CHAPTER II NAVIGATORS AND THEIR DISCOVERIES

NEXT day, the 27th of January, the passengers of the MACQUARIE were installed on board the brig. Will Halley had not offered his cabin to his lady passengers. This omission was the less to be deplored, for the den was worthy of the bear.

At half past twelve the anchor was weighed, having been loosed from its holding-ground with some difficulty. A moderate breeze was blowing from the southwest. The sails were gradually unfurled; the five hands made slow work. Wilson offered to assist the crew; but Halley begged him to be quiet and not to interfere with what did not concern him. He was accustomed to manage his own affairs, and required neither assistance nor advice.

This was aimed at John Mangles, who had smiled at the clumsiness of some maneuver. John took the hint, but mentally resolved that he would nevertheless hold himself in readiness in case the incapacity of the crew should endanger the safety of the vessel.

However, in time, the sails were adjusted by the five sailors, aided by the stimulus of the captain's oaths. The MACQUARIE stood out to sea on the larboard tack, under all her lower sails, topsails, topgallants, cross-jack, and jib.

By and by, the other sails were hoisted. But in spite
of this additional canvas the brig made very little way.
Her rounded bow, the width of her hold, and her heavy stern,
made her a bad sailor, the perfect type of a wooden shoe.

They had to make the best of it. Happily, five days, or,
at most, six, would take them to Auckland, no matter how bad
a sailor the MACQUARIE was.

At seven o'clock in the evening the Australian coast and the lighthouse
of the port of Eden had faded out of sight. The ship labored
on the lumpy sea, and rolled heavily in the trough of the waves.
The passengers below suffered a good deal from this motion.
But it was impossible to stay on deck, as it rained violently.
Thus they were condemned to close imprisonment.

Each one of them was lost in his own reflections. Words were few.
Now and then Lady Helena and Miss Grant exchanged a few syllables.
Glenarvan was restless; he went in and out, while the Major
was impassive. John Mangles, followed by Robert, went on the poop
from time to time, to look at the weather. Paganel sat in his corner,
muttering vague and incoherent words.

What was the worthy geographer thinking of? Of New Zealand, the country
to which destiny was leading him. He went mentally over all his history;
he called to mind the scenes of the past in that ill-omened country.

But in all that history was there a fact, was there a solitary incident that could justify the discoverers of these islands in considering them as "a continent." Could a modern geographer or a sailor concede to them such a designation. Paganel was always revolving the meaning of the document. He was possessed with the idea; it became his ruling thought. After Patagonia, after Australia, his imagination, allured by a name, flew to New Zealand. But in that direction, one point, and only one, stood in his way.

"Contin--contin," he repeated, "that must mean continent!"

And then he resumed his mental retrospect of the navigators who made known to us these two great islands of the Southern Sea.

It was on the 13th of December, 1642, that the Dutch navigator Tasman, after discovering Van Diemen's Land, sighted the unknown shores of New Zealand. He coasted along for several days, and on the 17th of December his ships penetrated into a large bay, which, terminating in a narrow strait, separated the two islands.

The northern island was called by the natives Ikana-Mani, a word which signifies the fish of Mani. The southern island was called Tavai-Pouna-Mou, "the whale that yields the green-stones."

Abel Tasman sent his boats on shore, and they returned
accompanied by two canoes and a noisy company of natives.
These savages were middle height, of brown or yellow complexion,
angular bones, harsh voices, and black hair, which was dressed
in the Japanese manner, and surmounted by a tall white feather.

This first interview between Europeans and aborigines seemed
to promise amicable and lasting intercourse. But the next day,
when one of Tasman's boats was looking for an anchorage nearer
to the land, seven canoes, manned by a great number of natives,
attacked them fiercely. The boat capsized and filled. The quartermaster
in command was instantly struck with a badly-sharpened spear,
and fell into the sea. Of his six companions four were killed;
the other two and the quartermaster were able to swim to the ships,
and were picked up and recovered.

After this sad occurrence Tasman set sail, confining his revenge to giving
the natives a few musket-shots, which probably did not reach them.
He left this bay--which still bears the name of Massacre Bay--
followed the western coast, and on the 5th of January, anchored near
the northern-most point. Here the violence of the surf, as well as
the unfriendly attitude of the natives, prevented his obtaining water,
and he finally quitted these shores, giving them the name Staten-land
or the Land of the States, in honor of the States-General.

The Dutch navigator concluded that these islands were

adjacent to the islands of the same name on the east of Terra del Fuego, at the southern point of the American continent. He thought he had found "the Great Southern Continent."

"But," said Paganel to himself, "what a seventeenth century sailor might call a 'continent' would never stand for one with a nineteenth century man. No such mistake can be supposed! No! there is something here that baffles me."