

He never seemed to look on men or children as prey, but as companions, and the natives assert that when wild they live principally on poultry, birds, and the smaller kinds of deer."

This animal is called in Sumatra, the

rimau-dahan. The word *dahan* means the fork of a tree, in which they commonly rest. It is larger than the leopard, and remarkable for the thickness of its limbs, but its head is smaller and less expressive of ferocity.

THUROT'S INVASION.



THE town of Carrickfergus, in the county of Antrim, Ireland, boasts an antiquity which carries us back to the early days of history. It was, doubtless, an important place during the

eventful wars which occurred in Ireland during the middle ages, and its castle is supposed to have been built in the year 1178. Coming down to later times we find that the town was besieged in 1689 by the Duke of Schomberg, to whom it surrendered on August 28th of that year; and it was at Carrickfergus that King William III. landed with his army, twelve days before the battle of the Boyne. In 1760 the castle was taken, and the town plundered, by the daring French commodore, Thurot—an episode distinguished in history as "Thurot's Invasion."

Of the career of Commodore Thurot, and his last exploit—the attack on Carrickfergus—the following is a brief sketch:—

François Thurot was born in the year 1727, at Nuits, in Burgundy, and was of Irish extraction, his grandfather being Captain O'Farrell, one of those who loyally adhered to the cause of James II. after his abdication. Thurot's mother was a French lady, her connections being of some distinction; and it was to this circumstance that Thurot owed his escape on the occasion when his life had been forfeited to the laws of his country.

As a lad, Thurot evinced an insatiable passion for adventure; and when only fifteen years of age he surreptitiously

left his home, and proceeded to Dunkirk, with a view of indulging his taste for the sea. By a singular coincidence, amongst the seafarers with whom Thurot now came into contact, was a roving Irish smuggler, bearing Thurot's family name of Farrell. Being told by this individual that the O'Farrells were still a flourishing family in Connaught, amongst whom he would find a friendly reception, Thurot agreed to accompany his new acquaintance to Ireland.

On reaching the Isle of Man, however, a dispute arose between the two rovers, and the lad determined to remain on the island, leaving his friend to proceed alone on his adventures. Failing to meet with an opportunity of continuing his journey, Thurot entered the service of a gentleman from Anglesey, who was engaged in the smuggling business; and in this service the youth was employed in "running" goods between Anglesey and the Isle of Man. In this occupation, Thurot increased his knowledge of the English language, and at the same time acquired some skill in seamanship. Impelled by his thirst for adventure, Thurot abandoned this employment and went to Dublin, where he entered the service of a nobleman as valet; but, before long, his love of the sea returned, and he again took up his old avocation of smuggling.

The boldness of Thurot's transactions attracted the attention of the revenue officers, who kept a vigilant watch upon his proceedings, and on his return from one of his expeditions they fell upon his

party, and captured several of the boats. Thurot, however, contrived to escape, and sought a refuge in Scotland, where for a time he lived upon the proceeds of his smuggling adventures. Having at length obtained the mastership of a trading sloop, he sailed from Edinburgh for London, but on arriving in the Thames his vessel was destroyed by fire, and he relapsed into his old employment of smuggling—this time, however, he sought a new sphere of operations. Having taken up his residence at Boulogne, he organised a band of smugglers, of whom he became the recognised chief, exporting not less than £25,000 worth of goods annually. The French Government being determined to put a stop to these frauds upon the revenue, took active steps against the contrabandists; and Thurot, being captured, was tried and condemned to death. The life of the adventurous smuggler was, however, spared through the influence of his mother's family; and his merits being discerned, the government decided to employ him in the navy.

When the war between England and France broke out in 1755, Thurot was placed in command of a war-sloop; but the monotony of the regular service proving tiresome to his ardent temperament, he obtained permission to join the privateers of Dunkirk. In this capacity he inflicted much damage on British commerce in the Channel, and his name became the terror of English merchants. His exploits brought him under the favourable notice of the French government, and in 1757 he was appointed to the command of a frigate, in which position he so distinguished himself that he was soon placed in a more important command.

The French government at this time was desirous of checking the development of the English navy, and Thurot's knowledge of the British coasts rendered him a competent adviser. He suggested a bold attack upon four or five points of

the coast simultaneously, and the government entrusted to him the command of a squadron of five frigates, carrying about 170 guns, manned by 700 seamen, and about 1,200 soldiers, with which force it was designed to make a descent upon the coast of Ireland. Thurot sailed from Dunkirk in October, 1759, but in avoiding the Channel, then vigilantly guarded by British cruisers, his fleet encountered a disastrous storm, which completely disabled one of his ships; and when at length the little squadron arrived off the coast of Derry, they were again driven to sea by unfavourable winds, and another ship was separated from the fleet.

Disheartened by want of success, and suffering greatly from privation, Thurot's officers desired to be allowed to return to France, but the indomitable commodore refused to listen to their wishes, and insisted upon continuing his expedition. Securing a small supply of provisions in Islay, the sufferings of his crew were somewhat alleviated, and Thurot at length anchored in Carrickfergus Bay, on February 21, 1760, his forces being now reduced to three vessels, with 200 or 300 sailors, and 600 soldiers. So unexpected was this warlike visit, that at first the ships were mistaken for English vessels; and it is told that a little girl, who had two brothers in the East Indies, upon seeing them, ran to her mother with childlike glee, exclaiming, "Oh, mamma, here are three Indiamen in the bay—my brothers are come home!" and immediately ran back to meet them. Upon approaching the beach, the child quickly returned, and, with saddened tones, said—"Mamma, they say they are Frenchmen—they are landing—and I saw their guns glittering!" And Frenchmen they proved to be, as was soon ascertained!

It can scarcely be said that Carrickfergus was in a state of defence, for the wall and the castle were both in ruins; but the town was garrisoned by four

companies of soldiers, the greater part of whom were at exercise in a field near the castle at the time when Thurot so boldly effected a landing. Colonel Jennings, who was in command, proceeded to oppose the progress of the invaders; and it was whilst the French troops were marching through the streets towards the castle that the following affecting and romantic incident occurred:—

A little girl, who had been on a visit to a friend in the town, and, unacquainted with the novel dangers which had disturbed the quietude of the place, was returning home, had somehow or other contrived to get betwixt the retreating soldiers of the garrison and their advancing foes. At this critical moment, one of the Frenchmen, touched by the innocent demeanour of the child in the midst of peril, and disregarding the risk to which his action exposed him, rushed forward, snatched the child in his arms, and carrying it to the nearest place of safety (which happened to be its father's house), returned to his place in the ranks.

The garrison, overpowered by numbers, retired, and gallantly devoted themselves to the defence of the castle, where they made so effectual a stand as to procure for themselves an honourable capitulation, Colonel Jennings entering into a parole that the officers and soldiers should not serve against France until exchanged.

The magistrates being unable to supply stores to the French, as there was a scarcity in the town, Thurot sent a flag of truce to Belfast, demanding provisions to a large amount, and threatened to burn Carrickfergus, and Belfast also, if his demands were not complied with. But the country becoming aroused, and the militia assembling, he resolved to return to his ships. Before the expedition could leave the bay, however, three British frigates arrived in pursuit. The vessels were equal in number, but the

French ships were unseaworthy, and the British carried heavier metal. On the morning of February 28th, the English sighted the enemy and immediately gave chase, coming to an engagement with them off the Isle of Man. Thurot had a presentiment of his impending fate, for, as he hurriedly paced the deck while his men were preparing for action, he observed to the mayor of Carrickfergus and another gentleman whom he had carried off as hostages, "I shall die to-day!"

Yet, when the action commenced, Thurot fought with his accustomed bravery; and even after his vessel had been pierced below the water-line, and the sea was rapidly gaining in the hold, he still fought on, sustaining the conflict for nearly two hours, when, his ship having been boarded by the crew of one of the English vessels, he perceived that all hope of victory was gone, and ordered the colours to be struck. In obeying this order, a man was shot dead—then another—and before a third could effect it, Thurot, who was assisting, was shot through the heart; and in the excitement and heat of the engagement, his body was thrown into the sea by his own crew. Thus terminated the career of a man who, whilst his name had become terrible to all the trading ports of Great Britain and Ireland, yet by his courage had won the admiration even of his enemies.

In the engagement, three hundred of the French were killed and wounded, whilst the British loss did not exceed fifty. The British took possession of their prizes, and conveyed them to Ramsay Bay, in the Isle of Man. The Irish House of Commons accorded a vote of thanks to Colonel Jennings for his gallant defence of Carrickfergus, whilst the freedom of the city of Cork, in silver boxes, was presented to the captains of the three British frigates. The event was also celebrated in ballads which were sung about the country.