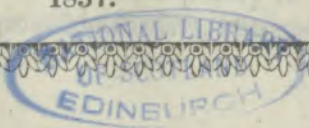


THE
 INTREPID & DARING ADVENTURES
 OF
SIXTEEN BRITISH SEAMEN
 TO WHICH IS ADDED,
 A CURE FOR THE TOOTHACH.



PAISLEY:
 PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY G. CALDWELL.

1837.



EDINBURGH
Printed and Published by
JOHN W. PATERSON

1831

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY W. & A. GORDON
EDINBURGH



A CASE FOR THE JOOLHUCH
TO WHICH IS JOINED
SIXTEEN BRITISH SEAMEN
OR
MARRIED & DURING ADVENTURES
THE

THE ADVENTURES OF

SIXTEEN BRITISH SEAMEN.

THE history of the war of independence in the western states of South America is interspersed with numerous instances of remarkable adventure. Desultory in its nature, and unconnected in its details, that war was peculiarly fitted to call into activity the latent energies of those who participated in its perils; and the spirit of bold enterprise to which it gave rise was shared no less by those who fared on the sea, than by the scattered guerilla parties on the continent. The banner of freedom, indeed, had hardly been raised on the towers of Valparaiso, when numerous bands of hardy seamen fitted out their barks for predatory adventure; and privateers in particular, received both encouragement and assistance from the insurgent government, whose policy it was to weaken, by every possible means, the maritime

power of the mother country. Foreigners, as well as Americans, eagerly embarked in the business of legalised plunder, not from any principle of patriotism, it is obvious, but upon mere mercenary speculation. British sailors, more than those of any other country, were enamoured of the exploits which such a field of enterprise presented for their achievement, and many of them left their peaceful London and Liverpool traders to share, if not in the honours, at least in the anticipated profit and pleasure of a course, perhaps a life, of perpetual hostility.

Previous to the arrival of Lord Cochrane's fleet on the coast of Chili, privateering was nearly at its height in the South American seas, and it is to that period, viz. in 1818, that the following isolated passage of history belongs.

Soon after Valparaiso had fallen into the hands of the revolutionary forces, a few British seamen resolved to set up as privateers on the Chilian and Peruvian coasts. With this view, having in the first instance, procured the governor's licence, they purchased an old West-Indian druggers boat, (a vessel similar to a lighter in this country) as sorry looking a craft as ever ventured a league to sea, but the small stock of dollars which they had succeeded in scraping together did not enable

them to purchase one better fitted for their purpose. Having taken a few additional hands into partnership, they soon put a deck upon her; and otherwise rigged her out in tolerable style. They next collected a quantity of old arms, consisting of muskets, pistols, cutlasses, boarding-pikes, and two small swivels, which they mounted on the boat's timber-heads; but as they were to trust chiefly to boarding, they took on board no cannon—their bark, indeed, was, from its diminutive size, utterly unfit for this grand instrument of war. Altogether, their outfit and the object of it seemed somewhat of a burlesque upon ordinary privateering; but they were good-humoured fellows, and of a joke, and their own masters; so they did not mind the mirth and harmless ridicule which their armament excited.

Thus equipped, and having stowed on board several bales of dry jerk beef, with some other necessary articles of provision, they put to sea, determined to make the most of every thing they should meet with. The crew consisted of sixteen hands, commanded by one Mackay, Scotsman, who had a short time before resigned the office of steward in a South-Sea whaler, and who had originally projected this mad-like scheme. They had only one course to follow,—for the trade wind, which blows for a considerable part of the year constantly

from the south, carried them briskly up the wide coast of Peru. On their voyage, which was extended to a considerable distance beyond Lima, they had not the good fortune to fall in with a single legitimate prize; but running short of provisions, they were soon forced to put under contribution such trading vessels and boats as they chanced to fall in with. Supporting themselves entirely by compulsory levies it was not long before they lost all proper sense of a distinction between plundering and privateering; but the plea of necessity was always a hand to satisfy their not over-scrupulous consciences, that in employing such means to supply their wants, they did nothing morally wrong—at least that, circumstanced as they were, their doings amounted, at the utmost, to justifiable maulauding. Their acts of depredation became so frequent, however, and in some instances so aggravated a character, that they soon excited alarm throughout the whole coast. Even at Lima they were heard of. At one period, indeed, it was seriously intended by the authorities there to dispatch a small force to consign the druggist and her pilfering crew to the bottom of the ocean; but they were saved the trouble of carrying their threat into execution. The offenders soon brought on their own apparent ruin; for, dreaded by friends no less than foes, they were in a few weeks shunned and run from by every bark that hove in sight. Smugglers, as well as people of their own calling, refused not only to relieve their wants, but to hold any intercourse with them;

and they were at the same time denied all communication with the peaceable citizens on shore. Thus situated, both their provisions and water were speedily exhausted, and, to add to their distress, their little vessel became leaky to such a degree that she was almost wholly unfit for sea, while they were themselves worn out with the constant exertion which was necessary to keep her afloat.

They were, therefore, compelled to turn towards Valparaiso ; but, under the difficulties they had to encounter, the attempt to reach that port was almost a hopeless one. The wind blew right a-head, while they had neither provisions, nor were they in a situation in other respects to venture upwards of a hundred miles from land, in order to fall under the north trade-wind. In these painful circumstances, and not daring to touch at any of the intermediate ports, there was no alternative but to sweep (rowing in a decked boat is, in technical phrase, sweeping) back to Valparaiso. They were not without apprehension, too, that Spanish frigates might be cruising on the coast, into whose hands they knew it would be certain destruction to fall. No wonder, therefore, that their spirits flagged a little, and that they now crept along the coast with a degree of caution that contrasted strikingly with their former reckless disregard of all danger. It was only during the night, indeed, that they coasted along ; during the day they skulked in close to the land, concealing themselves in unfrequented creeks and among the rocks, where they employed themselves in fishing, now the only means by which they obtained a subsistence.

While thus fighting their way against fortune and the winds, they fell in with an Indian fisherman, whom they made prisoner, to procure from him information respecting the state of the coast; and they had an eye also to his fishing apparatus, as well as to the benefit of his superior skill in the art of using it; for by this time they were sorely pressed by the common wants of our nature. By the Indian they were informed that the coast was clear of king's ships—that an armed merchantman from Old Spain had arrived at Arica (a fortified town still in the hands of the loyalists) a few days before, and that she was lying under the protection of the fort, ready to discharge a valuable cargo. Their disappointment at having missed the opportunity of falling in with so rich a prize, in consequence of useless, and in other respects, hurtful delays, was extreme, for they entertained no doubt whatever, that, had they been down in time, as they would have been but for these delays, the *Minerva* would have been the reward of all their privations. Disappointment is not a feeling that arises in the mind, and then instantaneously passes away; it recurs again and again, to vex the spirit, and to rouse its energies to redeem the mistaken or neglected step by which it has been troubled. With the crew of the druggier-boat it operated with instantaneous effect, and they were at the same time stimulated, by the severe pressure of existing necessities, to form the desperate resolution of attempting the capture of the *Minerva*. But then, on farther interrogation, the Indian added, that besides being armed with five-and-twenty

guns, and lying, as the vessel did, within musket shot of a strong battery, she had received on board, in addition to a numerous crew, upwards of 250 Spanish soldiers, for the especial purpose of protecting her from any piratical or prædal attack. These were difficulties which, to the ordinary run of mortals, would have been considered as absolutely insurmountable; but, by the hand of famishing tars, they were viewed in no such light. The crew of the *Minerva* did not enter into their calculation at all; for once on board, with cutlass in hand, they would speedily be overcome; and the fort, though strong enough to blow them out of the water in five minutes, would not surely (so they reasoned among themselves) be so regardless of Spanish life and Spanish property, as to sink the *Minerva* in order to destroy a few impertinent mauraunders already on board of her. The formidable guard of soldiers, could not, however, be so conveniently disposed of. To attempt a fair stand-up-fight with a force numerically so far superior, would be to court certain destruction. It therefore appeared to them that the only means by which the difficulty might, by possibility, be obviated, was to board the vessel by surprisè at midnight, and to secure her hatches—a plan sufficiently simple in itself, and effectual too, provided it could be promptly accomplished. A council of war, consisting of all hands, having been held, the scheme underwent solemn, but by no means deliberate discussion, and was pronounced *quite practicable!* This point finally settled to every one's entire satisfaction, and evening coming on, they stole

out from among the rocks where they had been concealed during the day, and hove warily down towards the mouth of the semicircular bay, in the innermost verge of which stands the beautiful town of Arica. Before daybreak they again betook themselves to a hiding place, close on shore, some eight or ten miles distant from Arica; and, ere the sun had been an hour above the horizon, each in his turn had slipped out in the Indian's canoe to enjoy a stolen peep at the expected prize. Their arms and ammunition were now carefully overhauled. Every pistol received a fresh flint, and its lock a touch of oil. A sufficient quantity of powder was spread out on an old top-sail to dry in the sun; and, while engaged in settling the details of the assault, they employed their hands in giving their rusty cutlasses the keen edge of a razor. All this day, a little putrid water was their only refreshment, for they had not had leisure to capture a single fish; but their mental anxiety was sufficiently intense to absorb all consciousness of physical wants.

The poor Indian fisherman was kept as much as possible in the dark as to the important part that was to be assigned to him in the affair. He happened to be the only one on board who could speak Spanish with sufficient fluency to escape instant detection; and, in the event of being challenged by the Minerva's sentinels, he was instructed to say that they were the bearers of dispatches for the captain from the commander of the Spanish fleet.

Towards evening the wind died away into a dead calm, and the moon rose with just as much

light as sufficed to render objects close at hand sufficiently distinguishable, while there was not nought of it to expose to view those at a distance. Thus favoured, the sixteen lion-hearted British seamen left their lurking place, and stole into the bay towards the Minerva. About midnight, the dull light of a lantern on board became visible, and in a few minutes afterwards the dim outline of the vessel's hull was discovered. For a moment the druggers's oars were suspended to allow her crew to draw one deep breath before striking the desperate blow. During this pause, each man ascertained that his brace of pistols was in his belt, and his cutlass and boarding-pike at hand. Their courage required no "screwing up," for in one and all of them it naturally remained, at all times, above the "sticking point;" but at this moment of suspense, it may easily be conceived that their breasts were swelled with a tumult of distracted emotion, and with that burning solicitude which is produced, even in the hearts of the bravest, by the consciousness that the moment has arrived when nought remains but to do or die. Agitated but not confused by these feelings, the druggers's crew rowed furiously forward upon the Minerva's larboard side. All was quiet, until they reached within musket shot of the ship; it was then that the night watch sung out a challenge. "Dispatches from the fleet for the captain," was the fisherman's answer. "Keep the captain is on shore," replied the sentry. "Pull on, pull on, ye devils;" whispered Mackay. "Stand off, stand off, you there, or I'll sink you, St. Maria," reiterated the sentry; and the

threat having been disregarded, he fired his musket into the boat, but without effect. "Slap alongside, my boys," cried Tom Martin; "keep clear o' her *stinsails*." But Tom's warning was too late; for at this critical moment the druggier's mast and cordage ran foul of the *Minerva's* swinging-boom, which, as is usual in large ships, had been rigged out for the purpose of mooring the boats, and a considerable swell causing the *Minerva* to roll heavily, the difficulty of boarding even without resistance was, in the situation in which they were now placed, rendered almost insurmountable. Not a moment, however, was lost. Martin, firing a pistol among a knot of Spaniards, who had suddenly collected on the gangway, seized hold of the *Minerva's* "quiz-work," and mounting the swinging-boom, was instantly on board. He was speedily followed by several of his shipmates, who, without uttering a word, commenced an unresisting attack on the astonished Spaniards. Meanwhile, the druggier had been swung round by the swell, till she came right alongside of the *Minerva*, and the remainder of the assailants easily scrambled on deck. The conflict was bloody, but of brief duration, for so instantaneous had been the assault, and panic-struck as the Spaniards were by its temerity, they made little or no resistance; and their unexpected visitors experienced little difficulty in driving those who had escaped with life down the hatchway. The only man among them, indeed, who defended himself with true courage, was the *Minerva's* boatswain. This brave fellow, who encountered Mackay, placed his back against the

bulwarks, and defended himself nobly, but having refused to ask for quarter, his antagonist was reluctantly compelled to cut him down.

The hatches were now secured upon the multitude below, the captives of the sixteen dare-devils above; and the closing of the hatches was accompanied by an information, that the slightest attempt to alarm the fort or to recapture the ship would be followed by an immediate discharge of grape-shot through the decks.

Here, then, was the *Minerva*, and her guards and crew, fairly in the hands of our heroes, but they had yet much to do before being absolutely secure of their prize. On looking around them, they discovered that not only were her topmasts struck, but that all her sails were unbent, and her foreyard lying across the fore-castle—her deck being, at the same time, “lumbered up” with goods ready for disembarkation next morning. In this state it was impossible that the vessel could sail an inch, and there was no time to be lost, for an entire quarter of an hour had elapsed since they got on board, and at day-dawn the fort would at once discover what had happened—so the Indian was dispatched to the cuddy, where a number of the defeated seamen had taken refuge, to learn where the sails had been stowed—they were below, and the rolling of several guns from the ship’s side to the middle of the deck, with a few intimations, “upon oath,” that they were ready for the work of destruction, soon induced the Spaniards to hand the sails upon deck. These got, all hands were immediately at work. The topmasts were swayed away, as also the fore-

yard and topsail yards. In any other than the most desperate circumstances, they would have been altogether unequal to the fatigue which, exhausted as they were by previous labour and want, they sustained in putting the vessel in such trim as to enable her to sail out of harbour. At length the sails were bent, but then there was hardly enough of wind to make them flap against the masts. It was, in fact, and had been during the whole night, a perfect calm. The situation of the captors became every moment more perilous: Should morning dawn upon them where they lay, they were lost; for what defence could they make against a combined attack from the fort and from all the boats of Arica? Already voices were heard on the shore, and they dreaded that an early visit to the ship would be the first duty of the custom-house officers. They were in an agony of hope, fear, and anxiety. Daniel in the den of lions was not more awkward or uncomfortably situated; and yet what could they do? Why, without wind they could do nothing. To escape now in their own druggier-boat appeared utterly impossible, for the lighter sailing boats of the Aricans would soon overtake and capture her. At this most critical moment—not half an hour before daybreak—a slight breeze *did* spring up, and in an instant their hearts were as much elated as the instant before they had been cast down. The cables were immediately cut, the sails set, and the *Minerva* stood out to sea. The breeze was light, however, and before she was beyond the range of the fort, the Aricans, to their utter astonishment, for they could not con-

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ecture what had happened, as no other vessel was in sight, saw the *Mincerva* bearing briskly down toward Moro-Blanco, a promontory on the south side of the bay, several miles distant from Arica. With the strong military force on board, they could not persuade themselves that there existed a possibility of her having been taken by an enemy. The most natural conclusion was, that the soldiers themselves had made a joint speculation of her. The alarm was immediately given in the fort, and throughout Arica; and in less than half an hour the harbour and beach were crowded with soldiers and sailors ready to embark in pursuit of the fugitive ship, in the hope that, as the morning advanced, the breeze would die away. The *Mincerva* had just rounded the blunt point of Moro-Blanco, when, as the Aricans had anticipated, it became a dead calm, and she once more lay like a log upon the water. Here, then, were the captors again in a situation not much better than that from which they had so recently escaped. They were not to be daunted, however, by this fresh difficulty, but ordering the Spaniards on deck, by two at a time, they pinioned them, and shipped them on board the druggier, the ship's launch, and small boats, reserving only the smallest one for their own use. This accomplished, they pointed the guns towards the boats, ordering the Spaniards on shore, a small number of rowers remained unbound, and threatening to blow them out of the water on the slightest indication of a disposition to disobey orders. They now took a snatch of refreshment, which to their empty stomachs and exhausted

frames was true balm, and then hurried to prepare for the attack, which, as a matter of course, was to be expected from Arica. They double-shotted the ship's guns with grape, and unloosing those on the starboard side, brought them over to the larboard, on which side, being that opposite Arica, the attack was naturally to be anticipated. They soon smashed out rude port-holes in the bulwarks, and pointed the cannon,

In the meantime, the crew of the *Minerva*, with the Spanish soldiers, reached Arica, where the particulars of the exploit were immediately made known. Not a moment was lost in manning the boats that could be collected. Their number was not great, it is true, but they were crowded with men, who, had they been all cannibals, would have made but a sorry breakfast of the sixteen half-starved hands on board the *Minerva*. Having learnt the precise number of the *Minerva*'s captors, their exasperation at the audacity of the adventure was unbounded; but for so daring an insult, they promised themselves the satisfaction of making an immediate return of most ample vengeance. They were, in fact, so filled with resentment, and so anxious for revenge, that they neglected to be cautious. In the hurry and heat of the moment, they seemed only to strive which should first reach the *Minerva* by the shortest road. To men of cooler passion and calmer judgment, it would probably have occurred, that the safest, and in other respects the best mode of attack, would have been to disperse the boats, and, by surrounding the vessel, be in a situation to board on all points at once.

Had this been done, the handful of Englishmen must inevitably have been cut to pieces. But the Spaniards did not condescend to consume time in concerting a plan of co-operation. They pulled on in a body, to devour, as they said, the devoted Englishmen. The Englishmen, however, were prepared for them. As the fleet of boats approached, they coolly took their aim with every gun on board. The boats advanced in a dense extended line, each gun was brought to bear upon particular parts of them, so that there should be no useless expenditure of powder and shot. The *Minerva* being a deep-waisted vessel, with a top-gallant fore-castle and poop, the boat's crew did not discover the preparations that had been made for their reception—so they continued pulling on until they were within pistol shot of the ship's side. At that moment Mackay, to whom all eyes on board the *Minerva* were now directed, every thing having been in perfect readiness, gave the signal to "fire." A shower of millstones could not have been productive of more frightful effects. The moment before, the boats were in gallant array, burthened with some hundreds of bold hearts, inflamed with rage and revenge—the next, it was as if the besom of destruction had come over them. To use a homely simile, the roadside of heavy grape made a commotion among the boats similar to that which is produced by an unexpected shot from a well-loaded fowling piece among a flock of ducks on the bosom of a pond. Instead of one such shot, however, five-and-twenty double shots of grape and canister were sent by deliberate aim among the boats of

Arica, and each shot struck its allotted portion of the line of attack. At the scene which presented itself when the smoke cleared away, even the druggers' crew were appalled. The grape had swept the entire line, carrying death and destruction before it; and the cannon's roar was in an instant succeeded by the loud shrieks of the wounded and drowning. Several boats were sunk, others were fast sinking, while those that swam were soon overloaded by such as had scrambled into them, or had been picked out of the water; some of the craft, indeed, were in this way swamped, and their crews suffered to perish, for there existed no means of saving them. All around was covered with shattered planks, drifting oars, and the still buoyant bodies of the killed, while here and there were seen wounded soldiers, sailors, and citizens, engaged in an ineffectual struggle for life.

The surviving boats soon made for Arica, and the authorities there wisely resolved to make no farther attempt to disturb the new masters of the *Minerva*. One of these, the same Tom Martin whose name has been already mentioned, and from whom this narrative has been chiefly derived, was informed, some years afterwards, that the *Minerva's* fatal broadside consigned to eternity upwards of 150 men!

Not in the least surprising incident in the fortunes of Mackay and his shipmates remains to be related. After having deliberately put the ship in proper sailing trim, they stood out to sea, in order to catch the trade-wind, which is at the distance of 150 miles at that season from the north.

Having reached this wind, they bore down for Valparaiso, with the view of disposing of the ship and cargo, and of dividing their spoil. Off Valparaiso lay a strong Spanish fleet, blockading the port; but of this circumstance our adventurers were not aware, neither did they entertain the slightest suspicion that an obstacle of so formidable a nature was at all likely to oppose itself to the completion of an adventure already so nearly crowned with success. At nightfall, previous to the morning when they expected to reach Valparaiso, they were not sufficiently near that city to distinguish the fleet that lay in the offing; so the wind being favourable, they skimmed over the waves with hearts bounding in the pride of being the undisputed masters of so gallant a ship and all she contained, little dreading the danger into which they were about to fall. On they went, however, and a dense fog coming on at day-dawn, they sailed through the very thickest of the Spanish fleet, not only without either seeing or being seen by a single ship, but without even suffering that annoyance which is produced by a consciousness of being in a situation of extreme danger; and, before the fog cleared away, they lay safely moored below the fort of Valparaiso—so true does it seem to be that “fortune favours the brave.”

On the morning, they received the congratulations of the governor of the city, by whom the *Minerva* was declared to be a lawful prize, and all Valparaiso resounded with the praises of the captors' heroism.

The vessel and her cargo turned out a prize of great value, and the English tars soon found themselves in the possession of what appeared to them inexhaustible riches. They would not have been true British seamen, however, had they hoarded up their wealth. No less characteristic of their profession was the reckless intrepidity which one and all of them had displayed, than was the profusion of their expenditure after getting fairly on shore. Each got his riding horse and his sweetheart, of course. They gave balls, grand theatrical parties, and all sorts of sumptuous entertainment; and when they met, as they often did, it was quite a common thing for them to toss up for a score of dollars, or to play "evens or odds" for a handful or a pocketful at a time. In a few years afterwards, so effectual had been the exertions of some of them to get rid of their money, that they again found themselves before the mast in Lord Cochrane's fleet; while others, more provident, established themselves as respectable, and substantial citizens. Mackay became one of the most considerable of the merchants and shipowners in Valparaiso, where, for ought that is known to the contrary, he still lives in the enjoyment of his wealth.

A Cure for the Toothach.

THE toothache is rendered more distressing, if not more acute, by there being no commiseration for the wretchedness it occasions. The belief in this, and a keen recollection of bodily and mental sufferings, have produced the following little narrative:—

Some years ago, a tremendous tooth, with three enormous prongs, confined me to my room, and irritated me to a state little short of distraction. With my head tied up in a bandana handkerchief, both hands on my afflicted jaw, I sat swaying my body to and fro, as if endeavouring to calm a fractious infant; at other times I stamped about like a lunatic, or plunged about like a frog swimming. Being at length reduced to a state of exhaustion, I was anxious to retreat from all intercourse with the world; yet knock after knock at the door continued, as if only to increase my already excessive nervous irritability. Many of the persons I had no desire to see, but some were those interwoven with my professional pursuits, and I was compelled to be at home. I had no account for my disconsolate appearance—to describe my tormenting pangs, till I was weary speaking upon the subject. To all of my fervid descriptions, I received the cold remark, and the chilling advice, that it was *only* the toothach, and that I had better have it *extracted*. At this time, the salivary glands were pouring their fluids into my mouth, the gastric juices were wasting

their powers, and I was in a paroxysm of excruciating anguish. It was astonishing how persons could calmly behold such a complication of miseries. Nothing could be eaten; slops became offensive; the sight of a spoon frightful; and a basin revolting to a perpetual blister. Even the air could not be taken!--it was too much for the petulance of my capricious tooth. On it raged, as if torments were its delight. In all my reading, I never met with any author but Burns who had a proper idca of the toothach. He wished his enemies to have it for a twelvemonth. Oh dear! He must be more or less than man who could endure this. He must despair and perish.

How true it is, that out of evil often some good will spring; for while I was enduring this thumb-screw on my gums--this gout in my jaw--this rack of nerves--this destroyer of brains--amid this desolation I acquired much useful information respecting the toothach. One friend informed me that half the suffering was occasioned by nervous irritability; for, if I went to a dentist with a determination to have the tooth extracted, the moment I entered the door the tooth would cease to give me pain. He had proved it more than once.

Another friend requested me to be careful in selecting an operator on my tooth, for that he went to a dentist once, under anguish scarcely endurable, to have a large double tooth like mine extracted. He seated himself in a chair, and was told to hold fast by the frame-work of the seat, to prevent being hoisted up by the lever power in the hands of the operator. All was properly arranged, the instrument in, and a tooth drawn;

but, unfortunately, the fellow had taken the wrong tooth out, being the only one left to meet another in the opposite jaw, to enable my friend to masticate his food. Bad as this was, he found it must be endured, because the tooth could not be replaced, and because a portion of the jawbone had been torn away with the tooth. Miserable situation! The pain redoubled its violence, and he resolved to have the tormenting fang extracted. To prevent being tossed against the ceiling, he fixed his feet in leather straps attached to the floor, and held firmly by the chair. In this determined state he made a round O of his mouth; the operator popped in the instrument, and u-g-h!—a-h! it slipped. He felt as if a loaded waggon had passed over his head. The dentist apologized, saying, ‘It was a common occurrence; gentlemen did not mind it much, because the second attempt was always successful.’ This my friend was obliged to receive as a consolation, though deficient in every satisfactory particular. Down he sat; made another round O; in went the instrument. Oh!—ough!—gh! His head seemed separated from his body, but only part of the tooth, with one fang, was extracted. Again the dentist begged pardon; ‘hoped he should be excused, as every one must have a beginning, in whatever profession. He would fetch his master, who would punch out the remaining fangs in less than a quarter of an hour!’ This was too much. The gentleman sickened at the idea, and left the shop in a worse state than he entered.

I hoped to escape from further interruption by being denied, but my servant Betty told me a gentleman had been waiting some time in the par-

hour, who said he would not detain me half a minute. He came—a friend I had not seen for years. He sympathized with me, while I briefly told how sadly I was afflicted.

‘My dear friend,’ exclaimed he, ‘I can cure you in ten minutes.’

‘How? How?’ inquired I; ‘do it in pity?’

‘Instantly,’ said he. ‘Betty,’ have you any alum?’

‘Yes.’

‘Bring it, and some common salt.’

They were produced; my friend pulverized them, mixed them in equal quantities; then wet a small piece of cotton, causing the mixed powder to adhere, and placed it in my hollow tooth.

‘There,’ said he, ‘if that do not cure you, I will forfeit my head. You may tell this in Gath, and publish it in the streets of Aschalon; the remedy is infallible.’

It was as he predicted. On the introduction of the mixed alum and salt, I experienced a sensation of coldness, which gradually subsided, and with it the torment of the toothach.

Though I thus learnt something from my sufferings, and entertain a hope that what I learnt, being thus published, will be of service to my fellow creatures, I am far from believing that any universal remedy has yet been discovered for this afflicting malady. It would almost appear, indeed, that instead of there being any general cure for the toothach, every body would require to have his own cure; for though certain preparations have been found effectual in certain cases, nothing is more common than to find these fail when applied to others.