

SKETCH

OF THE

Life and Transactions

OF

PETER BROWN,

AN ENGLISH SAILOR.

At an early period of life, run away from his father's house, and went to sea; and after a long absence returned home with plenty of money and valuable jewels, which he had got by plunder. Also Account how he entered his parents' house as a stranger wanting lodgings, and they not knowing him to be their son, watched till he was asleep, and then Murdered him in the most barbarous manner for the sake of his riches. Likewise an Account how they discovered next morning that he was their own child. When they ended their lives with the same life they had butchered him; and how his sister, coming into the room, was so overcome at the sight of the bloody scene, that she fell suddenly down, and instantly expired.

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THE

LIFE AND TRANSACTIONS

OF

PETER BROWN.

SOME time ago, there lived a man Perin in Cornwall, whose name as the sequel will show, we are not at liberty to insert. He was blessed with ample possession and fruitful issue, and happy only in a younger son, who, when he left his father, went under the name of Peter Brown.

Peter being of a wily and enterprising disposition, joined with a crew of smugglers, who went a roving to sea, and soon became pirates, making prize of all who they could master; and so increased wealth, number, and strength, that the Straits they advanced upon a large Turkish vessel, richly laden, where they got a great booty; but their powder by mischance taking fire, our hero trustin

his skilful swimming, got to shore upon the Isle of Rhodes, with the best of his jewels about him.

Some time after, he offered a few of em for sale to a Jew, who knew them to be the governor's of Algiers. Whereupon he was apprehended, and for a while condemned to the gallies amongst other Christians; but their miserable slavery made them use their wits to recover their former liberty; and accordingly, watched their opportunity, they slew some of their officers, and valiantly released themselves.

Peter, soon after this exploit, got aboard of an English ship, and came safe to London, where his former misery, and some skill that he had gotten that way, preferred him to be servant to a surgeon, who, after a while, sent him to the East Indies. Our hero was not long there till, by his diligence and industry, he made money, with which he returned to England. And, longing to see his native county, Cornwall, in a small ship from London he sailed westward, but before

he attained his desired port, he was carried away upon that coast, where once more his excellent skill in swimming brought him safe to shore. Having now been fifteen years absent, before he discovered himself to any of the family, he made what inquiries he could to learn how they fared, and understood that his father was much decayed in his estate, and had retired himself to live privately in a place not far off, being in debt and danger.

His sister he finds married to a merchant a meaner match than her birth promised to her he at first appeared as a poor stranger, but he soon took an opportunity to let her know that he was her brother, and in a private manner shewed her what jewels and gold he had concealed in a bow-case about him; and concluded by telling her, that the next day he intended to discover himself to his parents yet to keep his disguise till she and her husband should come thither to make their common joy complete.

Being come to his parents' door, his humble behaviour, and particularly his

mean attire, melted the old people into so much compassion, that they immediately consented to give him shelter from the cold season under their humble roof. By degrees, his stories, his travels, adventures, and sufferings, he told with much passion to the old people, made him their guest so long by the kitchen fire, that the husband bade them good night, and went to bed; and soon after, his true stories working compassion in the weaker vessel she wept and so did he.

Peter being greatly moved at seeing his mother in tears, comforted her with a piece of gold, which gave her an assurance that he deserved the lodging which she afforded him. Shortly after he retired to bed, but before he lay down he imprudently shewed her the treasure which was girded about his body, still concealing who he was, and this indiscreet act wrought his own utter destruction. But is there a more open guileless character in the world than an honest British Tar off duty? and who could extend their prudence so far as to entertain

for a moment any dangerous consequences, on account of the disclosure, from a loving parent? Unfortunate young man, alas! his suspicions were lulled asleep by his fond affections.

The old woman being tempted by the golden bait that she had received, and greedily thirsting after the enjoyment of the rest, she went to her husband, and awaking him, informed him of the discovery she had made; at the same time in the most pathetic manner, representing their present wretched circumstances and at length told him of her base and diabolical intention. Though, with horrid apprehensions, he often refused, yet her insinuating eloquence (Eve's enchantments) moved him at last to consent, and become master of all the wealth, by murdering the owner thereof.

After much consultation, they agreed to perpetrate the horrid deed by cutting his throat with a large carving knife while he lay asleep. Having accomplished their hellish purpose they cov

ered the corpse with clothes till opportunity served for their carrying it away.

Early next morning the sister hastened to her father's house, where, with signs of great joy, she inquired for the handsome young sailor that was to lodge there last night. The old folks at first denied that they had seen any such man, but she told them he was her long lost brother, which she knew assuredly by a scar upon his arm, cut by a sword in his youth, and that they had made an appointment to meet there the next morning and be merry.

The father hearing this, hastily ran up into the room, and finding the mark as his daughter had told him, with horrid regret of this monstrous murder of his own son, and with the very knife wherewith he killed him, he cut his own throat. The mother shortly after went up stairs to consult with her husband what mode of conduct they would pursue in order to elude being suspected of the atrocious crime, when she beheld him weltering in his blood; wild and

aghast on beholding the awful spectacle, and stung to the heart with remorse, she seized the fatal instrument of death, still reeking with the blood of her husband, and instantly ripped up her own belly in such a manner that her entrails tumbled out.

The daughter wondering at their delay in returning, went up stairs to learn the reason, which, alas! she too soon discovered. To see, at once, a father, a mother, and a brother, butchered in so shocking a manner, was too much for human nature to bear—quite overcome with horror and amazement at so bloody scene, she sunk down and instantly expired.

The names of this unfortunate family who thus, by sordid views, came to this untimely end, were prudently concealed for the sake of preserving their innocent relations from ignominy and shame. Peter Brown is the name the unfortunate youth gave himself when he left his parents, and was well known by many sea-faring men both in Portsmouth and Plymouth.