

## INTRODUCTION.

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Eighty years ago, when the story told in these pages was first published, "forecastle yarns" were more thrilling than they are now. In these days we look for information in regard to a new land's capabilities for pastoral, agricultural, and commercial pursuits; in those days it was customary, with a large portion of the British public, at any rate, to expect sailors to tell stories

Of the cannibals that each other eat,  
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads  
Do grow beneath their shoulders,

and to relate other particulars likely to arrest the attention and excite the imagination. Men then sailed to unknown lands, peopled by unknown barbarians, and their adventures in strange and mysterious countries were clothed in a romance which has been almost completely dispelled by the telegraph, the newspaper press, cheap books, and rapid transit, and by the utilitarian ideas which have swept over the world.

It was largely to meet the public taste for something wonderful and striking that John Rutherford's story of adventures in New