

A Narrative of the Shipwreck, Captivity and Sufferings of Horace Holden and Benj. H. Nute, Who Were Cast Away in the American Ship Mentor, on the Pelew Islands, in the Year 1832; and For Two Years Afterwards were Subjected to Unheard of Sufferings Among the Barbarous Inhabitants of Lord North's Island. Fourth Edition. Boston: Russell Shattuck, and Co., 1836.

CHAPTER VI.

Regret at having undertaken the voyage in boats.—Storm, and damage in consequence of it.—Loss of the canoe and the provisions on board.—Danger of perishing from famine.—On the fifteenth day, when nearly exhausted with fatigue and hunger, they discover a small island.—Approach of eighteen canoes filled with natives, who make prisoners of them all.—Cruelty of the natives; and return with their prisoners to the island.—Reception there.—The prisoners distributed among the captors.

WE had not proceeded far before we had reasons for regretting, that we had entered upon the perilous undertaking of navigating the waters of that region in boats so poorly adapted to the purposes we had in view. There came on a violent storm of rain, the wind blowing hard, and the waves threatening to swallow us each moment of the night. To our dismay, the rudder of the canoe, owing to the imperfect manner in which it had been constructed, was unshipped, and for a time the destruction of those on board seemed inevitable. Fortunately we

continued to keep company. By great exertion we made out to replace the rudder in the morning, and then proceeded. In the course of the day the rudder was again unshipped ; but, with less difficulty than before, we succeeded in fastening it to its place with ropes, so that it answered tolerably well as a substitute for a better one. Happy would it have been for us, if this had been the worst of the disasters of our voyage. Our mast next went by the board ; and during the whole of the next night, we lay drifting at the mercy of the winds and waves. In the mean time the canoe sprung a leak, and we found it impossible to bail out the water as fast as it came in. In this extremity we lost no time in shifting all our lading into one end of the canoe ; and by tearing up our old clothes, and stuffing them into the crack, we at length stopped the leak. In this sad plight we continued on, meeting with no very serious accident till the fifth day from the time of leaving the island ; when, just at the setting of the sun, owing to some mismanagement, a light puff of wind capsized

the canoe! Fortunately no one was drowned. All but three swam to our boat; those who remained continued through the night to cling to the canoe. With great difficulty we kept our boat from being stove in pieces by coming in contact with the canoe. During all this time it rained very hard, and never had we experienced a more dismal night. In the morning we tried to get the canoe right side up; but finding that impossible, we concluded to abandon it entirely. We took from it a few cocoa-nuts, and, as our last resort, all took refuge in the boat. We saved the compass, and did not so much regret the loss of the canoe, as it had cost us already an incalculable amount of anxiety, toil, and suffering.

But new difficulties now stared us in the face. Most of our provisions had been lost by the upsetting of the canoe, and we had but a very small quantity of water. It was therefore deemed expedient to divide among us the means of subsistence remaining. We had four cocoa-nuts for each person, and a few pieces over, which were distributed

equally At this time no objects were seen, except a few sea birds. We continued in this condition for nine days and nights, with actual starvation before us, as the most probable end of our anxieties and sufferings. We were about settling down into a state of confirmed despair, when, to our inexpressible joy, we discovered land apparently about ten miles off. We exerted all our remaining strength to reach it. When within six miles we saw, approaching us, a fleet of eighteen canoes, filled with the natives of the small island we were approaching.

At first the small canoes came near us, for the purpose of ascertaining who and what we were. The appearance of these natives was such as to excite at once our astonishment and disgust. Like the inhabitants of the island we had left, they were entirely naked; and, as our subsequent experience proved, they were infinitely more barbarous and cruel. Very soon the large canoes came up, when the wretches commenced their outrages. They attacked us with brutal ferocity, knocking us overboard with their

clubs, in the mean time making the most frightful grimaces, and yelling like so many incarnate devils. They fell upon our boat and immediately destroyed it, breaking it into splinters, and taking the fragments into their canoes. While this was going on we were swimming from one canoe to another, entreating them by signs to spare our lives and permit us to get into their canoes. This they for a long time refused, beating us most unmercifully, whenever we caught hold of any thing to save ourselves from sinking.

After they had demolished our boat, and kept us in that condition for some time, they allowed us to get on board. They then compelled us to row towards the land. They stripped us of all our clothing immediately after we were taken in; and the reader may form some idea of our distress in this condition, under a burning sun, from the fact, that before night our shoulders were blistered, by being thus exposed to the heat.

On approaching land we discovered no habitation; but after going round a point

of the island, we saw near the beach a row of small and badly constructed huts. We were compelled to jump from the canoes into the water and wade to the shore. By this time the beach was lined with women and children, who caused the air to resound with the most horrid yells and screams. Their gestures and violent contortions of countenance resembled the frantic ravings of Bedlamites.

The reception we met with on land was no more agreeable than that upon the water. Judging from the treatment we had received from the females of the island which we had left, it was hoped that the gentler sex would extend to us some proof of their commiseration; but in this we were sadly disappointed. If possible, they were more cruel than their inhuman lords and masters. We were soon separated from each other, and dragged about from place to place; our brutal captors, in the mean time, contending with each other to see who should have us as his property. Frequent contests of this kind occurred; in one of which, during the

first day, I was knocked down. The question of ownership was at length settled, and we were retained by those into whose hands we had at first fallen. Some of us were taken to their house of worship, called by them Verre-Yarris—literally, God's house, where they went through with some of their religious ceremonies, and we received a few mouthfuls of food, which was the first we had tasted through the day.

It was my good fortune to be retained by one who, compared with the other natives, was humane. His name was *Pahrahbooah*; the female head of the family was called *Nahkit*; and they had four children. I went by the name of *Tee'mit*; and Benjamin Nute by the name of *Rollo*. The captain was also fortunate in falling into the hands of a friend of my master, who treated him with comparative kindness. He was valued the more highly also on account of being a large, fleshy man—they judging of these things by the size and appearance.