

**AMONG MALAY  
PIRATES: A TALE OF  
ADVENTURE AND PERIL**

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Among Malay pirates: a tale of adventure and peril by G. A. Henty

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"DICK, OLD CHAP, YOU HAVE BEEN WOUNDED."—*Frontispiece.*  
*Among Malay Pirates.*

# AMONG MALAY PIRATES

*A TALE OF ADVENTURE AND PERIL*

BY

G. A. HENTY

AUTHOR OF "UNDER DRAKE'S FLAG," "IN FREEDOM'S CAUSE,"  
"TRUE TO THE CLIF FLAG," "THE DRAGON  
AND THE RAVEN," ETC., ETC.



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# AMONG MALAY PIRATES.

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## CHAPTER I.

"I WISH most heartily that something would happen," Harry Parkhurst, a midshipman of some sixteen years of age, said to his chum, Dick Balderson, as they leaned on the rail of her majesty's gunboat *Serpent*, and looked gloomily at the turbid stream that rolled past the ship as she lay at anchor. "One day is just like another—one is in a state of perspiration from morning till night, and from night till morning. There seems to be always a mist upon the water; and if it were not that we get up steam every three or four days and run out for twenty-four hours for a breath of fresh air, I believe that we should be all eaten up with fever in no time. Of course, they are always talking of Malay pirates up the river kicking up a row; but it never seems to come off."

"There is one thing, Harry—there is always something to look at, for there are canoes constantly going up and down, and there is plenty of variety among them—from the sluggish dhows, laden with up-country produce, to the long canoes with a score



of paddlers and some picturesque ruffian sitting in the stern. It adds to the interest when you know that the crews are cut-throats to a man, and would make but the shortest possible work of you if they had got you in their power."

"Yes, Dick. Look at that canoe coming up stream; what a good-looking chap that is in the stern, though by the way he scowls at us I can quite believe he would, as you say, cut our throats if he had the chance. That is a pretty little child sitting by him, and what a gorgeous dress she has! There, you see, he can look pleasant enough when he speaks to her. I fancy they must have come from a long way up the river, for they look wilder than most of the fellows who pass us. If that fool who is steering her does not mind what he is about, Dick, he will either run into that canoe coming down or else get across our chain. There, I told you so."

The man at the tiller was in fact, looking, with mingled curiosity and hostility, at the gunboat that he was passing but a few yards away, and did not notice a canoe, manned by six rowers, that was coming down with the stream, taking an oblique course across the bows of the *Serpent*, and was indeed hidden from his view by the hull of the vessel, until he had passed beyond her. Then there was a sudden shout and a yell from a dozen throats, as the two canoes came into collision, the one proceeding up the river being struck on the quarter with a force

that almost cut her in two, and in an instant her occupants were in the water. As the Malays were to a man almost as much at home in the water as on land, the accident would have had little effect beyond the loss of the boat and its contents, had it not been that the stem of the other craft struck the Malay chief with such force as to completely disable him, and he would have sunk at once had not two of the boatmen grasped him and kept his head above water.

"What has become of the child?" Harry Parkhurst exclaimed, and he and Dick Balderson both leaped on to the rail, throwing off their jackets as they shouted to the men to lower a boat. Nothing could be seen of the child until, after half a minute's suspense, a little face suddenly appeared in the swirl of the muddy water some fifteen yards from the vessel's side. It was gone again in an instant, but, as it disappeared, both lads sprang from the side and with a few strokes reached the spot where they had seen the face disappear; then they dived under water and soon grasped her. As soon as they came to the surface a sailor, who had seized a coil of rope, flung it to them, and, grasping it, they were quickly by the side of the gunboat.

A minute later some sailors, who had at once tumbled into a boat on the alarm being given, came up. The child was first handed into it, then the midshipmen scrambled in, and, by their directions,

two of the sailors, standing on the thwarts, lifted the child high above their heads to the hands of the men leaning over the bulwark.

"Take the little thing to the doctor," Dick said. "Now, lads, row on; let's pick up some of those Malay fellows."

A babel of shouts and sounds rose from the water; the bow of the second canoe had been stove in, and she also had sunk to the water level; a fierce fight was going on between several of the Malays; the chief, who was being supported by two of his crew, was shouting furiously; and others of his men, in obedience to his orders, were diving under water. Harry turned to the gunboat, and called to the men to bring Soh Hay, the interpreter, to the side. A minute later the man was hustled to the rail.

"Tell that chief that we have got his child safely on board," Harry shouted.

Again and again the interpreter called out; but it was some time before he could make the chief pay attention to him. As the latter caught the purport of his words his face changed at once, and, after calling to his men to desist from their search, his head sank on to the shoulder of one of the men supporting him, and he evidently lost consciousness.

"He is badly hurt, Dick; we had better get him on board, too. Old Horsley was wishing this morning that he had something to do beyond administering doses of quinine to the men."