

**YOUNG FOLKS' STORIES.
SERIES III. ADVENTURES
BY LAND AND SEA**

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Young Folks' Stories. Series III. Adventures by Land and Sea by Maria Hack

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MARIA HACK

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Page 105.

HUNTING THE BEAR.

Frontispiece.

YOUNG FOLKS' STORIES

Series III

ADVENTURES BY LAND AND SEA

By MARIA HACK

WITH TWELVE FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS.



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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
LOSS OF THE WAGER	6
<i>Illustrations :—</i>	
Leaving the Ship	15
Sleeping Quarters	29
The Indians	37
ADVENTURES OF BYRON	41
<i>Illustration :—</i>	
A Peep into a Wigwam	57
A WINTER IN CHARLTON ISLAND. Part I.	74
<i>Illustrations :—</i>	
At Prayer	79
On the Side of the Forest	93
A WINTER IN CHARLTON ISLAND. Part II.	100
<i>Illustration :—</i>	
The Forest on Fire	117
ADVENTURES IN SWEDEN	125
<i>Illustrations :—</i>	
Swedish Sledge	120
Hunting the Bear (<i>Éventailpiece</i>)	137
ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN BIGH. Part I.	143
<i>Illustrations :—</i>	
Otaheite	145
A Malay Family	163
ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN BIGH. Part II.	167
<i>Illustration :—</i>	
Among the Islands	175

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

51

52

53

54

55

56

57

58

59

60

61

62

63

STORY I.

LOSS OF THE "WAGER."

"WILL you be so kind, dear mamma, as to tell us a story to-night, of something that happened in a part of the world where none of *our* travellers have been?"

"With all my heart, Lucy. I quite approve of changing the scene of action. I think we have not yet sailed round Cape Horn."

"Round Cape Horn!" exclaimed Harry. "Oh, no, mamma! We have been several times to the cold countries in the north, but never to those in the southern part of the world. Pray tell me who the traveller is!"

"The person who will interest you more than any other that I shall mention, is an active, spirited lad of seventeen."

"Oh, I shall like that! I wonder what he will do at Cape Horn!"

"I must first tell you, that about the same time

that Behring set out on his second voyage, a squadron sailed from England, under the command of George Anson. Do you remember what the officer is called who commands several ships?"

"To be sure I do: he is a commodore. So then, Commodore Anson sailed round Cape Horn: was he only seventeen?"

"You travel a great deal too fast, Harry. The commodore was a much more experienced person. The youthful hero, with whom you are so impatient to be acquainted, was named John Byron. He was a midshipman on board the *Wager*, a ship of the squadron commanded by Commodore Anson; but you must suspend your curiosity about him for the present.

"On the 18th of September, 1740, the squadron left St. Helen's. In the English Channel they were joined by other ships of war, and trading vessels, with which they sailed in company till the 29th, when they separated; some ships going to America, others to Turkey, and those under the command of Anson, proceeding to the island of Madeira, where they arrived, on Monday, October the 25th."

"Why did Commodore Anson undertake this voyage, mamma? Was it to make discoveries?"

“ No: he went, by order of the English government, to attack some of the Spanish settlements on the western coast of South America. It is not, however, the adventures of Commodore Anson that I am going to relate to you; but the disasters that befel the Wager, and those unhappy men who had the misfortune to be on board.

“ In the first part of the voyage, Captain Kidd, who commanded this vessel, died. Though no particular accident had happened to the ship while she was under his command, the captain in his last moments, predicted the evils that would befall her. Neither did it require any extraordinary sagacity to foretel her miserable fate; for she was an old worn-out ship, heavily laden, and manned by discontented sailors, who had been forced, on returning home from long voyages, to engage in this enterprise. The dissatisfaction of the sailors was increased by the murmurs of the soldiers on board, who were a detachment of poor helpless invalids, ill calculated to endure the hardships of the service they were going to be employed in, and indignant at being taken from the retirement of Chelsea Hospital, to end their days in a foreign land. Nothing but misfortune and disgrace could be expected to result from an enterprise so badly planned.