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NARRATIVE

OF THE



CAPTURE, SUFFERINGS, AND MIRACULOUS ESCAPE

OF

MRS. ELIZA FRASER,

Wife of the late Captain SAMUEL FRASER, commander of the ship *Sterling Castle*, which was wrecked on 25th May, in latitude 34, and longitude 155, 12, east, on Eliza Reef, on her passage from New South Wales to Liverpool—a part of the crew having taken to the long boat, were driven to and thrown on an unknown island, inhabited by Savages, by whom Captain Fraser and his first mate were barbarously murdered, and Mrs. Fraser (the wife of the former, with the 2d mate and steward) were for several weeks held in bondage, and after having been compelled to take up her abode in a wigwam and to become the adopted wife of one of the Chiefs, Mrs. F. was providentially rescued from her perilous situation.



An Indian Chief in the act of forcibly conveying Mrs. Fraser to his hut or wigwam.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES S. WEBB.—1837.



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NY. OP. A. S. N.



NARRATIVE, &C.

SINCE it pleased the Father of Mercies to deliver me from the hands of barbarians, and to restore me to the arms of my surviving friends, I have been strongly urged by some of them, to furnish for the press, a Narrative of my Capture, Sufferings, and Miraculous Escape from Bondage; together with other remarkable events, that have attended me since the fatal period of my unfortunate shipwreck; a request which I now attempt to comply with, with no small degree of reluctance, through fear that more may be expected from me, than what I shall be able to perform; having never received but an indifferent education, and having been by the hands of unmerciful savages deprived of my husband, and thereby of that aid that would have been of essential service to me in this my undertaking, I cannot therefore but flatter myself that for reasons mentioned, my readers will expect no more from me, than a plain, unvarnished tale; exaggerating nothing, but recording truly and faithfully the particulars of such events as most deeply impress my mind at the present moment, and which are esteemed by me the most worthy of record.

It was by the solicitations of my poor, unfortunate husband, that I consented to accompany him, on a voyage to New South Wales, and from thence back to Liverpool, on board the ship *Sterling Castle*, of which he was the commander. The voyage was one, which he, as well as others, represented would probably prove in no way unpleasant to me, and which, indeed, did not so prove, until the 25th day of May, four weeks from the day of our em-

barking, when it was our misfortune to experience very boisterous weather. On the 24th, the wind increased to a heavy gale, the like of which I had never before experienced—the sea indeed run “mountains high!” and our precarious situation at that moment, demanded so much of the attention of my husband, in giving orders relative to the management of the ship, that he could pay but little or no attention to me. The close of the day (the 24th) presented to our view an aspect the most dreary; not the least appearance of the gale abating, on the contrary it seemed every moment to increase. Although all on board appeared willing and ready to obey the orders issued by my husband, and to do every thing in their power for the safety of the ship, as well as their own lives, yet, to add to our horror and dismay, early the next morning the sound of breakers was distinctly heard, and in less than half an hour afterwards the ship struck with great violence upon a hidden reef.

The poor affrighted crew, conceiving from this moment that the ship was lost, little else was now thought of but the preservation of their lives. As much of the ship's provisions as could be hastily collected, together with some other necessary articles, were thrown into the boats, with which the crew quit the wreck and put to sea, with the intention, if possible, of reaching Repulse Bay. The two boats succeeded in keeping company until the evening of the third day from that of our departure from the wreck, when the one which contained my husband, the two mates, the steward, and myself, was unfortunately separated from the other, and which was driven by a strong current and wind far to the east, and three days after the separation of the boats, was about midnight driven on an unknown island, inhabited by a savage race of people.

Drenched with the sea, and nearly famished with hunger and cold, with one of the sails a temporary

tent was erected upon the sand, beneath which we spent a wretched night, anxiously awaiting the return of morning, unconscious of what our fate might be, but, fearless that our condition could be rendered still worse than it then was! The day at length dawned, and presented to our view a band of frightful looking savages, approaching us, apparently with the ferocity of wild beasts; all armed with knives or dirks, and long spears. On their near approach, my husband suggested the propriety of our quietly surrendering ourselves prisoners to them, as we possessed not a single weapon with which to defend ourselves. There appeared approaching us three different parties of different tribes, or clans, one of which seized and made prisoner my husband, another Mr. Brown the chief mate, and a third, Mr. Baxter the second, and the ship's steward. These they strongly pinioned and marched off to one of their settlements, then full in view, leaving me alone on the beach! The reader cannot have but a very faint conception of what my feelings must have been, at this alarming moment, thus to be left alone, separated from my dear husband, and he, perhaps, doomed to endure whatever tortures the savage monsters might be pleased to inflict upon him.

I was not, however, suffered long to remain thus alone, or unconscious of the fate of my husband. About half an hour after the departure of the savages, I was visited by a very great number of their squaws, accompanied by their children, who first commenced with a close examination of my person, then to beating and maiming me with clubs, and at the same time encouraging their children to follow their example, to pinch me, to pull my hair and to throw dirt into my face and eyes! When they had become weary of thus tormenting me, they put into my arms one of the most deformed, and ugly looking brats, that my eyes ever beheld; and then by signs gave me to

understand that I must follow them ; which I did, and was conducted to one of their villages, comprised of a few huts of the meanest construction, and where I found my husband and the two mates, who informed me that they had received from the natives, treatment still more severe than that which I represented I had experienced from them. After being permitted to converse a few moments, I was again separated from my husband, and conducted to the miserable hovel of one, whom I supposed to be the parent of the young papoose given in my charge ; a burden of which I was given to understand that I was not very soon to be relieved, but that a principal part of my time was to be devoted to attending and walking about with it for its amusement.

It is impossible for me to describe what was the state of my feelings at that moment, by so sudden and unexpected a transition, from a state of content and enviable happiness, to that of inconceivable wretchedness ! Nor was this degrading and unmerited state of bondage to which I was thus doomed, my greatest affliction. To be torn from the presence of my dear husband, was still greater ! Could I have been permitted to enjoy his society, I think I could have more willingly submitted to the severe trials with which Providence seemed pleased to visit me ; but this was an indulgence not allowed me. He was compelled to depart by the savage who claimed him as his property, to a remote part of the island, where, as I afterwards learned, he was not only doomed to hard labor, but was made the subject of much ill treatment.

The island on which we were thus unfortunately cast, was situated far from the usual track of vessels, was extremely low, but three or four feet above the level of the sea, and apparently but a few miles in circumference ; which, probably, was the cause why it was seldom, if ever before visited

by the whites ; as the natural savage disposition of the natives, rendered it probable that they never had much intercourse with any of the civilized race. There was indeed something in the appearance of those savage islanders, that was, to me, truly frightful. They were extremely filthy, never cleansing themselves with water, and almost all, without scarcely an exception, were covered with vermin. They were small in stature, and their features resembling more those of negroes, than those of that class denominated savages. Their complexion was of a dark copper color, and their hair, long, black, and somewhat curley ; their only dress was a strip of course cotton cloth wove by the women, and which was worn by both male and female, in form of a scarf, over their right shoulder, and extending to a little below their knees ; the chiefs wearing upon their heads a turban, or cap, decorated with a wreath of feathers. Their food was principally fish, which they caught in small nets, and a kind of land crab, or snail, with which the island appeared in some places greatly to abound. The males were naturally very indolent, leaving the most laborious duties for their squaws to perform ; and which they appeared cheerfully to do, without a complaint or a murmur. Their cooking utensils were but few and mean, and their habitations but miserable hovels, fit only for those whose customs and habits degrade them to the level of the dumb beasts !

It was in a small filthy cabin, as described, that I was compelled to take up my abode, and with no other society than that of half a dozen or more of the detestable wretches, male and female, that I have described ; and from some of whom I was almost daily in the habit of receiving the most harsh and cruel treatment ; being seldom allowed sufficient food to satisfy the cravings of nature ; and that of a quality not to be eaten under any other circumstances than that bordering on starvation !

Alas, it is impossible that I at the present moment can reflect on what I have endured, and the scenes of horror that I was doomed to witness, without the severest shock! but, amid my sufferings, I tried all in my power to reconcile myself to my situation, believing that He, who had witnessed them, would yet make use of some one as an instrument of mercy toward me. For the space of twenty days I lived in the manner as represented, my time mostly devoted to attending upon the filthy and decrepid young one committed to my charge; and in all of which time I was scarcely permitted to retire to the distance of three rods from the place of my confinement.

The fishing of the natives failing them, they began to suffer so much for the want of food, that they were compelled to seek for it in another part of the island; which I found was not an uncommon practice with them, that, when water and provisions failed them in one place, to seek for it in another; and it is a remarkable fact, that in this, a time of the greatest scarcity of provisions, and when the savages could scarcely obtain for themselves a sufficient quantity to sustain life, and consequently, as might be expected, to me but a scanty pittance was allowed, yet I felt no extraordinary sensations of hunger or thirst! and did not so much suffer on account of the small quantity of food allowed me, as that of the place assigned me within which to repose at night, which was extremely filthy, and overrun with vermin!

The party of savages with whom I had dwelt, and by whom I had been by threats and blows compelled to obey and regard as my superiors, having resolved on a removal, packed up the mats on which they were wont to repose, and the few rude sun-baked vessels which had served them as cooking utensils, and set out in search of another place of abode, the men taking the lead, and carrying nothing but their spears and dirks, followed close

by me, bearing my usual burden ; while the squaws with their children or papooses brought up the rear, the squaws bearing the almost worthless contents of their deserted cabins. In this manner we travelled to the distance, as I judged, of seven or eight miles, when they reached an opposite point or shore of the island, when they came to a halt ; and having held a short consultation, commenced preparations for erecting another habitation, after the form of the one they had last occupied—a task which was left altogether for the women to perform, and in which I too soon found that I was myself to be engaged, although by reason of the privations and hardships that I had endured, I possessed at that moment strength hardly sufficient to bear the burden of my charge—of this, however, I was for the first time since that of my captivity, relieved ; but, immediately thereupon, in lieu thereof, a sharp pointed stick was put into my hands, with which I was ordered to dig holes in the ground, for the reception of the posts or poles of which the hut was to be constructed ; as I well knew that every sign or plea that I could make, of an inability to perform the task, would be disregarded by them, in compliance with their commands I commenced digging, and continued so to do until my hands became blistered, from my wrists to my fingers ends ! I was more than one hour in performing the labor in a manner satisfactory to those by whom I had been compelled thus to toil. Their squaws had not in the mean time been permitted to remain idle, but had been engaged in collecting moss and sea-weed with which to thatch the hut ; while, during the whole of the performance of this labor their lazy husbands had remained idle spectators, not even, as I could perceive, lifted a finger to assist in any part thereof.

At about the close of the day the hut was finished in the rudest manner, and at a little past sunset was so crowded with savage occupants, (men, wo-

men and children) as to leave no room for me ; and finding it impossible to obtain entrance, I was compelled to remain without, and with no other covering than that afforded by the canopy of heaven, and which I considered far preferable to that of attempting to seek repose with those who were apparently the most disgusting and filthy of the human race ; and, although the bed improved by me that dismal night was no better or other than a bed of sand, yet so completely exhausted was I from the fatigues of the day preceding, that I fell into a sound sleep, and did not awake until aroused by the yell of the savages late in the morning.

While both the men and the women were early engaged in mending and preparing their nets for fishing, I was compelled to resume my old employment of attending to and amusing and keeping quiet the disgusting and ill-humored brat, with which I had been almost constantly burdened ever since it was my misfortune to be deprived of my liberty. Whenever it happened to cry (for I could not always prevent it) I was sure to receive a sharp reprimand and sometimes a severe beating from my squaw-mistress, who professed to be its mother. Great was the abuse that I received from this savage monster, who, in her fits of rage, would, beast-like, gnash her teeth, and sometimes seize me by the throat until I became nearly strangled ! and at other times would seize me by the hair, which she would pull to that degree as to prostrate me upon my back. To have offered any resistance, would have only increased her fury. She was more ill-looking and disgusting than any of her companions, and none who manifested so great a share of deep rooted malignity in their dispositions. Her husband was the least savage of the two, and apparently disposed to treat me with more humanity, but was evidently governed by his squaw, and dared to do nothing to cause her displeasure. One whom it was represented to me

was his brother, and belonging to the same clan, was a much more independent spirit, and one to whom I feel myself much indebted for the protection that he afforded me at times when nearly sinking under severe pains, produced by blows inflicted upon my person by his infuriated sister! This man, although a savage, evidently possessed a better heart than many who claim a rank among a more humane and civilized race. The poor fellow was indeed deserving of a better fate, for it was, as the reader will hereafter learn, in defence of me that he lost his life.

It was now more than three weeks since I fell into the hands of the natives, in which time I had been permitted but once to see and converse with my husband, when he bitterly complained of the great hardships that he had and was still enduring and the barbarous treatment received from the natives.

The party of savages by whom I was more particularly held in bondage, having become once more short of provisions, preparations were made by them for still another removal, which were very similar to those already described by me, being compelled to bear my burden and to perform my portion of the labor.

The savages now took a more inland course and traversed a part of the island that was more thickly covered with briars, and low brush, which rendered the travelling very difficult, and to me extremely painful, insomuch that before they reached the place of their destination, I became so much exhausted as to be obliged to drop my burden, and by signs represent to my mistress that I could proceed no further; upon which she became, as usual, greatly enraged, and seizing me by the throat, commenced beating me, and continued so to do with so much violence that it would probably very soon have put a period to my existence, had not her husband's brother humanely interposed in my

behalf! It was by his entreaties that I was permitted to remain where I was until the succeeding morning, when, having gained a little more strength, I was compelled once more to put forward, and to accompany my truly savage mistress by whom I had been closely watched through the night—a night which I had passed with extreme misery and horror! expecting that nought but death would be my portion should I be found still unable to travel the succeeding morning. My only resource was my prayers, which I did not fail to repeat night and morning during the period of my captivity, nor have I since ceased in the performance of that all-important duty, in obedience to the commands of that merciful Being who supported me under my most severe afflictions, and finally most miraculously delivered me from the hands of my cruel oppressors.

About the middle of the day proceeding that on which we left our last encampment, we reached a cluster of inhabited tents or huts of another and more numerous clan of savages; and where, to my inexpressible joy, I once more met and was permitted to converse with my husband, after a separation of three weeks! Alas, how great the change in his appearance in this short period! What a sad and melancholly spectacle did his emaciated body and pale countenance present! His employment since that period, he informed me, had been that of dragging a heavy slab or board, and had been while thus engaged, so frequently made the subject of the insults and abuse of those whose hearts were callous to every humane feeling that he felt little or no anxiety longer to live! and, indeed, at that very moment he was reduced to that state of extreme debility, as to be no longer able to perform the task assigned him, and begged me to assist him therein—but this my Indian mistress would not permit me to do, and on perceiving me

weeping, compelled me to depart to a greater distance from him.

The morning ensuing, by the intercession of my master's brother, I was once more permitted to approach and to converse with my husband, which was the last interview that Heaven had ordained that I should have with him. The final separation was now about to take place! his strength having in the course of the night so far failed as to render him unable longer to obey the commands of his savage task masters, who, to revenge themselves, had most inhumanly stabbed him with their knives—a spear was thrust into his body in my presence, which caused me in a fit of despair to exclaim (as I seized and pulled the spear out of his body) “Jesus of Nazareth I can endure this no longer!”—he retained his senses until a few moments before he expired. The last words he uttered were, “Eliza, I am gone!” I was permitted until the melancholly moment when the vital spark took its flight, to remain with him, and to impart to him in his last and expiring moments every consolation in my power; enjoining upon him not to mourn on my account, but to put his trust in One, who had not only the power, but whom I had faith to believe would finally deliver me from cruel bondage, and restore me to the arms of my surviving relatives.

No sooner had my unfortunate husband breathed his last than they conveyed me to a distance, beyond view of his mangled body, which, as they represented to me, they soon after deposited in a hole dug in the ground for that purpose. I ought here to mention that Mr. Brown, the chief mate of my unfortunate husband, and who had been held with him in bondage by one and the same master, and who too had witnessed the savage tortures inflicted upon his beloved captain, for whom he had always manifested great regard, and a disposition to protect him in his last moments—which was viewed by the remorseless demons (for they are

deserving of no better name) as cause sufficient to inflict similar tortures upon him (Brown) and for no other offence a few days after they put to death in a manner still more cruel! They applied burning brands of fire to his legs, which burning upwards, literally roasted him alive, his whole body being burned to a crisp, and presenting an awful proof of savage barbarity!

By the death of my husband and his chief mate, and the unfortunate escape of the steward, there were but two of us of those who were cast upon the island remaining in captivity (Mr. Baxter the second mate and myself,) and we were far separated from each other; Mr. Baxter being, soon after the death of my husband, conveyed across a deep river, to a remote part of the island; and, although since my captivity I had suffered much from hardship, as well as by reason of hunger and thirst, yet I too soon found that after having been deprived of the only earthly friend on whom I could depend for protection, I was to be made the subject of still greater hardships, and that new and more severe duties were to be imposed on me, and although relieved by the sudden death of the child, with whose charge I had been so long burdened, (which expired in my arms,) yet I found that my employment now was to be no other than that of cutting down and carrying wood, fetching water, and fishing for my Indian master and mistress.

Unaccustomed as I had ever been to hardship, until the period when I was unfortunately deprived of my liberty, to be compelled now to labor like a beast of burden, and that too without either shoes or stockings to my feet, or (although exposed to the powerful rays of the sun) any covering to my head, and otherways but miserably clad, my readers cannot but suppose my situation at that unhappy moment wretched in the extreme; and, such as to lead them to conclude that no additional affliction could render it more so--but, not so, my cup of

wo proved not yet full to the brim, and I was to be doomed (if possible) to still greater torments. Although I had now been more than six weeks in the power of the savages, and in that time suffered much, not only by being compelled to perform tasks that my strength would hardly admit of, but by reason of being exposed to the scorching rays of the sun by day, and the damp air at night, and with an allowance of food (if food it can be called) hardly sufficient to satisfy the calls of nature ; yet, during the whole period (independent of the hard labor and privations to which they had subjected me) I had neither experienced from or discovered any disposition on the part of the savages to subject my person to brutal insult, until a few days after the death of my husband ; when, the reader may imagine how great must have been my surprise, as well as disgust, to be visited by one of the most ugly and frightful looking Indians that my eyes ever beheld or that the whole island probably contained, with proposals that, "as I had lost my mate, I should become his squaw !" Having made every sign possible significant of the detestation and abhorrence in which he was held by me, and that death by his hands would be far preferable to my becoming his companion or "squaw," as he was pleased to term me, I endeavored to represent to him my willingness to become his slave, and to obey him in all his reasonable commands—but, this would not suffice. I must (he represented to me) either voluntarily become his "mate," or become so by compulsion ! that he was a chief, and that my late master and mistress had relinquished to him all claim to me ; and, that but a short time would be allowed me to consider of it, and to decide ! I was now indeed placed in a situation more horrid than I had ever any previous conception of ! yea, even so much so as to be compelled to decide, and that too immediately, whether to become the willing companion and associate

of a wild and barbarous savage, or voluntarily suffer myself to become the defenceless victim of brutal outrage! In this dreadful dilemma, kind providence once more directed me to apply to and plead for the interposition of my late master's brother, intreating him that if he should not succeed in defeating the designs of the old chief, who was apparently between sixty and seventy years of age, to do me the kindness either to stab me to the heart, or to knock me on the head with his tomahawk, as death, even in that savage manner, would be preferable to that of yielding to the desires of him who professed to have power to do as he pleased with me!

Soon I had the satisfaction to see that my application for relief was not made in vain; and soon after to my sorrow that I had but very little more cause to rejoice than to mourn, as by his kind act of interference my benefactor lost his life! The savage chief finding himself opposed in his designs by one of inferior rank, a challenge ensued, which being accepted by him by whom I had been uniformly treated with much humanity. They met and fought with their knives, but the contest with such weapons, was as short as it was fatal. My friend received a wound from his antagonist, which reaching the heart, produced almost instantaneous death! and accompanying his last dying groan might be heard the hideous and exulting whoop of the savage monster by whose hands he fell! who, now finding all obstacles removed and no one who dared oppose him, without further ceremony or delay, seized me by the shoulder, and fiend-like forced me within the enclosure of his dismal and filthy cabin, but before he had time to accomplish his designs the God of mercy interposed, and sent one, as if commissioned expressly for the purpose, from Heaven, to rescue me, not from the devouring jaws of a ravenous lion, but from the hands of a savage ruffian, far more to be dreaded!

The steward, who had been so fortunate as to make his escape from the island, and in an Indian canoe to reach the main land, from thence succeeded in reaching Moreton Bay, and there gave information of my situation, as well as that of my husband and unfortunate companions. Whereupon, a Mr. Graham, a man of great bodily strength and courage, and one who had been once a prisoner among the savages, and knew something of their language, volunteered to head a party who would (guided by the steward) proceed as soon as possible, by land and sea, in search of the island; pledging himself, if the island could be found, either to rescue the unfortunate sufferers from the hands of the savages, or perish in the attempt.

A party comprised of thirteen resolute young men, under command of Lieut. Otter, and the said Mr. Graham, presented themselves to engage in the expedition. They were accompanied by the ship's steward, and after a passage of seventeen days, in a direction pointed out by the latter, they were so fortunate as to fall in with the island—it laying but a very little above the level of the sea, and covered with nothing but low bushes, and a bold shore, they were almost on it before it was discovered by them. Nine of their number immediately landed, and with no one but the steward to guide them, were providentially directed to the spot where I was then held in bondage—and, as a most remarkable instance of the interposition of Divine Providence, they arrived in season to frustrate the designs of the savage brute, who had selected me as his victim, and to rescue me from one of the most alarming situations in which an unfortunate female could be placed! I at that instant was held fast by the savage a few paces from the hut, and was first discovered by Mr. Graham, who was a short distance ahead of the others, and was attracted to the thicket by my moans and entreaties for mercy! The first knowledge that I had of his

approach was by the sudden flight of the savage by whom I had been seized and held with an iron grasp, and by whom Mr. G. was first discovered. He made no attempt to intercept the affrighted savage, but caught me in his arms, and hurried me to the boat, in which we all immediately embarked, before the savage islanders had time to collect in sufficient numbers to oppose us.

We had a short and safe passage to Moreton Bay, and after a detention there for a few days, I was so fortunate as to obtain a passage from thence to Liverpool, where I met with and was welcomed home by my sympathizing friends, to whom I bore the sorrowful tidings of my misfortunes, as well as the particulars of the death of my beloved husband.

Many accounts have been presented the public of the captivity and state of bondage of many of our unfortunate fellow-beings, among savages, but there probably have been but few instances in which the sufferings of any have exceeded those experienced by me for so short a period as I was in their power! For some days after my deliverance, I felt the species of mental derangement which adverse fortune frequently produce; my mind was in continual agitation, and when at night I lost myself in sleep, I frequently awoke, thinking myself still in the power of the savages, whose terrific yells I imagined I distinctly heard! and at this moment, while writing and recalling to memory the dreadful scenes to which I have been witness, they present themselves to my imagination like a frightful dream! but, thanks be to Divine Providence, through whose kind interposition I have been restored to, and once more permitted to enjoy the society of my surviving friends, I feel that it is a blessed reality, and that all thanks and praise are due to that Supreme Being, who gave me strength to bear my afflictions with becoming fortitude.

ELIZA FRASER."

"Liverpool, July 2, 1837."

There is one important fact relating to the extreme sufferings of Mrs. Fraser, which, probably through modesty she has failed to mention in her narrative—four days after they had committed themselves to the care of Providence, Mrs. Fraser was delivered of a child, while up to her waist in water in the long boat—the infant was born alive but after a few gasps was drowned, and the 1st mate wrapped up the body in a part of his shirt, which he tore from his back for the purpose, and let it go with the tide.

It may be somewhat gratifying to the readers of the preceding Narrative to learn that soon after the miraculous escape of Mrs. Fraser was effected a second expedition, under the command of the intrepid Graham, was fitted out for the purpose of effecting the liberation of Mr. Baxter, who was still held in bondage by the savages; which attempt was attended with more difficulty, and at the very great risk of life. Graham and his followers succeeded in reaching the island, but, when about to land, they fortunately discovered a number of the islanders concealed in the bushes, apparently well armed and prepared to give them a warm reception. Had they at the instant attempted a landing, the probability is that not one of them would have escaped capture or instant death, as they afterward learned from Baxter, who succeeded in making his escape and reaching the boat by swimming, that the boat's crew had been espied by the savages early in the morning, at a very considerable distance from the island, which gave them time to collect and equip themselves, and to the number of one hundred or more had repaired to and concealed themselves in a thicket near the point where they supposed the whites would disembark.

In conclusion, we would remark, that Mrs. Fraser, the narrator, very justly attributes her miraculous escape to the interposition of a kind Provi-

dence, of which we believe no reasonable person can for a moment doubt. Agreeably to her own declarations, she had unceasingly looked to and called upon Heaven for that help which it appeared not then in the power of any human being alone to afford her ; and to be thus so suddenly and unexpectedly rescued from the power of one who was about to plunge her into a state of inconceivable wretchedness, must be admitted as proof positive that in whatever situation we may be placed, however forlorn and apparently hopeless our condition, we have still a friend, whom, if in Him we put our trust, we shall find both able and willing to stay the assassin's hand, even at the instant when raised to inflict the fatal blow ! That He does thus sometimes reveal himself to his creatures in their dark hours of adversity, we have been made acquainted with in other instances besides that recorded by Mrs. Fraser ; and the one which we at this moment recollect of having but recently perused, was the loss of the ship *Blinderhall*, and the miraculous preservation of the crew, the particulars of which are very similar to those presented by Mrs. Fraser.

The *Blinderhall* free trader, bound from London to Bombay, with a full compliment of hands and a number of passengers, male and female, on board, was driven by contrary winds on "Inaccessible Island," so called, and soon went to pieces. Hungry, cold, and comfortless, thousands of miles from their native land, the shipwrecked voyagers retired to a shelving rock, the only shelter that could be found, some devoutly to prostrate themselves in humble thankfulness, before that merciful Being who had so wonderfully delivered them from destruction, others to rest, after the dreadful fatigue by which they were exhausted. Destitute of food of every kind, famine soon began to threaten—every stone near the sea was examined for shell fish, but in vain. In this extremity, three days from

that on which they were cast on the island, as the quarter-master's wife was observed sitting on a sand bank, with her little babe crying at her breast, faint and exhausted, a group of half starved seamen passed by, when one of them pointing to the infant, exclaimed to the others, "that will make us a drop of broth, if nothing else turns up!" The observation, as might be expected, spoke daggers to the poor mother! On the return of night, as the poor hungry wretches were squatting in sullen dejection round their fires, on a sudden hundreds of birds from seaward came actually flying through the flames; many fell dead, scorched and suffocated, and thus were the sufferers rescued for a time from the horrors which so imminently beset them. But when their stock of wild fowl had become exhausted, each began to fear they were now approaching that sad point of necessity, when between death and casting lots to see who should be sacrificed to serve for food for the rest, no alternative remains. While horror at the bare contemplation of an extremity so repulsive occupied the thoughts of all, the horizon was observed to be suddenly obscured, and presently clouds of penguins lighted on the island; and before the evening was dark, the sand could scarcely be seen for the numbers of eggs, with which the surface of the earth was covered! The penguins continued on the island four or five days, when, as if by signal, the whole took their flight and were never seen again. The eggs were collected and dressed in all manner of ways, and supplied abundance of food for upwards of two weeks.

In the mean time the carpenter with his gang had constructed a boat, and four of the men had adventured in her for Tristan da Lunha, in hopes of ultimately extricating their fellow-sufferers from their perilous situation. Unfortunately the boat was lost, whether carried away by the violence of the currents that set in between the islands, or was

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dashed to pieces against the breakers, was never known, for no vestige of the boat or the crew was ever seen. Before their provisions began however to fail, a second boat was launched; and in this, an officer and some seamen made a second attempt, and happily succeeded in effecting their landing, after much labor, on the island of Governor Glass. He received them most cordially, and with humanity, which neither time, nor place, nor total seclusion from the world had enfeebled or impaired. He instantly launched his boat, and, unawed by considerations of personal danger, hastened, at the risk of his life, to deliver his shipwrecked countrymen from the calamities they had so long endured. He made repeated trips, surmounted all difficulties, and fortunately succeeded in safely landing them on his own island, after they had been exposed for nearly three months to the horrors of a situation almost unparalleled in the recorded sufferings of seafaring men.

To conclude, the writer would beg the liberty to inquire, "Can there be any one, after being made acquainted with the remarkable interposition of Divine Providence in preserving the lives, and in sending deliverance to the crew and passengers of the *Blinderhall*, doubt the superintendence of a particular *Providence*, operating by second causes?"



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