

William & Elizabeth

Mary Ann

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Lieut. Turner, & Boats Crew of the Ship Tea, made Prisoners, by the Ladrone Pirates.

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SUFFERINGS

OF

JOHN TURNER,

CHIEF MATE OF THE COUNTRY SHIP,

TAY,

BOUND FOR CHINA,

UNDER THE COMMAND OF

WILLIAM GREIG,

INCLUDING

The Seizure of him and Six Lascars in the Cutter, and their
Captivity and Danger amongst the

LADRONES;

WITH

A Description of the Strength, Discipline, Manners, &c. of these

PIRATES,

Their Depredations and Conduct towards their Prisoners.

ALSO

A CURIOUS ACCOUNT OF

PETER SERRANO,

Who having escaped from Shipwreck, lived Seven Years on a
Sandy Island, on the Coast of Peru.

LONDON :

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SUFFERINGS

OF

JOHN TURNER,

Chief Mate of the Country Ship, TAY,

INCLUDING

His Captivity and Danger amongst the Ladrões.

THE hero of this narrative sailed from Bombay, August 13, 1806, as chief mate of the Tay, Country ship, bound for China, under the command of William Greig. After a tedious passage through the Mindora sea, they arrived off St. John's, on the South coast of China.

On the 29th of November, (being the day after their arrival here,) a fishing boat came off to enquire if they wanted an outside pilot. The captain offered these men 70 dollars if they would attend with their boat, and conduct the vessel to Macao roads; but they demanded the sum of 100 dollars, which Captain Greig positively refused. Two of these fishermen had come on board, and perceiving there were only two guns in the vessel, told the crew that if the Ladrões had any idea of their defenceless state, they would immediately attack, and undoubtedly take them prisoners. Some of the crew, however, observed in reply, that though they had only two carriage guns, they had plenty of small arms. These fishermen soon afterwards went away, and stood towards St. John's. The Tay afterwards kept coming to windward, with light N.E. winds, anchoring occasionally.

Having been at anchor, December 6th, about four miles West of the little Ladrone, a large junk stood down from the northward right towards them. The Captain having attentively viewed her through a glass, discovered her to be a war junk, but could not ascertain whether a Mandarin or Ladrone: the latter, however, became evident. Captain Greig now gave orders for a gun to be loaded, and small arms to be got on deck, which they fired to see if they were in order. Hereupon the junk hauled her wind, and stood to the N.W. between the islands. At six o'clock, P.M. they weighed with a light breeze, and at nine, came to an anchor about a mile and a half, or two miles below Kowhon point.

The captain now desired Mr. Turner, (as they were at some distance from Macao, and the second mate indisposed,) to get the cutter out at day-light in the morning, and make the best of his way to Macao, in order to get a pilot off as soon as possible, and a comprador, with provisions, of which they were very short. Accordingly Mr. Turner left the Tay in the cutter with six Lascars, at sunrise in the 7th, having only two muskets with them.

They now pulled a little to windward of Kowhon point, and about half past seven o'clock, A.M. came to an anchor to step the boat's masts. There having been at this time a strong ebb tide, they observed several vessels of different sizes coming from the northward, which Mr. Turner supposed to be fishermen, though he afterwards found that they were Ladrone: one junk, in particular, appeared to be coming from Macao, she being then some way inside of Cabrita Point.

Having stepped the masts, and weighed, they pulled and sailed towards Macao with a light breeze, when at a short distance between Kowhon and Cabrita Point, the junk still standing towards them, as near to the wind as she could, they perceived a boat put off from along side of her, and pulling towards the cutter. At first Mr. Turner imagined it was a comprador's boat, but on her nearer approach, he observed she was full of men. They now fired a gun from their bow, and Mr. Turner, perceiving their hostile intentions, began to load a musket. Having pulled towards each other, they closed instantaneously, when the enemy boarded the cutter, stabbing one of the Lascars in the back, and aiming a blow with the sword at Mr. Turner, who avoided it by jumping overboard. Our hero was soon after taken up, and the tide having by this time set the boats alongside the junk, he and his fellow cap-

tives were ordered to go on board her. This junk mounted eight carriage guns, six pounders. Mr. Turner was immediately plundered of all he had about him, and by the information of one of them who spoke a little English, he understood they were prisoners to the Ladrone.

Mr. Turner was now interrogated very closely respecting the strength of the vessel to which he belonged: he assured them that the Tay mounted twenty guns larger than their's, and had 150 men. He also took an opportunity of cautioning his fellow captives to say the same, if questioned separately; being convinced that if this junk had attacked the Tay, she would infallibly have carried her; for there were absolutely no other arms aboard the vessel than the two guns already mentioned, and six muskets, two of which had been given to Mr. Turner in the cutter; they were equally deficient in ammunition, having only eleven cartridges for the guns, and a small quantity for the muskets. Happily, however, the Ladrone believed Mr. Turner, and having bore up and stood down the Tyssa, they were joined by two other Ladrone junks. In about three hours after, they came to an anchor at Lunpacor, where there were several others.

We shall now make a few observations respecting the strength, discipline, manners, &c. of those pirates, into whose hands our hero had the misfortune to fall.

The chief number of vessels engaged in acts of piracy on the South coast of China, and which are known to Europeans, by the name of Ladrone, is, it is supposed, between five or six hundred sail: they are of different sizes, not having been built on purpose by the pirates themselves, but being vessels, which, from time to time have been captured by them; the largest may be about 200 tons burthen; the smallest 15 tons; the greatest part, however, are from 70 to 150 tons. There is nothing in their construction or appearance to distinguish them from the Chinese trading vessels, and like those, their draught of water is much less than the generality of Europeans of the same burthen. The largest of these vessels carries twelve guns six to twelve pounders, and some of them have even a few eighteen pounders. The rest carry metal according to their size, besides long wall pieces with metal locks; pikes with bamboo shafts, from 14 to 18 feet long, which they throw at a distance like javelins; also shorter ones, with shafts of solid wood, the iron part similar to the blade of a dirk, slightly recurved, and made sharp on one or both edges: these they keep in

their hands for fighting at close quarters; for which purpose they also use short swords scarcely exceeding eighteen inches in length.

Like the guns of the Chinese forts and vessels, those of the Ladrões are also mounted on carriages without trucks, having neither breechings nor tackling, and being all seen out right a-beam, never pointed fore and aft, they are obliged, in making an attack, to wear the vessel, in order to bring the guns to bear on the object, a man standing behind with a match, ready to fire as soon as he has a good aim: the guns are previously elevated or depressed, according to the distance. Having in this way fired their broadside, they haul off to reload.

The number of men in each vessel is generally considerable for its size. The largest have upwards of one hundred: few, even of the smallest, have less than thirty. If the whole be averaged at fifty men, and the number of vessels reckoned at five hundred, (neither of which suppositions exceeds the truth,) the total number of these pirates will amount to 25,000 men.

Independent of the force already described, several of the vessels have a row-boat belonging to them, mounting from six to ten wall pieces and swivels; also well armed with boarding pikes and swords; and, according to their sizes, carrying from eighteen to thirty men. These are rigged with one or two masts and sails like other Chinese boats, and pull down from fourteen to twenty oars. They are more particularly employed in going close along shore at night, plundering and destroying villages and farms, that do not pay them tribute, and carrying off such of the inhabitants as fall into their hands.

They chiefly infest the mouths of the rivers, Macao, and such places as have small trading boats. They generally leave the large vessels an hour or two before sun-set, and return about noon the following day; though they are sometimes absent two or three days; lying at anchor during the day, so as not to be seen by those on whom they intend to make their depredations. At dusk they issue forth, and plunder whatever falls in their way. Sometimes, when unsuccessful, they go on the sides or tops of the hills, and on perceiving any boat or vessel, which they think they are able to manage, immediately give chase to it.

The Ladrões are abundantly supplied with shot from Macao and Whampoa, stolen, no doubt, by the Chinese, from the forts and shipping at those places, and brought by them for sale. Even so many eighteen-pound shot was brought in Mr. Tur-

ner's presence; that they were refused: which, in all probability, came from Whampoa. When at close quarters, they frequently use nails, the fragments of iron pots, &c. which supply the place of grape and cannister. Of powder, of Chinese manufacture, they readily procure what they want from different places.

Their numbers are kept up, and even considerably augmented, partly by such of their captives as are unable to ransom themselves, and partly by Chinese, who come daily from different parts of the coast to join them. It will hardly be credited, how great the numbers of this latter description. Our hero saw from five to ten come at one time, and on one occasion upwards of thirty. Some of these were, doubtless, vagabonds, instigated by poverty and idleness to embrace this criminal mode of life; but many were men of decent appearance, and some of them brought money with them. The only reason assigned for their conduct, was, that the Mandarins of their district were unjust, and that they came there to avoid their oppression. These men, (as supposed,) are at liberty to leave the Ladrões whenever they choose; as several went away after being only a month or two with them. At one time they used to come and go in such quick succession, that the chief refused to allow any to join him, unless they agreed to stop eight or nine months, at the end of which time they were to be at liberty to go or stay. Great numbers, however, remain for years; and it is on them that the command of the vessels devolve.

The whole body of Ladrone vessels are under the command of about five chiefs, who are independent of each other; the vessels under each chief being distinguished by a particular flag, at the foremast-head. The division by which the Tay's cutter was captured had a red triangular flag, with a white scalloped border. A second division has a black triangular flag, with a white scalloped border. A third division has a red square flag, without any border. A fourth is distinguished by a red triangular flag, with a plain yellow border; and a fifth by a square flag, blue and white horizontally.

The two first divisions generally cruise amongst the islands on the coast from Tyho eastward. The three others keep more to the westward, though at times even they go to the eastward of Macao. The division bearing the red flag, with a white border, is at present, much superior in force to any of the others.

Each vessel has a captain, who directs in a general way all the operations on board, and whose authority is sufficiently

respected by the crew. The management of the sails, and steerage of the vessel, are intrusted to two or more experienced hands, whose orders on those points are attended to and executed by the others. Under them are three or four men similar to our boatswain's mates, whose business it is to keep the people on deck and at their duty.

During the time of action or chase, the captain takes a more active part, and directs all the movements. In every vessel there is a certain proportion of men of approved courage who have voluntarily joined the *Ladrones*. These fire the guns, and are the most forward in all hazardous enterprises. Should the captain fall, one of these generally takes the command. None of the crew are ever flogged or beaten in a *Ladron* boat, but they are sometimes put in irons. The captain is generally better dressed than the common *Ladrones*. He also fares somewhat better, and the officers or assistants above mentioned are some of them partakers of his meals.

Each division is formed into several squadrons, commanded by an inferior chief, by whom the captains of the different vessels are generally appointed, and from whom they receive their orders. He is himself responsible for his conduct to the chief of his division. Sometimes the whole of the squadrons join their forces, and frequently only a few vessels in company, according to the force which they expect to meet.

All vessels which frequent the coasts of China are liable to be attacked by them, excepting such as, by paying a tribute to one of the *Ladron* chiefs, have obtained a pass, which is respected by all the other divisions. Numbers of fishing boats, and of the country merchant vessels, avail themselves of these protections.

The farms and villages upon the coast, which have no fort in their neighbourhood, are equally subject to the depredations of the *Ladrones*; and their inhabitants are for the most part glad to compound for their safety, by paying a tribute, which is collected from the villages every six months, from the boats, annually; and the sums obtained in this way must be considerable. As a proof how far these passes are respected, it may be mentioned, that the commander of a squadron having plundered and detained a fishing boat that had a pass, the matter was represented to the chief of the division, and the commander was obliged not only to give up the boat to its owner, but to pay him five hundred dollars for the detention and losses which he had suffered.

If a vessel which they capture have made resistance, they in general murder some of the crew, and cruelly treat the rest. If she has made no resistance, but they suspect the crew of having destroyed or secreted any thing, though none are murdered, they are very severely punished. In other cases they are satisfied with the plunder and detention of the vessel and crew.

This punishment is inflicted in the following cruel manner; the unhappy subject, having been first stript of all but his trowsers, has his hands tied together behind his back; a rope passing from the mast head, is then made fast to his joined hands, by which he is hoisted from the deck; and, while thus suspended, repeated stripes are inflicted on every part of his body, with a rod formed of two or three rattans twisted together. Blood frequently follows the stripes, and in some cases the miserable sufferer is left suspended by his hands for upwards of an hour.

When any of the *Mandarin* boats unfortunately fall into their hands, the persons belonging to them are most cruelly butchered. All the prisoners whom they take, who are possessed of any funds, are expected to ransom themselves. The ransom demanded is generally as much as they suppose the person can raise, either from his own fortune, or by the assistance of his friends. Should those who are supposed capable of paying for their release refuse to do so, they infallibly expose themselves to the cruel treatment above mentioned.

When the ransom agreed upon is brought, the person is immediately given up. Those, however, who are unable to ransom themselves are detained, and obliged to assist in working the vessels, and other duties. They are never allowed to go on shore, even for water, without some of the *Ladrones* voluntarily accompanying them armed. Notwithstanding these precautions, they at times make their escape; but, if retaken, are most severely treated, or perhaps put to death. It is said that at the end of four or five years, they obtain their release, if they wish it, but the habits they have acquired, or their dread of being recognised as *Ladrones*, prevent the greater part from returning to their former occupations.

With respect to the women who fall into their hands, the handsomest are reserved by them for wives and concubines; the chiefs and captains having frequently three or more, the others seldom more than one; and having once made the choice of a wife, they are obliged to be constant to her, no promiscuous intercourse being allowed amongst them. But the greater part

of the crew are satisfied without women. A few are ransomed, and the most homely returned on shore. Children taken are generally detained, and brought up as servants, &c.

When a vessel is taken, and the owners do not ransom her, (which is sometimes the case,) both vessel and cargo are destroyed, if not wanted by the captors; but in general, the best vessels are kept, and armed as Ladrões. The cargo, when of use to them, is distributed amongst the ships of the squadron; and it is in this way that they are partly supplied with necessaries. Whatever money is found in their prizes is brought to the commander of the squadron, as also the sums received for the ransom of prisoners and goods.

Of this, a trifle is given to the immediate captors; part is reserved to purchase provisions and other supplies, according as they are wanted, for the use of the squadron; and a certain proportion, though we know not what, is paid to the chief of the division.

From this source, and that of the tribute before mentioned, there is generally a large quantity of specie aboard the vessels of the chief. It has been said, from fifty to one hundred thousand dollars. Out of this they supply such squadrons as may have been unsuccessful in their cruises.

The Ladrões find not the least difficulty in procuring supplies of provisions, and all other necessaries on every part of the coast, for which they pay honourably. The fishermen are generally the bearers of these supplies.

If the Ladrões are not endued with that desperate valour, which is the characteristic of many other pirates, they are by no means devoid of courage, as they have been repeatedly seen to stand very well during an attack. It has been asserted by an Armenian, and some Portuguese, who have been witnesses of their conduct during an attack, that they are apt to flinch when wounded. They have been known themselves to declare that they were not afraid of an attack either from the Chinese Government, or any other; and that nothing would give them greater pleasure than to meet with the Mandarin junks at a distance from Macao, on nearly equal terms. As an instance how well they will defend themselves if hard pushed, it has been stated that a Mandarin fell in with four Mandarin junks all larger than herself, which, after an engagement of some time, she beat off, having one man killed and two wounded.

They have often threatened, that some time or other, when there might be no foreign ships at Whampoa, they would make

an attack on Canton: and should the Portuguese cruisers oppose their design, that they would burn them. This might probably have been bravado: it is, however, certain that they frequently go amongst all the islands, singly, and in small bodies, without fear or molestation.

We shall now return to our captive hero, whom we left at anchor at Lunka-cow. On the 8th of December it blew a heavy gale. Mr. Turner, therefore, desired the man who spoke a little English, to inform the Captain of the junk that he suffered much from the cold, and would thank him to order the person who had taken his great coat, to return it. The captain accordingly sent an order to this effect, and the coat was restored to him, stripped, however, of all its buttons.

On the 9th our hero was sent on board the junk, in which the chief of the flag resided, while the Lascars were kept on board the vessel which captured the cutter. The chief's junk mounted ten guns, of which, two were long eighteen-pounders, the rest six and nine.

The next day Mr. Turner learned by the interpretation of a Malay, one of those taken with him in the boat, who understood a little Chinese, that the Ladrões demanded 3,000 dollars for their ransom; hereupon, our hero wrote two letters to Canton, one to Messrs. Baring and Co. who were agents for the ship, the other to Captain Greig; informing them of his unfortunate situation, and of the sum demanded for their enlargement. These letters were entrusted to the care of the fishermen, and in all probability were destroyed by them.

A Chinese who understood English, having come on board on the 11th, informed Mr. Turner that the Ladrões demanded 10,000 dollars for their ransom, which, if not given, they would consequently be put to death. He offered, if Mr. Turner would, write to the Captain of the Tay, to pay Captain Greig ten dollars to carry letters to Whampoa. Our hero, alarmed at the intelligence which this man had communicated, immediately wrote again to Messrs. Baring and Co. requesting their assistance.

An American who spoke the Moorish language, was brought on board December 14th, he had been captured by the Ladrões about seventeen months before, in a Portuguese brig from Manilla to Macao, in which he was a passenger. Our hero's apprehensions of being murdered were now partly removed, for the present, by this American, who remained on board till the 24th, when he was sent to look at some wounded men

in another junk, having before assisted in curing two or three invalids.

On the 25th they weighed and made sail in company of about seventy sail of Ladrone vessels, and stood to the N.E. between the islands. On the 28th they anchored at a place called by the Chinese Wung-chong-chow, where the Ladrone attacked two places, defended by forts, but without success. As the junk of the chief of the flag seldom or never fights but when first attacked, our hero was consequently no witness of these attacks.

Three Ladrone junks came from Macao on the 11th of January, 1807, who were sent by the man who had captured the cutter belonging to the Tay, with orders to bring Mr. Turner to him, saying the Mandarins would pay the ransom, they having now raised it to 30,000 dollars, which at first our hero could scarcely believe.

On the 13th Mr. Turner arrived on board the other junk, when he understood that the sum of 30,000 dollars had been insisted on, and also that it was not the English who were to pay this ransom, but the Mandarins, by order of the viceroy of Canton: he was also told that four men belonging to the Mandarins of Macao had been with the captors, inquiring how much they wanted, and where Mr. Turner was: they also signified that the Mandarins would pay the ransom demanded for the captured. These men were then told that 30,000 dollars was the sum that would be accepted, and no less; and that Mr. Turner, (for whom they enquired,) was on board a junk to the eastward. It was then the request was made that Mr. Turner should be sent for, and the required sum promised. Accordingly every circumstance which had been communicated to Mr. Turner by the ~~Armenian~~ was proved to be true. The Ladrone captain now desired Mr. Turner to write to the Mandarins, and inform them that if the proposed ransom was not sent in the course of three days, he and his fellow captives would be put to death.

Mr. Turner, not knowing how to address the Mandarins, wrote to Mr. Drummond, stating all the above particulars, and requesting that if the Mandarins really intended to redeem them, he, (Mr. D.) would be so kind to use all his influence in facilitating their benevolent purpose; adding, that he was continually threatened with being put to death, and that he had now no other hopes of recovering his liberty but that of the Honourable Company's interference; he therefore repeated his entreaties that he would commiserate his unfortunate situation.

As Mr. Drummond had unfortunately left China before this letter was written, he consequently never received it, and our hero was never informed whether it fell into the hands of any other gentleman.

On the 18th, a small Mandarin boat with four men in her, one of whom was brought on board the junk where Mr. Turner was, happened to be among the captures which the Ladrone were continually making. The cruelty of the Ladrone to this unfortunate captive made an indelible impression on Mr. Turner's mind. He was fastened to the deck by large nails, which were inhumanly driven through his feet, and was then beaten with four rattans twisted together, till he vomited blood. After remaining for some time in the most excruciating pain, he was taken on shore, and cut into several pieces.

On the following day Mr. Turner received a letter from Captain Greig, (dated December 28, 1806,) informing him that 500 dollars were offered for their ransom, and that if the Ladrone refused to give them up, vengeance would be taken on them. The captain's letter was accompanied by one addressed to J. W. Roberts, Esq. desiring them to pay the sum on their being brought to Macao.

Our responding hero now informed his captors of the sum which had been offered by Captain Greig, observing that the Tay had sailed by this time, and that he had no money of his own to add to the sum proposed: the Ladrone, however, continued to believe that the Mandarins would redeem them. Of this Mr. Turner despaired, and sent with the Captain's letter, another to Mr. Roberts, requesting he would take the earliest opportunity of ascertaining the truth of what he had heard from the Mandarins, and begging him, if it should not be true, that he would inform Mr. Drummond that the threat which had accompanied Captain Greig's proposal, would only tend to accelerate his and his fellow prisoners' dissolution. He also requested that if the vengeance which the Ladrone had been threatened with, should be attempted, no force might be immediately sent for that purpose; but that he might be left for some days to his wretched fate, until he could either make his escape, or procure assistance from England. He likewise solicited that a few clothes might be sent to him, as he suffered very much from the cold.

Soon after, our hero was informed that another man came from the Mandarins with the offer of 5,000 dollars for their ran-

som, which was refused by the Ladrone, who now insisted on 25,000, besides other things.

A Canton pass boat was taken the next day with twenty-two passengers on board, who were going to Macao. Several of these spoke English, and one in particular, named Afoo, a very sensible agreeable man, became acquainted with our hero. A very strong attachment took place, which owing to the circumstances which had formed it, proved not only mutually consolatory, but truly sincere.

Previous to New Year's day, the Ladrone passed over to Wong-chung-chow, where they intended to keep it. The ~~Armenian~~ ^{Armenian} now solicited to be sent to the junk which he was before on board of. As he had been of considerable service to them as a surgeon, his request was complied with: instead, however, of being recompensed for the cures which he had performed, his treatment became worse.

In about a week after, Mr. Turner, (by the advice of his friend, Afoo,) applied to Mr. Beale for the loan of 200 dollars to complete the sum demanded for his ransom. This letter of application contained a simple statement of his distressed situation, accompanied with repeated solicitations that he would make it known to his countrymen.

After passing a few days at Wong-chong-chow, they now left it to go near Macao. In the interim, the Ladrone urged Mr. Turner to solicit the assistance of all the British gentlemen at Macao and Canton, threatening him, that if he did not immediately procure his ransom, they would put him to a cruel death. Mr. Turner assured them, that having never been at China before, he was unacquainted with any gentlemen there. They then hinted that if they did not put him to death, they would make him a slave, and oblige him to assist in working their guns: he observed that as he belonged to a merchant-man, and not a ship of war, he knew nothing of this employment; they insinuated, however, that this was not the case.

The purser of the junk, (who had been taken by the Ladrone about three years before, and not having had money to purchase his liberty, had accepted the situation which he then held in hopes one day or other to obtain his enlargement,) was particularly kind to the captives. He often invited them to come and sit in his cabin, and one evening when Mr. Turner and Afoo were together discoursing of their unfortunate situation, they all made a vow that whoever was first released should use every exertion in his power to procure the enlargement of the

others. Afoo was the fortunate man; he, by the kind assistance of Mr. Beale, completed the sum which was demanded for his ransom, and after a month's captivity, obtained his liberty, February 22d.

Soon after a plot had been formed by two men on board a small vessel to run away with her, but the conspiracy having been discovered, they were immediately flogged and put in irons by order of the captain of the junk where Mr. Turner was. Desirous that they should be put to death, the captain brought them before the chief of the squadron, and made his complaint accordingly. The chief, however, would not consent to the sentence of death, which occasioned a sudden contest, when the captain and some of his people got their arms, and insisted on their immediate execution; but in the fray the chief was victorious, and the captain and his party were driven to their boat, one or two of them having been wounded. The captain was consequently obliged to leave the Ladrone, and the chief having given up his own vessel, took the command of the junk, though a smaller.

On the 1st of March Mr. Turner received a letter from Afoo, with some clothes which were sent by Mr. Beale; but before he had time to acknowledge the receipt of them, the Ladrone got under weigh, and stood to the south and west, passing at a short distance two or three hundred sail of Mandarins and sail boats coming from the westward, and in two or three days they arrived where several other Ladrone vessels were lying. Here they hauled their vessels on shore, and cleaned their bottoms. At this place our hero was permitted to go on shore (for the first time since he had been taken prisoner,) where he remained about an hour. A man was here put to death with circumstances of peculiar horror. Being fixed upright, his bowels were cut open, and his heart was taken out, which they afterwards soaked in spirits and ate. Mr. Turner did not witness this bloody execution, but he was shewn the mangled body. He also understood that this shocking treatment is frequently experienced by those, who, having offended the Ladrone, should ever be so unfortunate as to be in their power afterwards.

They now sailed to Tyho, from which place they soon afterwards departed, sailing in company with five other junks, and leaving several others behind. Mr. Turner was now informed by his fellow sufferers, the Lascars, that they had fallen in with some Mandarin vessels, whom they had engaged, and had taken a small one, which they burnt, having thrown every

person overboard. They now kept beating to the N.E. between the islands, and parted company again the next day.

About sunset one evening they observed two Chin-chew junks, and immediately chased them. The force of the Ladrões being four large and three small vessels, they attacked the one they came up with, and after some time, finding that she was too heavy for them, they took the guns out of one of the small vessels, and converted her into a fire ship. They then laid her alongside the Chin-chew junks to windward, and set fire to the train, in doing which, one of the Ladrões suffered exceedingly. She burnt very well, but as there was little wind, and as the junk's main-sail was on the opposite side, there was nothing that could take fire, except the hull. In about ten minutes they got her shoved off, which the Ladrões perceiving, gave the junk a few more shot, and stood from her.

About two days after, while lying between the islands, in company with three other Ladroné vessels, they saw, in the forenoon, several Mandarin junks, making all sail towards them. They immediately got under weigh, and ran to the S.W. the Mandarin still pursuing them with a force consisting of twenty-two large junks; afterwards in the evening they fell in with fourteen sail, large and small, of the Ladrões, and came to an anchor at the back of an island.

The next morning they got under weigh, and stood to the N.E. About eight o'clock, A.M. they saw the Mandarins at anchor in shore off them; they shortly after got under weigh, and though superior in force to the Ladrões, never attempted to approach them. The Ladrões turned to windward three leagues off, while the Mandarins were close in shore; the former appearing neither to seek an engagement or to avoid one. About four, P.M. the Mandarins still continued outside.

In a few days after this, the purser already mentioned told Mr. Turner that he understood that about three or four thousand dollars would be now accepted for his ransom. Hereupon, Mr. Turner wrote to Mr. Beale (from whom he had received three or four encouraging letters during his captivity,) intimating the same. The next day the purser having obtained his release by a plan which had been concerted between him and Afoo, left the Ladrões, and our hero now remained without a friend in captivity.

On the 22d of April Afoo came to the Ladroné junk in which Mr. Turner was, and informed him that he had been with the chief of the flag, from whom he had a pass for three

months, and that he had been endeavouring to induce him to lessen the sum demanded for his friend's ransom. This generous and voluntary act was doubtless of considerable advantage to Mr. Turner: for after treating some time with the chief of the squadron by whose boat he had been taken captive, it was at length agreed that 2500 dollars should be given. Afoo then left his friend to return to Macao, having first obtained a pass to secure the above sum, while bringing it, from being taken by any other Ladrões, a precaution which manifested the care and fidelity of this intelligent and worthy character.

In the morning of April 28, when lying at Lunpachou, intelligence was brought that several Mandarin vessels were approaching. The Ladrões immediately got under weigh, when one of the captains hailed the junk that Mr. Turner was on board of, saying "We are equal to them in force, and therefore will not sheer off." Hereupon the Ladrões turned about, and stood towards the Mandarins. The force of the former was eight large and ten small vessels: that of the latter, ten large and five small.

The Mandarins now showed no disposition to wait for them but made all possible sail to get away, which they at length effected, though not by their superior sailing; for the Ladrões, when within musket shot of the rear, gave up the chase, in consequence of their observing, on rounding a point, a Portuguese frigate at anchor, about the distance of two miles.

Having now made sail to the eastward, in three days the Ladrões arrived at Wong-chong-chow. On the 9th of May a Chinese, who had been sent by Afoo, came to the Ladrões, and informed them there was an English ship lying off Sam-cock, which had on board the money that was demanded for the enlargement of Mr. Turner and his party; and that if they would carry them there, and anchor in sight, it should be immediately forwarded to them.

Mr. Turner and the Lascars having now been put into another junk, with two others accompanying her, they proceeded to Samcock. At this time our hero was informed that one of the Lascars had a few days before made his escape.

On their arrival at Samcock no English vessel or any other was to be seen. It is impossible to describe the feelings of the captives on this occasion. Joy was now turned into sorrow; a gloomy melancholy clouded their countenances, which was before enlivened with the rays of hope. The Chinese who had

come to the Ladrões with the message, went to Macao, imagining that the ship might have gone thither, as it was dirty weather.

The next morning the Ladrões stood towards Macao, to try if they could perceive the vessel; but on observing twenty-five sail of Mandarin junks, they made sail towards Wong-chong-chow, at which place they arrived the following morning; but the re-appearance of the captives, so little expected, and which was not so agreeable as the 2500 dollars would have been, they were welcomed on their return by the assurance that their heads should be immediately cut off. Fortunately the threat was delayed, and though the disappointment was great on both sides, yet doubtless it was more sensibly felt by the wretched sufferers.

On the 21st of May a letter was brought from Captain Ross to Mr. Turner, with the happy intelligence that he had the money on board for their ransom, and that he wished to know where they were to be had, or at what place they should stay for them.

Mr. Turner immediately communicated the contents of this letter to the Ladrone chief, who said he would send them the next morning, and allowed one of the Lascars to go with a letter to Captain Ross, and acquaint him that a Ladrone junk would anchor in sight of him, and fire a gun as a signal; when, if he would send his boat with the money, Mr. Turner and the rest of the Lascars should be liberated.

At midnight, Mr. Turner and the remaining Lascars were sent away with five vessels in company, and the next forenoon, arrived in sight of the Honourable East India Company's cruizers, Discovery and Antelope, when one of the Ladrone row-boats went to give the signal.

In a short time after the gun was fired, a fishing boat brought a letter from Captain Ross, informing them he heard the signal, and that the jolly-boat should be immediately dispatched with the dollars. Mr. Turner immediately communicated this message to the Ladrões, requesting they would go nearer the ship. For this purpose Mr. Turner and the Lascars were put on board a smaller vessel, and our hero soon observed that the Discovery had dispatched her boats, but as she was pulling towards the vessel in which the captives were, another Ladrone junk, that was out on a cruize, passed between their vessel and the Discovery's boat, at which she fired two shots, and dispatched a row-boat in chase of her. Hereupon, the Discovery's boat put

about, and pulled towards the ship, fearing some treachery; but a signal having been made from the vessel in which the captives were, the other left off chasing, and bore down to them.

The fisherman who brought Mr. Turner the letter, having now overtaken the jolly-boat, explained the mistake to the persons on board her, and assuring them of perfect safety, prevailed on her to return. Accordingly, she put about again, and the fishermen accompanied her to the Ladrões with the ransom, which having been taken out and counted, Mr. Turner and the rest of the Lascars were then told they were at liberty.

One of the row-boats was now sent part of the way with the jolly-boat, in order to prevent their being molested by any of the Ladrone vessels, and about 3 o'clock, P.M. of the 22d of May, our hero arrived on board the Honourable Company's cruizer, Discovery, where he was sincerely congratulated on his happy deliverance. The pleasure which he felt at this period, can better be conceived than described.

Dreadful as Mr. Turner's situation was, subjected to innumerable inconveniences, and in daily apprehensions of suffering a cruel death, yet he was fortunate enough to enjoy his health during a captivity of five months and a half.

For the first few days after he was taken he was used kindly, but afterwards his treatment was very indifferent. He was several times struck and kicked about by the lowest of the Ladrões, while useless expostulation was all he could oppose in his defence. He was continually threatened with a torturing death; but at last he became so accustomed to the menace, that it almost lost the effect of intimidating him. He was well aware, however, that he had nothing to hope either from the justice or mercy of those unprincipled robbers, who certainly would have put their threats in execution, had they not been amused with the hopes of a speedy ransom. Our hero, however, though he expected daily to be ransomed, was under the most dreadful apprehensions that some treachery on the part of the Ladrões, might render useless the efforts of those who had interested themselves for his liberation, and perpetuate his confinement among those pirates, or accelerate the stroke of the sword, which continually hung over his head.

His fare during his captivity was the same as that of the common Chinese, consisting, for the most part, of coarse rice, with a bitter salt fish. The accommodations, however, were, upon the whole, very wretched, an inconvenience which

he most severely felt, and which indeed might naturally be expected in vessels so crowded as the Ladrone boats so generally are. The space allowed him to sleep in at night was never more than about eighteen inches wide, and four feet long; and and if at any time he happened to extend his contracted limbs beyond their limits; he was sure to be reminded of his mistake by a kick or a blow.

CURIOUS ACCOUNT

OF

PETER SERRANO,

Who having escaped from Shipwreck, lived Seven Years on a sandy Island, on the Coast of Peru.



THIS man, as related by Garcilasso de la Vega, escaped from shipwreck by swimming to that desert island, which from him received its name, being, as he reported, about two leagues in compass, and for so much it is laid down in the Book of Charts, three little islands with divers shallow places about them; so that all ships keep at a distance from them, avoiding them with all possible care and circumspection.

It was Peter Serrano's misfortune to be lost upon these places, and to save his life on this disconsolate island, where no water, wood, grass, nor any thing for support of human life, at least, not for maintenance of him so long a time as, until some ship passing by might redeem him from perishing by hunger and thirst; which languishing manner of death is much more miserable, than by a speedy suffocation in the waters. With

the sad thoughts hereof he passed the first night, lamenting his affliction with as many melancholy reflections as we may imagine capable to enter into the mind of a wretch in like extremity.

As soon as it grew day, he began so to traverse his island, and found on the shore some cockles, shrimps, and other creatures of like nature, which the sea had thrown up, and he was forced to eat raw, because he wanted fire to roast them.

With this small entertainment he passed his time, till observing some turtles not far from the shore, he watched a convenience until they came within his reach, and then throwing them on their backs, (which is the manner of taking that sort of fish,) he cut the throat, drinking the blood instead of water; and slicing out the flesh with a knife, which was fastened to his girdle, he laid the pieces to be dried and roasted by the sun; the shell he made use of to rake up the rain-water, which lay in little puddles, for that is a country often subject to great and sudden rains.

In this manner he passed the first of his days, by killing all the turtles that he was able, some of which were so large, that their shells were as big as targets or bucklers. Others were so great, that he was not able to turn them or stop them in their way to the sea; so that in a short time experience taught him which sort he was able to deal with, and which were too unwieldy for his force. With his lesser shells he poured water into the greater, some of which contained twelve gallons; so that having made sufficient provisions both of meat and drink, he began to contrive some way to strike fire, that he might not only dress his meat with it, but also make a smoke, to give a sign to any ship that was passing.

Considering of this invention, (for seamen are much more ingenious in all times of extremity, than men bred at land,) he searched every where to find out a couple of hard pebbles, instead of flints; his knife serving in the place of a steel; but the island being all covered over with a dead sand, and no stone appearing, he swam into the sea, and diving often to the bottom, he at length found a couple of stones fit for his purpose, which he rubbed together, until he got them to an edge, with which being able to strike fire, he drew some threads out of his shirt, which he worked so small, that it was like cotton, and served for tinder; so that having contrived a means to kindle fire, he gathered a great quantity of sea-weeds, thrown up by the waves, which, with the shells of fish and the planks of ships,

which had been wrecked on those shoals, afforded nourishment for his fuel; and lest sudden showers should extinguish his fire, he made a little covering, like a small hut, with the shells of the largest turtles or tortoises that he had killed, taking great care that his fire should not go out.

In the space of two months, and sooner, he was as unprovided of all things as he was at first, for, with the rains, heat, and moisture of that climate, his provisions were corrupted, and the great heat of the sun was so violent on him, having neither clothes to cover him, nor shadow for a shelter, that when he was, as it were, broiled in the sun, he had no remedy but to run into the sea.

In this misery and care he passed three years, during which time he saw several ships at sea, and as often made his smoke; but none turned out of their way to see what it meant, for fear of those shelves and sands, which wary pilots avoid with all imaginable circumspection, so that the poor wretch, despairing of all manner of relief, esteemed it a mercy for him to die, and arrive at that period which could only put an end to his miseries.

Being exposed in this manner to all weathers, the hair of his body grew in that manner, that he was covered all over with bristles, and the hair of his head and beard reaching to his waist, he appeared like some wild, savage creature.

At the end of three years, Serrano was strangely surprized with the appearance of a man in his island, whose ship had, the night before, been cast away upon these sands, and who had saved himself on a plank of the vessel; so soon as it was day, he espied the smoke, and imagining whence it was, he made towards it.

As soon as they saw each other, it is hard to say, which was the more amazed; Serrano imagined that it was the devil, who came in the shape of a man, to tempt him to despair. The new comer believed Serrano to be the devil in his own proper shape and figure, being covered over with hair and beard; in fine they were both afraid, flying one from the other. Peter Serrano cried out, as he ran, "Jesus, Jesus, deliver me from the devil." The other, hearing this, took courage; and returning again to him, called out, "Brother, brother, don't fly from me, for I am a Christian as thou art." And because he saw that Serrano still ran from him, he repeated the Credo, or Apostles' Creed in words aloud, which, when Serrano heard, he knew it was no devil that would recite those words, and there-

upon gave a stop to his flight, and returning with great kindness they embraced each other with sighs and tears, lamenting their sad state, without any hopes of deliverance. Serrano supposing that his guest wanted refreshment, entertained him with such provisions as his miserable life afforded; and having a little comforted each other, they began to recount the manner and occasion of their sad disasters.

For the better government of their way of living, they designed their hours of day and night to certain services; such a time was appointed to kill fish for eating, such hours for gathering weeds, fish-bones, and other matters which the sea threw up, to maintain their constant fire; and especial care had they to observe their watches, and relieve each other at certain hours, that so they might be sure their fire went not out.

In this manner they lived amicably together for certain days; for many did not pass, before a quarrel arose between them so high, that they were ready to fight. The occasion proceeded from some words that one gave the other, hinting that he took not that care and labour as the extremity of their condition required. This difference so increased, (for to such misery do our passions often betray us,) that at length they separated and lived apart one from the other. However, in a short time, having experienced the want of that comfort which mutual society procures, their choler was appeased, and they returned to enjoy converse, and the assistance which friendship and company afforded; in which condition they passed four years, during all which time they saw many ships sail near them, yet none would be so charitable or curious, as to be invited by their smoke and flame; so that being now almost desperate, they expected no other remedy besides death, to put an end to their miseries.

However, at length, a ship venturing to pass nearer than ordinary espied the smoke; and rightly judging that it must be made by some shipwrecked persons escaped to those sands, hoisted out their boat to take them in. Serrano and his companion readily ran to the place where they saw the boat coming; but as soon as the mariners approached so near as to distinguish the strange figure and looks of these two men, they were so affrighted, that they began to row back: but the poor men cried out, and, that they might believe them not to be devils or evil spirits, they rehearsed the creed, and called aloud on the name of Jesus, with which words the mariners returned, took them into the boat, and carried them to the ship, to the great wonder of all present, who with admiration beheld their hairy shapes,

not like men but beasts, and with singular pleasure heard them relate the story of their past misfortunes.

The companion died in his voyage to Spain, but Serrano lived to come thither; from whence he travelled into Germany, where the Emperor, Charles V. then resided: all which time he nourished his hair and beard, to serve as an evidence and proof of his past life. Wheresoever he came, the crowd pressed, as to a sight, to see him. Persons of quality, having the same curiosity, gave him sufficient to defray his charges; his Imperial Majesty presented him with an annuity for life. He died at Panama.