (suol marino) of Dante; and all the sea-pictures, both fair and stormy, in the wonderful twelfth canto of Book the Second, with its fabulous ichthyology, part of which I must quote here for
the pleasure of poetical readers: for the seas ought not to be traversed without adverting to these other shapes of their terrors—

"All dreadful pourtraicts of deformitie;
Spring-headed hydras, and sea-shouldering whales;
Great whirlc-poolcs which all fishes make to flee;
Bright scolopendras, arm'd with silver scales;
Mighty monoccros with immeasured tayles.*
The dreadfull fish that hath deserved the name
Of Death, and like him looks in dreadfull hew;
The griesly wasserman, that makes his game
The flying ships with swiftness to pursue;
The horrible sea-satyre, that doth shew
His fearefull face in time of greatest storm;
Huge ziffius, whom mariners eschew
No less than rocks, as travellers informe;

(How he loads his verses with a weight of apprehension, as if it was all real!)

And greedy rosmaries, with visages deformè.

"All these, and thousand thousands many more,
And more deformèd monsters, thousand-fold,
With dreadful noise and hollow rumbling rorc
Came rushing, in the fomy waves enroll'd,
Which seem'd to fly, for feare them to behold.
No wonder if these did the knight appall:
For all that here on earth we dreadfull hold,
Be but as bugs to fearen babes withall,
Comparèd to the creatures in the sea's enthral."

* This is the smisurato of the Italians. In the Orlando Innamorato somebody comes riding on a smisurato cavallone, an immeasurable horse.
Five *dreadfuls* in the course of three stanzas, and not one too many, any more than if a believing child were talking to us.

Gibraltar has a noble look, tall, hard, and independent. But you do not wish to live there:—it is a fortress, and an insulated rock; and such a place is but a prison. The inhabitants feed luxuriously, with the help of their fruits and smugglers.

The first sight of Africa is an achievement. Voyagers in our situation are obliged to be content with a mere sight of it; but that is much. They have seen another quarter of the globe. "Africa!" They look at it, and repeat the word, till the whole burning and savage territory, with its black inhabitants and its lions, seems put into their possession. Ceuta and Tangier bring the old Moorish times before you; "Ape's Hill," which is pointed out, sounds fantastic and remote, "a wilderness of monkeys;" and as all shores on which you do not clearly distinguish objects have a solemn and romantic look, you get rid of the petty effect of those vagabond Barbary States that occupy the coast, and think at once of Africa, the country of deserts and wild beasts, the "dry-nurse of lions," as Horace, with a vigour beyond himself, calls it.

At Gibraltar you first have a convincing proof of the rarity of the southern atmosphere, in the near
look of the Straits, which seem but a few miles across, though they are thirteen.

But what a crowd of thoughts face one on entering the Mediterranean! Grand as the sensation is in passing through the classical and romantic memories of the sea off the western coast of the Peninsula, it is little compared with this. Countless generations of the human race, from three quarters of the world, with all the religions, and the mythologies, and the genius, and the wonderful deeds, good and bad, that have occupied almost the whole attention of mankind, look you in the face from the galleries of that ocean-floor, rising one above another, till the tops are lost in heaven. The water at your feet is the same water that bathes the shores of Europe, of Africa, and of Asia,—of Italy and Greece, and the Holy Land, and the lands of chivalry and romance, and pastoral Sicily, and the Pyramids, and old Crete, and the Arabian city of Al Cairo, glittering in the magic lustre of the Thousand and One Nights. This soft air in your face comes from the grove of "Daphne by Orontes;" these lucid waters, that part from before you like oil, are the same from which Venus arose, pressing them out of her hair. In that quarter Vulcan fell—

"Dropt from the zenith like a falling star:"

and there is Circe's Island, and Calypso's, and the
promontory of Plato, and Ulysses wandering, and Cymon and Miltiades fighting, and Regulus crossing the sea to Carthage, and

"Damasco and Morocco, and Trebisond;
And whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia."

The mind hardly separates truth from fiction in thinking of all these things, nor does it wish to do so. Fiction is Truth in another shape, and gives as close embraces. You may shut a door upon a ruby, and render it of no colour; but the colour shall not be the less enchanting for that, when the sun, the poet of the world, touches it with his golden pen. What we glow at and shed tears over, is as real as love and pity.

At night the moon arose in a perfection of serenity, and restored the scene to the present moment. I could not help thinking, however, of Anacreon (poets are of all moments), and fancying some connection with moonlight in the very sound of that beautiful verse in which he speaks of the vernal softness of the waves:—

"Apalûnetai galêné."

I write the verse in English characters, that every reader may taste it.

All our Greek beauties why should schools engross?
I used to feel grateful to Fielding and Smollett, when a boy, for writing their Greek in English. It is like catching a bit of a beautiful song, though one does not know the words.

27th. Almost a calm. We proceeded at no greater rate than a mile an hour. I kept repeating to myself the word "Mediterranean;" not the word in prose, but the word in verse, as it stands at the beginning of the line:

    "And the sea
    Mediterranean."

We saw the mountains about Malaga, topped with snow. Velez Malaga is probably the place at which Cervantes landed on his return from captivity at Algiers. (See Don Quixote, vol. ii.) I had the pleasure of reading the passage, while crossing the line betwixt the two cities. It is something to sail by the very names of Granada and Andalusia. There was a fine sunset over the hills of Granada. I imagined it lighting up the Alhambra. The clouds were like great wings of gold and yellow and rose-colour, with a smaller minute sprinkle in one spot, like a shower of glowing stones from a volcano. You see very faint imitations of such lustre in England. A heavy dew succeeded; and a contrary wind at south-east, but very mild. At night, the reflection of the moon on the water was like silver snakes.

We had contrary winds for several days in suc-
cession, but nothing to signify after our winter. On the 28th we saw a fire at night on the coast of Granada, and similar lights on the hills. The former was, perhaps, made by smugglers; the latter, in burning charcoal or heath. A gull came to us next day, hanging in the air, like the dove in the picture, a few yards' distance from the trysail, and occasionally dipping in the water for fish. It had a small head, and long beak, like a snipe's; wings tipped with black. It reminded us of Coleridge's poem; which my eldest boy, in the teeth of his father's rhymes, had the impudence to think the finest poem in the world. We may say of the *Ancient Mariner*, what is only to be said of the very finest poems, that it is equally calculated to please the imaginations of the most childlike boy and the profoundest man; extremes, which meet in those superhuman places; and superhuman, in a sense exquisitely human, as well as visionary. I believe Coleridge's young admirer would have been as much terrified at shooting this albatross, as the one the poet speaks of; not to mention that he could not be quite sure it was a different one.

30th. Passed Cape de Gata. My wife was very ill, but observed that illness itself was not illness, compared to what she experienced in the winter voyage. She never complained, summer or winter. It is very distressing not to be able to give perfect
comfort to patients of this generous description. The Mediterranean Sea, after the Channel, was like a basin of gold fish; but when the winds are contrary, the waves of it have a short uneasy motion, that fidget the vessel, and make one long for the nobler billows of the Atlantic. The wind, too, was singularly unpleasant,—moist and feverish. It continued contrary for several days, but became more agreeable, and sank almost into a calm on the 3rd of June. It is difficult for people on shore, in spite of their geographical knowledge, not to suppose that the view is very extensive at sea. Intermediate objects being out of the way, and the fancy taking wing like the dove of Noah, they imagine the "ocean-floor," as the poets call it, extending itself interminably all round, or bounded by an enormous horizon; whereas, the stretch of vision is limited to a distance of about seven miles, and the uninterrupted concave of the horizon, completes the look of enclosure and limitation. A man on the top of a moderate hill may see four or five times as far as from the mainmast of a man-of-war. In the thin atmosphere of the south, the horizon appears to be still more circumscribed. You seem to have but a very few miles around you, and can hardly help fancying that the sea is on a miniature scale, proportioned to the delicacy of its behaviour.

On the day above mentioned, we saw the land
between Cape St. Martin and Alicant. The coast hereabouts is all of the same rude and gray character. From this night to the next it was almost a calm, when a more favourable wind sprang up at east-south-east. The books with which I chiefly amused myself in the Mediterranean, were *Don Quixote* (for reasons which will be obvious to the reader), *Ariosto* and *Berni* (for similar reasons, their heroes having to do with the coasts of France and Africa), and Bayle's admirable *Essay on Comets*, which I picked up at Plymouth. It is the book that put an end to the superstition about comets. It is full of amusement, like all his dialectics; and holds together a perfect chain- armour of logic, the handler of which may cut his fingers with it at every turn, almost every link containing a double edge. A generation succeeds quietly to the good done it by such works, and its benefactor's name is sunk in the washy pretensions of those whom he has enriched. As to what seems defective in Bayle on the score of natural piety, the reader may supply that. A benevolent work, tending to do away real dishonour to things supernatural, will be no hinderance to any benevolent addition which others can bring it; nor would Bayle, with his good-natured face, and the scholarly simplicity of his life, have found fault with it. But he was a soldier, after his fashion, with qualities, both positive and negative, fit to keep him
one; and some things must be dispensed with on the side of what is desirable, for the sake of the part that is taken in the overthrow of what is detestable. Him whom inquisitors hate, angels may love.

All day, on the 5th, we were off the island of Yvica. The wind was contrary again till evening. Yvica was about ten miles off, when nearest. It has a barren look, with its rock in front. Spain was in sight; before and beyond, Cape St. Martin. The high land of Spain above the clouds had a look really mountainous. After having the sea to ourselves for a long while, we saw a vessel in our own situation, beating to wind and tide. Sympathy is sometimes cruel as well as kind. One likes to have a companion in misfortune. At night fell a calm.

6th. It was a grand thing this evening, to see on one side of us the sunset, and on the other side, nighttime, already on the sea. "Ruit oceano nox" (night rushes on the sea). It is not true that there is no twilight in the south, but it is very brief. Before the day is finished on one side, night is on the other. You turn and behold it unexpectedly—a black shade that fills one end of the horizon, and seems at once brooding and coming on. One sight like this, to a Hesiod or a Thales, is sufficient to fill poetry for ever with those images of brooding, and of raven wings, and the birth of Chaos, which are associated with the mythological idea of night.
To-day we hailed a ship bound for Nice, which would not tell us the country she came from. Questions put by one vessel to another are frequently refused an answer, for reasons of knavery or policy. It was curious to hear our rough and informal captain speaking through his trumpet with all the precision and loud gravity of a preacher. There is a formula in use on these occasions that has an old scriptural effect. A ship descried, appears to the sailors like a friend visiting them in prison. All hands are interested: all eyes turn to the same quarter; the business of the vessel is suspended; and such as have licence to do so, crowd on the gangway; the captain, with an air of dignity, having his trumpet brought him. You think that "What cheer, ho?" is to follow, or, "Well, my lads, who are you? and where are you going?" Not so; the captain applies his mouth with a pomp of preparation, and you are startled with the following primitive shouts, all uttered in a high formal tone, with due intervals between, as if a Calvinistic Stentor were questioning a man from the land of Goshen:—

"What is your name?"
"Whence come you?"
"Whither are you bound?"

After the question "What is your name?" all ears are bent to listen. The answer comes, high and remote, nothing, perhaps, being distinguished of it but
the vowels. The "Sall-of-Hym," you must translate into the Sally of Plymouth.

"Whence come you?" All ears bent again. "Myr" or "Mau," is Smyrna or Malta.

"Whither are you bound?" All ears again. No answer. "D—d if he'll tell," cries the captain, laying down at once his trumpet and his scripture.

7th. Saw the Colombrettes, and the land about Tortosa. Here commences the ground of Italian romance. It was on this part of the west of Spain, that the Paynim chivalry used to land, to go against Charlenagne. Here Orlando played him the tricks that got him the title of Furioso; and from the port of Barcelona, Angelica and Medoro took ship for her dominion of Cathay. I confess I looked at these shores with a human interest, and could not help fancying that the keel of our vessel was crossing a real line, over which knights and lovers had passed. And so they have, both real and fabulous; the former not less romantic, the latter scarcely less real; to thousands, indeed, much more so; for who knows not of hundreds of real men and women that have crossed these waters, and suffered actual passion on those shores and hills? And who knows not Orlando and all the hard blows he gave, and the harder blow than all given him by two happy lovers; and the lovers themselves, the representatives of all the young love that ever was. I had a grudge of my own against
Angelica, looking upon myself as jilted by those fine eyes which the painter has given her in the English picture; for I took her for a more sentimental person; but I excused her, seeing her beset and tormented by all those knights, who thought they earned a right to her by hacking and hewing; and I more than pardoned her, when I found that Medoro, besides being young and handsome, was a friend and a devoted follower. But what of that? They were both young and handsome; and love, at that time of life, goes upon no other merits, taking all the rest upon trust in the generosity of its wealth, and as willing to bestow a throne as a ribbon, to show the all-sufficiency of its contentment. Fair speed your sails over the lucid waters, ye lovers, on a lover-like sea! Fair speed them, yet never land; for where the poet has left you, there ought ye, as ye are, to be living for ever—for ever gliding about a summer-sea, touching at its flowery islands, and reposing beneath its moan.

The blueness of the water about these parts was excessive, especially in the shade next the vessel's side. The gloss of the sunshine was there taken off, and the colour was exactly that of the bottles sold in the shops with gold stoppers. In the shadows caused by the more transparent medium of the sails, an exquisite radiance was thrown up, like light struck out of a great precious stone. These colours, con-
tasted with the yellow of the horizon at sunset, formed one of those spectacles of beauty, which it is difficult to believe not intended to delight many more spectators than can witness them with human eyes. Earth and sea are full of gorgeous pictures, which seem made for a nobler and certainly a more numerous admiration than is found among ourselves. Individuals may roam the loveliest country for a summer’s day, and hardly meet a person bound on the same enjoyment as themselves. Does human nature flatter itself that all this beauty was made for its dull and absent eyes, gone elsewhere to poke about for pence? Or, if so, is there not to be discerned in it a new and religious reason for being more alive to the wholesome riches of nature, and less to those carking cares and unneighbourly emulations of cities?

8th. Calm till evening, when a fairer wind arose, which continued all night. There was a divine sunset over the mouth of the Ebro,—majestic, dark-embattled clouds, with an intense sun venting itself above and below like a Shekinah, and the rest of the heaven covered with large flights of little burnished and white clouds. It was what is called in England a mackerel sky,—an appellation which may serve to show how inferior it is to a sky of the same mottled description in the south. All colours in the north are comparatively cold and fishy. You have only to see a red cap under a Mediterranean sun, to be con-
vinced that our painters will never emulate those of Italy as our poets have done. They are birds of a different clime, and are modified accordingly. They do not live upon the same lustrous food; therefore will never show it in their plumage. Poetry is the internal part, or sentiment, of what is material; and therefore, our thoughts being driven inwards, and rendered imaginative by these very defects of climate which discolour to us the external world, we have had among us some of the greatest poets that ever existed. It is observable, that the greatest poets of Italy came from Tuscany, where there is a great deal of inclemency in the seasons. The painters were from Venice, Rome, and other quarters; some of which, though more northern, are more genially situated. The hills about Florence made Petrarch and Dante well acquainted with winter; and they were also travellers, and unfortunate. These are mighty helps to reflection. Titian and Raphael had nothing to do but to paint under a blue sky half the day, and play with their mistress's locks all the rest of it. Let a painter in cloudy and bill-broking England do this if he can.

9th. Completely fair wind at south-west. Saw Montserrat. The sunshine, reflected on the water from the lee studding-sail, was like shot silk. At half-past seven in the evening, night was risen in the east, while the sun was setting opposite. "Black
night has come up already," said our poetical captain. A fair breeze all night and all next day, took us on at the rate of about five miles an hour, very refreshing after the calms and foul winds. We passed the Gulf of Lyons still more pleasantly than we did the Bay of Biscay, for in the latter there was a calm. In both of these places, a little rough handling is generally looked for. A hawk settled on the main-yard, and peered about the birdless main.

11th. Light airs not quite fair, till noon, when they returned and were somewhat stronger. (I am thus particular in my daily notices, both to complete the reader's sense of the truth of my narrative, and to give him the benefit of them in case he goes the same road.) The land about Toulon was now visible, and then the Hieres Islands, a French paradise of oranges and sweet airs——

"Cheer'd with the grateful smell, old Ocean smiles."

The perfume exhalating from these and other flowery coasts is no fable, as every one knows who has passed Gibraltar and the coast of Genoa. M. le Franc de Pompignan, in some verses of the commonest French manufacture, tells us, with respect to the Hieres Islands, that Vertumnus, Pomona, Zephyr, &c. "reign there always," and that the place is "the asylum of their loves, and the throne of their empire." Very private and public!
It was the coast of Provence we were now looking upon, the land of the Troubadours. It seemed but a short cut over to Tripoli, where Geoffrey Rudel went to look upon his mistress and die. But our attention was called off by a less romantic spectacle, a sight unpleasant to an Englishman,—the union flag of Genoa and Sardinia hoisted on a boat. An independent flag of any kind is something; a good old battered and conquered one is much; but this bit of the Holy Alliance livery, patched up among his brother servants by poor Lord Castlereagh, and making its bow in the very seas where Andrew Doria feasted an emperor and refused a sovereignty, was a baulk of a very melancholy kind of burlesque. The Sardinian was returning with empty wine casks from the French coast; a cargo which, at the hour of day when we saw it, probably bore the liveliest possible resemblance to the heads whom he served. The wind fell in the evening, and there was a dead calm all night. At eleven o'clock, a grampus was heard breathing very hard, but we could not see it on account of the mists, the only ones we had experienced in the Mediterranean. These sounds of great fish in the night-time are very imposing, the
creature displacing a world of water about it, as it dips and rises at intervals on its billowy path.

12th. During the night we must have crossed the path which Bonaparte took to Antibes from Elba. We went over it as unconsciously as he now travels round with the globe in his long sleep. Talking with the captain to-day, I learned that his kindred and he monopolize the whole employment of his owner, and that his father served in it thirty-three years out of fifty. There is always something respectable in continuity and duration. If this family should continue to be masters and conductors of vessels for two or three generations, more especially in the same interest, they will have a sort of moral pedigree to show, far beyond those of many proud families, who do nothing at all because their ancestors did something a hundred years back.

I will here set down a memorandum, with regard to vessels, which may be useful. The one we sailed in was marked A. 1, in the shipping list: that is to say, it stood in the first rank of sea-worthy vessels; and it is in vessels of this class that people are always anxious to sail. In the present instance, the ship was worthy of the rank it bore; so was the one we buffeted the Channel in; or it would not have held out. But this mark of prime worthiness, A. 1, a vessel is allowed to retain only ten years; the consequence of which is, that many ships are built to
last only that time; and goods and lives are often entrusted to a weak vessel, instead of one which, though twice as old, is in twice as good condition. The best way is to get a friend who knows something of the matter, to make inquiries; and the seaworthiness of the captain himself, his standing with his employers, &c., might as well be added to the list.

13th. The Alps! It was the first time I had seen mountains. They had a fine sulky look, up aloft in the sky,—cold, lofty, and distant. I used to think that mountains would impress me but little; that by the same process of imagination reversed, by which a brook can be fancied a mighty river, with forests instead of verdure on its banks, a mountain could be made a mole-hill, over which we step. But one look convinced me to the contrary. I found I could elevate, better than I could pull down; and I was glad of it. It was not that the sight of the Alps was necessary to convince me of "the being of a God," as it is said to have done somebody, or to put me upon any reflections respecting infinity and first causes, of which I have had enough in my time; but I seemed to meet for the first time a grand poetical thought in a material shape,—to see a piece of one's book-wonders realized,—something very earthly, yet standing between earth and heaven, like a piece of the antediluvian world looking out of the coldness of
ages. I remember reading in a Review a passage from some book of travels, which spoke of the author standing on the sea-shore, and being led by the silence and the abstraction, and the novel grandeur of the objects around him, to think of the earth, not in its geographical relations, but as a planet in connection with other planets, and rolling in the immensity of space. With these thoughts I have been familiar, as I suppose every one has been who knows what solitude is, and has an imagination, and perhaps not the best health. But we grow used to the mightiest aspects of thought, as we do to the immortal visages of the moon and stars: and therefore the first sight of the Alps, though much less things than any of these, and a toy, as I had fancied, for imagination to recreate itself with after their company, startles us like the disproof of a doubt, or the verification of an early dream,—a ghost, as it were, made visible by daylight, and giving us an enormous sense of its presence and materiality.

In the course of the day, we saw the tableland about Monaco. It brought to my mind the ludicrous distress of the petty prince of that place, when on his return from interchangeing congratulations with his new masters and the legitimates, he suddenly met his old master, Napoleon, on his return from Elba. Or did he meet him when going to Elba? I forget which; but the distresses and con-
fusion of the prince were at all events as certain as the superiority and amusement of the great man. In either case, this was the natural division of things, and the circumstances would have been the same. A large grampus went by, heaping the water into clouds of foam. Another time, we saw a shark with his fin above water, which, I believe, is his constant way of going. The Alps were now fully and closely seen, and a glorious sunset took place. There was the greatest grandeur and the loveliest beauty. Among others was a small string of clouds, like rubies with facets, a very dark tinge being put here and there, as if by a painter, to set off the rest. Red is certainly the colour of beauty, and ruby the most beautiful of reds. It was in no commonplace spirit that Marlowe, in his list of precious stones, called them "beauteous rubies," but with exquisite gusto:

"Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts, Jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds, Beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds," &c.

They come upon you, among the rest, like the women of gems. All these colours we had about us in our Mediterranean sunsets; and as if fortune would add to them by a freak of fancy, a little shoal of fish, sparkling as silver, leaped out of the water this afternoon, like a sprinkle of shillings. They were the anchovies, or Sardinias, that we eat. They give a
burlesque title to the sovereign of these seas, whom the Tuscans call "King of the Sardinias."

We were now sailing up the angle of the Gulf of Genoa, its shore looking as Italian as possible, with groves and white villages. The names, too, were alluring,—Oneglia, Albenga, Savona; the last, the birthplace of a sprightly poet (Frugoni), whose works I was acquainted with. The breeze was the strongest we had had yet, and not quite fair, but we made good head against it; the queen-like city of Genoa, crowned with white palaces, sat at the end of the gulf, as if to receive us in state; and at two o'clock, the waters being as blue as the sky, and all hearts rejoicing, we entered our Italian harbour, and heard Italian words.

Luckily for us, these first words were Tuscan. A pilot boat came out. Somebody asked a question which we did not hear, and the captain replied to it. "Va bene," said the pilot, in a fine open voice, and turned the head of the boat with a tranquil dignity. "Va bene," thought I, indeed. "All goes well" truly. The words are delicious, and the omen good. My family have arrived so far in safety; we have but a little more voyage to make, a few steps to measure back in this calm Mediterranean; the weather is glorious; Italy looks like what we expected; in a day or two we shall hear of our friends: health and peace are before
us, pleasure to others and profit to ourselves; and it is hard if we do not enjoy again, before long, the society of all our friends, both abroad and at home. In a day or two we received a letter from Shelley, saying that winds and waves, he hoped, would never part us more.—Alas! for that saying.

In the harbour of Genoa, we lay next a fine American vessel, the captain of which, I thought, played the great man in a style beyond anything I had seen in our English merchantmen. On the other side of us, was an Englishman, as fragile as the other was stout built. Yet the captain, with a dialect more uncouth than any of us had heard, talked of its weathering the last winter capitally, and professed not to care anything for a gale of wind, which he called a “gal o’ wined.” We here met with our winter vessel, looking as gay and summery as possible, and having an awning stretched over the deck, under which the captain invited us to dine. I went and had the pleasure of meeting our friend the mate, and a good-natured countryman, residing at Genoa, who talked much of a French priest whom he knew, and whom he called “the prate” (prêtre). Our former companions, in completing their voyage, had had a bad time of it in the Gulf of Lyons, during which the ship was under water, the cook-house and bulwarks, &c., carried away, and the men obliged to be taken aft.
into the cabin two nights together. We had reason to bless ourselves that my wife was not there; for this would infallibly have put an end to her.

On the 28th of June, we set sail for Leghorn. The weather was still as fine as possible, and our concluding trip as agreeable; with the exception of a storm of thunder and lightning one night, which was the completest I ever saw. Our newspaper friend, "the oldest man living," ought to have been there to see it. The lightning fell in all parts of the sea, like pillars; or like great melted fires, suddenly dropped from a giant torch. Now it pierced the sea like rods; now fell like enormous flakes or tongues, suddenly swallowed up. At one time, it seemed to confine itself to a dark corner of the ocean, making formidable shows of gigantic and flashing lances (for it was the most perpendicular lightning I ever saw): then it dashed broadly at the whole sea, as if it would sweep us away in flame; and then came in random portions about the vessel, treading the waves hither and thither, like the legs of fiery spirits descending in wrath.

I now had a specimen (and confess I was not sorry to see it) of the fear which could enter even into the hearts of our "gallant heroes," when thrown into an unusual situation. The captain, almost the only man unmoved, or apparently so (and I really believe he was as fearless on all occasions, as his
native valour, to say nothing of his brandy and water, could make him), was so exasperated with the alarm depicted in the faces of some of his crew, that he dashed his hand contemptuously at the poor fellow at the helm, and called him a coward. For our parts, having no fear of thunder and lightning, and not being fully aware perhaps of the danger to which vessels are exposed on these occasions, particularly if, like our Channel, friend, they carry gunpowder (as most of them do, more or less), we were quite at our ease compared with our inexperienced friends about us, who had never witnessed anything of the like before even in books. Besides, we thought it impossible for the Mediterranean to play us any serious trick,—that sunny and lucid basin, which we had beheld only in its contrast with a northern and a winter sea. Little did we think, that in so short a space of time, and somewhere about this very spot, a catastrophe would take place, that should put an end to all sweet thoughts, both of the Mediterranean and the south.