

Stolen Treasure eBook

Stolen Treasure by Howard Pyle

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Contents

Stolen Treasure eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	6
Page 1.....	7
Page 2.....	9
Page 3.....	10
Page 4.....	12
Page 5.....	14
Page 6.....	16
Page 7.....	18
Page 8.....	19
Page 9.....	20
Page 10.....	22
Page 11.....	23
Page 12.....	25
Page 13.....	26
Page 14.....	27
Page 15.....	28
Page 16.....	30
Page 17.....	32
Page 18.....	34
Page 19.....	36
Page 20.....	38
Page 21.....	40
Page 22.....	41

Page 23.....	43
Page 24.....	45
Page 25.....	47
Page 26.....	49
Page 27.....	51
Page 28.....	53
Page 29.....	55
Page 30.....	57
Page 31.....	59
Page 32.....	61
Page 33.....	63
Page 34.....	65
Page 35.....	67
Page 36.....	69
Page 37.....	71
Page 38.....	72
Page 39.....	73
Page 40.....	75
Page 41.....	77
Page 42.....	79
Page 43.....	80
Page 44.....	81
Page 45.....	83
Page 46.....	84
Page 47.....	85
Page 48.....	86

Page 49.....	88
Page 50.....	90
Page 51.....	92
Page 52.....	93
Page 53.....	95
Page 54.....	96
Page 55.....	98
Page 56.....	99
Page 57.....	101
Page 58.....	102
Page 59.....	104
Page 60.....	105
Page 61.....	106
Page 62.....	108
Page 63.....	110
Page 64.....	112
Page 65.....	114
Page 66.....	116
Page 67.....	118
Page 68.....	119
Page 69.....	121
Page 70.....	123
Page 71.....	125
Page 72.....	126
Page 73.....	127
Page 74.....	129

Page 75.....	130
Page 76.....	131
Page 77.....	132
Page 78.....	133
Page 79.....	134
Page 80.....	136
Page 81.....	137
Page 82.....	139
Page 83.....	140
Page 84.....	142
Page 85.....	144
Page 86.....	145
Page 87.....	147
Page 88.....	148
Page 89.....	150
Page 90.....	151

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Start of eBook	1
ILLUSTRATIONS	1
STOLEN TREASURE	1
I	1
II	3
III	4
IV	7
V	14
II. TOM CHIST AND THE TREASURE-BOX	15
II	18
III	22
IV	24
V	25
VI	28
VII	31
III. THE GHOST OF CAPTAIN BRAND	34
I	34
II	37
III	39
IV	44
V	51
VI	52
VII	54
VIII	57
IX	58
X	61
IV. A TRUE HISTORY OF THE DEVIL AT NEW HOPE	62
I	63
II	69
III	74
IV	81
V	86
THE END	90

Page 1

ILLUSTRATIONS

"I've kept my ears open to all your doings"

"This figure of war our hero asked to step aside with him"

"Our hero, leaping to the wheel, seized the flying spokes"

"She and master Harry would spend hours together"

"... And twenty-one and twenty-two"

"'Tis enough,' cried out parson Jones, 'to make us both rich men'"

"Captain Malyoe shot captain brand through the head"

"He would shout opprobrious words after the other in the streets"

STOLEN TREASURE

I. WITH THE BUCCANEERS

Being an Account of Certain Adventures that Befell Henry Mostyn under Captain H. Morgan in the Year 1665-66.

I

Although this narration has more particularly to do with the taking of the Spanish Vice-Admiral in the harbor of Puerto Bello, and of the rescue therefrom of Le Sieur Simon, his wife and daughter (the adventure of which was successfully achieved by Captain Morgan, the famous buccaneer), we shall, nevertheless, premise something of the earlier history of Master Harry Mostyn, whom you may, if you please, consider as the hero of the several circumstances recounted in these pages.

In the year 1664 our hero's father embarked from Portsmouth, in England, for the Barbadoes, where he owned a considerable sugar plantation. Thither to those parts of America he transported with himself his whole family, of whom our Master Harry was the fifth of eight children—a great lusty fellow as little fitted for the Church (for which he was designed) as could be. At the time of this story, though not above sixteen years old, Master Harry Mostyn was as big and well-grown as many a man of twenty, and of such a reckless and dare-devil spirit that no adventure was too dangerous or too mischievous for him to embark upon.

At this time there was a deal of talk in those parts of the Americas concerning Captain Morgan, and the prodigious successes he was having pirating against the Spaniards.

This man had once been an indentured servant with Mr. Rolls, a sugar factor at the Barbadoes. Having served out his time, and being of lawless disposition, possessing also a prodigious appetite for adventure, he joined with others of his kidney, and, purchasing a caraval of three guns, embarked fairly upon that career of piracy the most successful that ever was heard of in the world.

Page 2

Master Harry had known this man very well while he was still with Mr. Rolls, serving as a clerk at that gentleman's sugar wharf, a tall, broad-shouldered, strapping fellow, with red cheeks, and thick red lips, and rolling blue eyes, and hair as red as any chestnut. Many knew him for a bold, gruff-spoken man, but no one at that time suspected that he had it in him to become so famous and renowned as he afterwards grew to be.

The fame of his exploits had been the talk of those parts for above a twelvemonth, when, in the latter part of the year 1665, Captain Morgan, having made a very successful expedition against the Spaniards into the Gulf of Campeachy—where he took several important purchases from the plate fleet—came to the Barbadoes, there to fit out another such venture, and to enlist recruits.

He and certain other adventurers had purchased a vessel of some five hundred tons, which they proposed to convert into a pirate by cutting port-holes for cannon, and running three or four carronades across her main-deck. The name of this ship, be it mentioned, was the *Good Samaritan*, as ill-fitting a name as could be for such a craft, which, instead of being designed for the healing of wounds, was intended to inflict such devastation as those wicked men proposed.

Here was a piece of mischief exactly fitted to our hero's tastes; wherefore, having made up a bundle of clothes, and with not above a shilling in his pocket, he made an excursion into the town to seek for Captain Morgan. There he found the great pirate established at an ordinary, with a little court of ragamuffins and swashbucklers gathered about him, all talking very loud, and drinking healths in raw rum as though it were sugared water.

And what a fine figure our buccaneer had grown, to be sure! How different from the poor, humble clerk upon the sugarwharf! What a deal of gold braid! What a fine, silver-hilted Spanish sword! What a gay velvet sling, hung with three silver-mounted pistols! If Master Harry's mind had not been made up before, to be sure such a spectacle of glory would have determined it.

This figure of war our hero asked to step aside with him, and when they had come into a corner, proposed to the other what he intended, and that he had a mind to enlist as a gentleman adventurer upon this expedition. Upon this our rogue of a buccaneer Captain burst out a-laughing, and fetching Master Harry a great thump upon the back, swore roundly that he would make a man of him, and that it was a pity to make a parson out of so good a piece of stuff.

[Illustration: "*This figure of war our hero asked to step aside with him*"]

Nor was Captain Morgan less good than his word, for when the *Good Samaritan* set sail with a favoring wind for the island of Jamaica, Master Harry found himself established as one of the adventurers aboard.

Page 3

II

Could you but have seen the town of Port Royal as it appeared in the year 1665 you would have beheld a sight very well worth while looking upon. There were no fine houses at that time, and no great counting-houses built of brick, such as you may find nowadays, but a crowd of board and wattled huts huddled along the streets, and all so gay with flags and bits of color that Vanity Fair itself could not have been gayer. To this place came all the pirates and buccaneers that infested those parts, and men shouted and swore and gambled, and poured out money like water, and then maybe wound up their merrymaking by dying of fever. For the sky in these torrid latitudes is all full of clouds overhead, and as hot as any blanket, and when the sun shone forth it streamed down upon the smoking sands so that the houses were ovens and the streets were furnaces; so it was little wonder that men died like rats in a hole. But little they appeared to care for that; so that everywhere you might behold a multitude of painted women and Jews and merchants and pirates, gaudy with red scarfs and gold braid and all sorts of odds and ends of foolish finery, all fighting and gambling and bartering for that ill-gotten treasure of the be-robbed Spaniard.

Here, arriving, Captain Morgan found a hearty welcome, and a message from the Governor awaiting him, the message bidding him attend his Excellency upon the earliest occasion that offered. Whereupon, taking our hero (of whom he had grown prodigiously fond) along with him, our pirate went, without any loss of time, to visit Sir Thomas Modiford, who was then the royal Governor of all this devil's brew of wickedness.

They found his Excellency seated in a great easy-chair, under the shadow of a slatted veranda, the floor whereof was paved with brick. He was clad, for the sake of coolness, only in his shirt, breeches, and stockings, and he wore slippers on his feet. He was smoking a great cigarro of tobacco, and a goblet of lime-juice and water and rum stood at his elbow on a table. Here, out of the glare of the heat, it was all very cool and pleasant, with a sea-breeze blowing violently in through the slats, setting them a-rattling now and then, and stirring Sir Thomas's long hair, which he had pushed back for the sake of coolness.

The purport of this interview, I may tell you, concerned the rescue of one Le Sieur Simon, who, together with his wife and daughter, was held captive by the Spaniards.

This gentleman adventurer (Le Sieur Simon) had, a few years before, been set up by the buccaneers as Governor of the island of Santa Catherina. This place, though well fortified by the Spaniards, the buccaneers had seized upon, establishing themselves thereon, and so infesting the commerce of those seas that no Spanish fleet was safe from them. At last the Spaniards, no longer able to endure these assaults against their commerce, sent a great force against the freebooters to drive them out of their island

stronghold. This they did, retaking Santa Catherina, together with its Governor, his wife, and daughter, as well as the whole garrison of buccaneers.

Page 4

This garrison were sent by their conquerors, some to the galleys, some to the mines, some to no man knows where. The Governor himself—Le Sieur Simon—was to be sent to Spain, there to stand his trial for piracy.

The news of all this, I may tell you, had only just been received in Jamaica, having been brought thither by a Spanish captain, one Don Roderiguez Sylvia, who was, besides, the bearer of despatches to the Spanish authorities relating the whole affair.

Such, in fine, was the purport of this interview, and as our hero and his Captain walked back together from the Governor's house to the ordinary where they had taken up their inn, the buccaneer assured his companion that he purposed to obtain those despatches from the Spanish captain that very afternoon, even if he had to use force to seize them.

All this, you are to understand, was undertaken only because of the friendship that the Governor and Captain Morgan entertained for Le Sieur Simon. And, indeed, it was wonderful how honest and how faithful were these wicked men in their dealings with one another. For you must know that Governor Modiford and Le Sieur Simon and the buccaneers were all of one kidney—all taking a share in the piracies of those times, and all holding by one another as though they were the honestest men in the world. Hence it was they were all so determined to rescue Le Sieur Simon from the Spaniards.

III

Having reached his ordinary after his interview with the Governor, Captain Morgan found there a number of his companions, such as usually gathered at that place to be in attendance upon him—some, those belonging to the *Good Samaritan*; others, those who hoped to obtain benefits from him; others, those ragamuffins who gathered around him because he was famous, and because it pleased them to be of his court and to be called his followers. For nearly always your successful pirate had such a little court surrounding him.

Finding a dozen or more of these rascals gathered there, Captain Morgan informed them of his present purpose—that he was going to find the Spanish captain to demand his papers of him, and calling upon them to accompany him.

With this following at his heels, our buccaneer started off down the street, his lieutenant, a Cornishman named Bartholomew Davis, upon one hand and our hero upon the other. So they paraded the streets for the best part of an hour before they found the Spanish captain. For whether he had got wind that Captain Morgan was searching for him, or whether, finding himself in a place so full of his enemies, he had buried himself in some place of hiding, it is certain that the buccaneers had traversed pretty nearly the whole town before they discovered that he was lying at a certain auberge kept by a

Portuguese Jew. Thither they went, and thither Captain Morgan entered with the utmost coolness and composure of demeanor, his followers crowding noisily in at his heels.

Page 5

The space within was very dark, being lighted only by the doorway and by two large slatted windows or openings in the front.

In this dark, hot place—not over-roomy at the best—were gathered twelve or fifteen villanous-appearing men, sitting at tables and drinking together, waited upon by the Jew and his wife. Our hero had no trouble in discovering which of this lot of men was Captain Sylvia, for not only did Captain Morgan direct his glance full of war upon him, but the Spaniard was clad with more particularity and with more show of finery than any of the others who were there.

Him Captain Morgan approached and demanded his papers, whereunto the other replied with such a jabber of Spanish and English that no man could have understood what he said. To this Captain Morgan in turn replied that he must have those papers, no matter what it might cost him to obtain them, and thereupon drew a pistol from his sling and presented it at the other's head.

At this threatening action the innkeeper's wife fell a-screaming, and the Jew, as in a frenzy, besought them not to tear the house down about his ears.

Our hero could hardly tell what followed, only that all of a sudden there was a prodigious uproar of combat. Knives flashed everywhere, and then a pistol was fired so close to his head that he stood like one stunned, hearing some one crying out in a loud voice, but not knowing whether it was a friend or a foe who had been shot. Then another pistol-shot so deafened what was left of Master Harry's hearing that his ears rang for above an hour afterwards. By this time the whole place was full of gunpowder smoke, and there was the sound of blows and oaths and outcrying and the clashing of knives.

As Master Harry, who had no great stomach for such a combat, and no very particular interest in the quarrel, was making for the door, a little Portuguese, as withered and as nimble as an ape, came ducking under the table and plunged at his stomach with a great long knife, which, had it effected its object, would surely have ended his adventures then and there.

Finding himself in such danger, Master Harry snatched up a heavy chair, and, flinging it at his enemy, who was preparing for another attack, he fairly ran for it out of the door, expecting every instant to feel the thrust of the blade betwixt his ribs.

A considerable crowd had gathered outside, and others, hearing the uproar, were coming running to join them. With these our hero stood, trembling like a leaf, and with cold chills running up and down his back like water at the narrow escape from the danger that had threatened him.

Nor shall you think him a coward, for you must remember he was hardly sixteen years old at the time, and that this was the first affair of the sort he had encountered.

Afterwards, as you shall learn, he showed that he could exhibit courage enough at a pinch.

While he stood there endeavoring to recover his composure, the while the tumult continued within, suddenly two men came running almost together out of the door, a crowd of the combatants at their heels. The first of these men was Captain Sylvia; the other, who was pursuing him, was Captain Morgan.

Page 6

As the crowd about the door parted before the sudden appearing of these, the Spanish captain, perceiving, as he supposed, a way of escape opened to him, darted across the street with incredible swiftness towards an alleyway upon the other side. Upon this, seeing his prey like to get away from him, Captain Morgan snatched a pistol out of his sling, and resting it for an instant across his arm, fired at the flying Spaniard, and that with so true an aim that, though the street was now full of people, the other went tumbling over and over all of a heap in the kennel, where he lay, after a twitch or two, as still as a log.

At the sound of the shot and the fall of the man the crowd scattered upon all sides, yelling and screaming, and the street being thus pretty clear, Captain Morgan ran across the way to where his victim lay, his smoking pistol still in his hand, and our hero following close at his heels.

Our poor Harry had never before beheld a man killed thus in an instant who a moment before had been so full of life and activity, for when Captain Morgan turned the body over upon its back he could perceive at a glance, little as he knew of such matters, that the man was stone dead. And, indeed, it was a dreadful sight for him who was hardly more than a child. He stood rooted for he knew not how long, staring down at the dead face with twitching fingers and shuddering limbs. Meantime a great crowd was gathering about them again.

As for Captain Morgan, he went about his work with the utmost coolness and deliberation imaginable, unbuttoning the waistcoat and the shirt of the man he had murdered with fingers that neither twitched nor shook. There were a gold cross and a bunch of silver medals hung by a whip-cord about the neck of the dead man. This Captain Morgan broke away with a snap, reaching the jingling baubles to Harry, who took them in his nerveless hand and fingers that he could hardly close upon what they held.

The papers Captain Morgan found in a wallet in an inner breast-pocket of the Spaniard's waistcoat. These he examined one by one, and finding them to his satisfaction, tied them up again, and slipped the wallet and its contents into his own pocket.

Then for the first time he appeared to observe Master Harry, who, indeed, must have been standing the perfect picture of horror and dismay. Whereupon, bursting out a-laughing, and slipping the pistol he had used back into its sling again, he fetched poor Harry a great slap upon the back, bidding him be a man, for that he would see many such sights as this.

But, indeed, it was no laughing matter for poor Master Harry, for it was many a day before his imagination could rid itself of the image of the dead Spaniard's face; and as he walked away down the street with his companions, leaving the crowd behind them,

and the dead body where it lay for its friends to look after, his ears humming and ringing from the deafening noise of the pistol-shots fired in the close room, and the sweat trickling down his face in drops, he knew not whether all that had passed had been real, or whether it was a dream from which he might presently awaken.

Page 7

IV

The papers Captain Morgan had thus seized upon as the fruit of the murder he had committed must have been as perfectly satisfactory to him as could be, for having paid a second visit that evening to Governor Modiford, the pirate lifted anchor the next morning and made sail towards the Gulf of Darien. There, after cruising about in those waters for about a fortnight without falling in with a vessel of any sort, at the end of that time they overhauled a caravel bound from Puerto Bello to Cartagena, which vessel they took, and finding her loaded with nothing better than raw hides, scuttled and sunk her, being then about twenty leagues from the main of Cartagena. From the captain of this vessel they learned that the plate fleet was then lying in the harbor of Puerto Bello, not yet having set sail thence, but waiting for the change of the winds before embarking for Spain. Besides this, which was a good deal more to their purpose, the Spaniards told the pirates that the Sieur Simon, his wife, and daughter were confined aboard the vice-admiral of that fleet, and that the name of the vice-admiral was the *Santa Maria y Valladolid*.

So soon as Captain Morgan had obtained the information he desired he directed his course straight for the Bay of Santo Blaso, where he might lie safely within the cape of that name without any danger of discovery (that part of the main-land being entirely uninhabited) and yet be within twenty or twenty-five leagues of Puerto Bello.

Having come safely to this anchorage, he at once declared his intentions to his companions, which were as follows:

That it was entirely impossible for them to hope to sail their vessel into the harbor of Puerto Bello, and to attack the Spanish vice-admiral where he lay in the midst of the armed flota; wherefore, if anything was to be accomplished, it must be undertaken by some subtle design rather than by open-handed boldness. Having so prefaced what he had to say, he now declared that it was his purpose to take one of the ship's boats and to go in that to Puerto Bello, trusting for some opportunity to occur to aid him either in the accomplishment of his aims or in the gaining of some further information. Having thus delivered himself, he invited any who dared to do so to volunteer for the expedition, telling them plainly that he would constrain no man to go against his will, for that at best it was a desperate enterprise, possessing only the recommendation that in its achievement the few who undertook it would gain great renown, and perhaps a very considerable booty.

And such was the incredible influence of this bold man over his companions, and such was their confidence in his skill and cunning, that not above a dozen of all those aboard hung back from the undertaking, but nearly every man desired to be taken.

Page 8

Of these volunteers Captain Morgan chose twenty—among others our Master Harry—and having arranged with his lieutenant that if nothing was heard from the expedition at the end of three days he should sail for Jamaica to await news, he embarked upon that enterprise, which, though never heretofore published, was perhaps the boldest and the most desperate of all those that have since made his name so famous. For what could be a more unparalleled undertaking than for a little open boat, containing but twenty men, to enter the harbor of the third strongest fortress of the Spanish mainland with the intention of cutting out the Spanish vice-admiral from the midst of a whole fleet of powerfully armed vessels, and how many men in all the world do you suppose would venture such a thing?

But there is this to be said of that great buccaneer: that if he undertook enterprises so desperate as this, he yet laid his plans so well that they never went altogether amiss. Moreover, the very desperation of his successes was of such a nature that no man could suspect that he would dare to undertake such things, and accordingly his enemies were never prepared to guard against his attacks. Aye, had he but worn the King's colors and served under the rules of honest war, he might have become as great and as renowned as Admiral Blake himself!

But all that is neither here nor there; what I have to tell you now is that Captain Morgan in this open boat with his twenty mates reached the Cape of Salmedina towards the fall of day. Arriving within view of the harbor they discovered the plate fleet at anchor, with two men-of-war and an armed galley riding as a guard at the mouth of the harbor, scarce half a league distant from the other ships. Having spied the fleet in this posture, the pirates presently pulled down their sails and rowed along the coast, feigning to be a Spanish vessel from Nombre de Dios. So hugging the shore, they came boldly within the harbor, upon the opposite side of which you might see the fortress a considerable distance away.

Being now come so near to the consummation of their adventure, Captain Morgan required every man to make an oath to stand by him to the last, whereunto our hero swore as heartily as any man aboard, although his heart, I must needs confess, was beating at a great rate at the approach of what was to happen. Having thus received the oaths of all his followers, Captain Morgan commanded the surgeon of the expedition that, when the order was given, he, the medico, was to bore six holes in the boat, so that, it sinking under them, they might all be compelled to push forward, with no chance of retreat. And such was the ascendancy of this man over his followers, and such was their awe of him, that not one of them uttered even so much as a murmur, though what he had commanded the surgeon to do pledged them either to victory or to death, with no chance to choose between. Nor did the surgeon question the orders he had received, much less did he dream of disobeying them.

Page 9

By now it had fallen pretty dusk, whereupon, spying two fishermen in a canoe at a little distance, Captain Morgan demanded of them in Spanish which vessel of those at anchor in the harbor was the vice-admiral, for that he had despatches for the captain thereof. Whereupon the fishermen, suspecting nothing, pointed to them a galleon of great size riding at anchor not half a league distant.

Towards this vessel accordingly the pirates directed their course, and when they had come pretty nigh, Captain Morgan called upon the surgeon that now it was time for him to perform the duty that had been laid upon him. Whereupon the other did as he was ordered, and that so thoroughly that the water presently came gushing into the boat in great streams, whereat all hands pulled for the galleon as though every next moment was to be their last.

And what do you suppose were our hero's emotions at this time? Like all in the boat, his awe of Captain Morgan was so great that I do believe he would rather have gone to the bottom than have questioned his command, even when it was to scuttle the boat. Nevertheless, when he felt the cold water gushing about his feet (for he had taken off his shoes and stockings) he became possessed with such a fear of being drowned that even the Spanish galleon had no terrors for him if he could only feel the solid planks thereof beneath his feet.

Indeed, all the crew appeared to be possessed of a like dismay, for they pulled at the oars with such an incredible force that they were under the quarter of the galleon before the boat was half filled with water.

Here, as they approached, it then being pretty dark and the moon not yet having risen, the watch upon the deck hailed them, whereupon Captain Morgan called out in Spanish that he was Captain Alvarez Mendazo, and that he brought despatches for the vice-admiral.

But at that moment, the boat being now so full of water as to be logged, it suddenly tilted upon one side as though to sink beneath them, whereupon all hands, without further orders, went scrambling up the side, as nimble as so many monkeys, each armed with a pistol in one hand and a cutlass in the other, and so were upon deck before the watch could collect his wits to utter any outcry or to give any other alarm than to cry out, "Jesu bless us! who are these?" at which words somebody knocked him down with the butt of a pistol, though who it was our hero could not tell in the darkness and the hurry.

Before any of those upon deck could recover from their alarm or those from below come up upon deck, a part of the pirates, under the carpenter and the surgeon, had run to the gunroom and had taken possession of the arms, while Captain Morgan, with Master Harry and a Portuguese called Murillo Braziliano, had flown with the speed of the wind into the great cabin.

Here they found the captain of the vice-admiral playing at cards with the Sieur Simon and a friend, Madam Simon and her daughter being present.

Page 10

Captain Morgan instantly set his pistol at the breast of the Spanish captain, swearing with a most horrible fierce countenance that if he spake a word or made any outcry he was a dead man. As for our hero, having now got his hand into the game, he performed the same service for the Spaniard's friend, declaring he would shoot him dead if he opened his lips or lifted so much as a single finger.

All this while the ladies, not comprehending what had occurred, had sat as mute as stones; but now having so far recovered themselves as to find a voice, the younger of the two fell to screaming, at which the Sieur Simon called out to her to be still, for these were friends who had come to help them, and not enemies who had come to harm them.

All this, you are to understand, occupied only a little while, for in less than a minute three or four of the pirates had come into the cabin, who, together with the Portuguese, proceeded at once to bind the two Spaniards hand and foot, and to gag them. This being done to our buccaneer's satisfaction, and the Spanish captain being stretched out in the corner of the cabin, he instantly cleared his countenance of its terrors, and bursting forth into a great loud laugh, clapped his hand to the Sieur Simon's, which he wrung with the best will in the world. Having done this, and being in a fine humor after this his first success, he turned to the two ladies. "And this, ladies," said he, taking our hero by the hand and presenting him, "is a young gentleman who has embarked with me to learn the trade of piracy. I recommend him to your politeness."

Think what a confusion this threw our Master Harry into, to be sure, who at his best was never easy in the company of strange ladies! You may suppose what must have been his emotions to find himself thus introduced to the attention of Madam Simon and her daughter, being at the time in his bare feet, clad only in his shirt and breeches, and with no hat upon his head, a pistol in one hand and a cutlass in the other. However, he was not left for long to his embarrassments, for almost immediately after he had thus far relaxed, Captain Morgan fell of a sudden serious again, and bidding the Sieur Simon to get his ladies away into some place of safety, for the most hazardous part of this adventure was yet to occur, he quitted the cabin with Master Harry and the other pirates (for you may call him a pirate now) at his heels.

Having come upon deck, our hero beheld that a part of the Spanish crew were huddled forward in a flock like so many sheep (the others being crowded below with the hatches fastened upon them), and such was the terror of the pirates, and so dreadful the name of Henry Morgan, that not one of those poor wretches dared to lift up his voice to give any alarm, nor even to attempt an escape by jumping overboard.

At Captain Morgan's orders, these men, together with certain of his own company, ran nimbly aloft and began setting the sails, which, the night now having fallen pretty thick, was not for a good while observed by any of the vessels riding at anchor about them.

Page 11

Indeed, the pirates might have made good their escape, with at most only a shot or two from the men-of-war, had it not then been about the full of the moon, which, having arisen, presently discovered to those of the fleet that lay closest about them what was being done aboard the vice-admiral.

At this one of the vessels hailed them, and then after a while, having no reply, hailed them again. Even then the Spaniards might not immediately have suspected anything was amiss but only that the vice-admiral for some reason best known to himself was shifting his anchorage, had not one of the Spaniards aloft—but who it was Captain Morgan was never able to discover—answered the hail by crying out that the vice-admiral had been seized by the pirates.

At this the alarm was instantly given and the mischief done, for presently there was a tremendous bustle through that part of the fleet lying nearest the vice-admiral—a deal of shouting of orders, a beating of drums, and the running hither and thither of the crews.

But by this time the sails of the vice-admiral had filled with a strong land breeze that was blowing up the harbor, whereupon the carpenter, at Captain Morgan's orders, having cut away both anchors, the galleon presently bore away up the harbor, gathering headway every moment with the wind nearly dead astern. The nearest vessel was the only one that for the moment was able to offer any hinderance. This ship, having by this time cleared away one of its guns, was able to fire a parting shot against the vice-admiral, striking her somewhere forward, as our hero could see by a great shower of splinters that flew up in the moonlight.

At the sound of the shot all the vessels of the flota not yet disturbed by the alarm were aroused at once, so that the pirates had the satisfaction of knowing that they would have to run the gantlet of all the ships between them and the open sea before they could reckon themselves escaped.

And, indeed, to our hero's mind it seemed that the battle which followed must have been the most terrific cannonade that was ever heard in the world. It was not so ill at first, for it was some while before the Spaniards could get their guns clear for action, they being not the least in the world prepared for such an occasion as this. But by-and-by first one and then another ship opened fire upon the galleon, until it seemed to our hero that all the thunders of heaven let loose upon them could not have created a more prodigious uproar, and that it was not possible that they could any of them escape destruction.

By now the moon had risen full and round, so that the clouds of smoke that rose in the air appeared as white as snow. The air seemed full of the hiss and screaming of shot, each one of which, when it struck the galleon, was magnified by our hero's imagination into ten times its magnitude from the crash which it delivered and from the cloud of splinters it would cast up into the moonlight. At last he suddenly beheld one poor man

knocked sprawling across the deck, who, as he raised his arm from behind the mast, disclosed that the hand was gone from it, and that the shirt-sleeve was red with blood in the moonlight. At this sight all the strength fell away from poor Harry, and he felt sure that a like fate or even a worse must be in store for him.

Page 12

But, after all, this was nothing to what it might have been in broad daylight, for what with the darkness of night, and the little preparation the Spaniards could make for such a business, and the extreme haste with which they discharged their guns (many not understanding what was the occasion of all this uproar), nearly all the shot flew so wide of the mark that not above one in twenty struck that at which it was aimed.

Meantime Captain Morgan, with the Sieur Simon, who had followed him upon deck, stood just above where our hero lay behind the shelter of the bulwark. The captain had lit a pipe of tobacco, and he stood now in the bright moonlight close to the rail, with his hands behind him, looking out ahead with the utmost coolness imaginable, and paying no more attention to the din of battle than though it were twenty leagues away. Now and then he would take his pipe from his lips to utter an order to the man at the wheel. Excepting this he stood there hardly moving at all, the wind blowing his long red hair over his shoulders.

Had it not been for the armed galley the pirates might have got the galleon away with no great harm done in spite of all this cannonading, for the man-of-war which rode at anchor nearest to them at the mouth of the harbor was still so far away that they might have passed it by hugging pretty close to the shore, and that without any great harm being done to them in the darkness. But just at this moment, when the open water lay in sight, came this galley pulling out from behind the point of the shore in such a manner as either to head our pirates off entirely or else to compel them to approach so near to the man-of-war that that latter vessel could bring its guns to bear with more effect.

This galley, I must tell you, was like others of its kind such as you may find in these waters, the hull being long and cut low to the water so as to allow the oars to dip freely. The bow was sharp and projected far out ahead, mounting a swivel upon it, while at the stern a number of galleries built one above another into a castle gave shelter to several companies of musketeers as well as the officers commanding them.

Our hero could behold the approach of this galley from above the starboard bulwarks, and it appeared to him impossible for them to hope to escape either it or the man-of-war. But still Captain Morgan maintained the same composure that he had exhibited all the while, only now and then delivering an order to the man at the wheel, who, putting the helm over, threw the bows of the galleon around more to the larboard, as though to escape the bow of the galley and get into the open water beyond. This course brought the pirates ever closer and closer to the man-of-war, which now began to add its thunder to the din of the battle, and with so much more effect that at every discharge you might hear the crashing and crackling of splintered wood, and now and then the outcry or groaning of some man who was hurt. Indeed, had it been daylight, they must at this juncture all have perished, though, as was said, what with the night and the confusion and the hurry, they escaped entire destruction, though more by a miracle than through any policy upon their own part.

Page 13

Meantime the galley, steering as though to come aboard of them, had now come so near that it, too, presently began to open its musketry fire upon them, so that the humming and rattling of bullets were presently added to the din of cannonading.

In two minutes more it would have been aboard of them, when in a moment Captain Morgan roared out of a sudden to the man at the helm to put it hard a starboard. In response the man ran the wheel over with the utmost quickness, and the galleon, obeying her helm very readily, came around upon a course which, if continued, would certainly bring them into collision with their enemy.

It is possible at first the Spaniards imagined the pirates intended to escape past their stern, for they instantly began backing oars to keep them from getting past, so that the water was all of a foam about them; at the same time they did this they poured in such a fire of musketry that it was a miracle that no more execution was accomplished than happened.

As for our hero, methinks for the moment he forgot all about everything else than as to whether or no his captain's manoeuvre would succeed, for in the very first moment he divined, as by some instinct, what Captain Morgan purposed doing.

At this moment, so particular in the execution of this nice design, a bullet suddenly struck down the man at the wheel. Hearing the sharp outcry, our Harry turned to see him fall forward, and then to his hands and knees upon the deck, the blood running in a black pool beneath him, while the wheel, escaping from his hands, spun over until the spokes were all of a mist.

In a moment the ship would have fallen off before the wind had not our hero, leaping to the wheel (even as Captain Morgan shouted an order for some one to do so), seized the flying spokes, whirling them back again, and so bringing the bow of the galleon up to its former course.

[Illustration: "*Our hero, leaping to the wheel, seized the flying spokes*"]

In the first moment of this effort he had reckoned of nothing but of carrying out his captain's designs. He neither thought of cannon-balls nor of bullets. But now that his task was accomplished, he came suddenly back to himself to find the galleries of the galleon aflame with musket-shots, and to become aware with a most horrible sinking of the spirits that all the shots therefrom were intended for him. He cast his eyes about him with despair, but no one came to ease him of his task, which, having undertaken, he had too much spirit to resign from carrying through to the end, though he was well aware that the very next instant might mean his sudden and violent death. His ears hummed and rang, and his brain swam as light as a feather. I know not whether he breathed, but he shut his eyes tight as though that might save him from the bullets that were raining about him.

Page 14

At this moment the Spaniards must have discovered for the first time the pirates' design, for of a sudden they ceased firing, and began to shout out a multitude of orders, while the oars lashed the water all about with a foam. But it was too late then for them to escape, for within a couple of seconds the galleon struck her enemy a blow so violent upon the larboard quarter as nearly to hurl our Harry upon the deck, and then with a dreadful, horrible crackling of wood, commingled with a yelling of men's voices, the galley was swung around upon her side, and the galleon, sailing into the open sea, left nothing of her immediate enemy but a sinking wreck, and the water dotted all over with bobbing heads and waving hands in the moonlight.

And now, indeed, that all danger was past and gone, there were plenty to come running to help our hero at the wheel. As for Captain Morgan, having come down upon the main-deck, he fetches the young helmsman a clap upon the back. "Well, Master Harry," says he, "and did I not tell you I would make a man of you?" Whereat our poor Harry fell a-laughing, but with a sad catch in his voice, for his hands trembled as with an ague, and were as cold as ice. As for his emotions, God knows he was nearer crying than laughing, if Captain Morgan had but known it.

Nevertheless, though undertaken under the spur of the moment, I protest it was indeed a brave deed, and I cannot but wonder how many young gentlemen of sixteen there are to-day who, upon a like occasion, would act as well as our Harry.

V

The balance of our hero's adventures were of a lighter sort than those already recounted, for the next morning, the Spanish captain (a very polite and well-bred gentleman) having fitted him out with a suit of his own clothes, Master Harry was presented in a proper form to the ladies. For Captain Morgan, if he had felt a liking for the young man before, could not now show sufficient regard for him. He ate in the great cabin and was petted by all. Madam Simon, who was a fat and red-faced lady, was forever praising him, and the young miss, who was extremely well-looking, was as continually making eyes at him.

She and Master Harry, I must tell you, would spend hours together, she making pretence of teaching him French, although he was so possessed with a passion of love that he was nigh suffocated with it. She, upon her part, perceiving his emotions, responded with extreme good-nature and complacency, so that had our hero been older, and the voyage proved longer, he might have become entirely enmeshed in the toils of his fair siren. For all this while, you are to understand, the pirates were making sail straight for Jamaica, which they reached upon the third day in perfect safety.

[Illustration: "*She and master Harry would spend hours together*"]

Page 15

In that time, however, the pirates had well-nigh gone crazy for joy; for when they came to examine their purchase they discovered her cargo to consist of plate to the prodigious sum of L130,000 in value. 'Twas a wonder they did not all make themselves drunk for joy. No doubt they would have done so had not Captain Morgan, knowing they were still in the exact track of the Spanish fleets, threatened them that the first man among them who touched a drop of rum without his permission he would shoot him dead upon the deck. This threat had such effect that they all remained entirely sober until they had reached Port Royal Harbor, which they did about nine o'clock in the morning.

And now it was that our hero's romance came all tumbling down about his ears with a run. For they had hardly come to anchor in the harbor when a boat came from a man-of-war, and who should come stepping aboard but Lieutenant Grantley (a particular friend of our hero's father) and his own eldest brother Thomas, who, putting on a very stern face, informed Master Harry that he was a desperate and hardened villain who was sure to end at the gallows, and that he was to go immediately back to his home again. He told our embryo pirate that his family had nigh gone distracted because of his wicked and ungrateful conduct. Nor could our hero move him from his inflexible purpose. "What," says our Harry, "and will you not then let me wait until our prize is divided and I get my share?"

"Prize, indeed!" says his brother. "And do you then really think that your father would consent to your having a share in this terrible bloody and murdering business?"

And so, after a good deal of argument, our hero was constrained to go; nor did he even have an opportunity to bid adieu to his innamorata. Nor did he see her any more, except from a distance, she standing on the poop-deck as he was rowed away from her, her face all stained with crying. For himself, he felt that there was no more joy in life; nevertheless, standing up in the stern of the boat, he made shift, though with an aching heart, to deliver her a fine bow with the hat he had borrowed from the Spanish captain, before his brother bade him sit down again.

And so to the ending of this story, with only this to relate, that our Master Harry, so far from going to the gallows, became in good time a respectable and wealthy sugar merchant with an English wife and a fine family of children, whereunto, when the mood was upon him, he has sometimes told these adventures (and sundry others not here recounted) as I have told them unto you.

II. TOM CHIST AND THE TREASURE-BOX

An Old-time Story of the Days of Captain Kidd.



To tell about Tom Chist, and how he got his name, and how he came to be living at the little settlement of Henlopen, just inside the mouth of the Delaware Bay, the story must begin as far back as 1686, when a great storm swept the Atlantic coast from end to end. During the heaviest part of the hurricane a bark went ashore on the Hen-and-Chicken Shoals, just below Cape Henlopen and at the mouth of the Delaware Bay, and Tom Chist was the only soul of all those on board the ill-fated vessel who escaped alive.

Page 16

This story must first be told, because it was on account of the strange and miraculous escape that happened to him at that time that he gained the name that was given to him.

Even as late as that time of the American colonies, the little scattered settlement at Henlopen, made up of English, with a few Dutch and Swedish people, was still only a spot upon the face of the great American wilderness that spread away, with swamp and forest, no man knew how far to the westward. That wilderness was not only full of wild beasts, but of Indian savages, who every fall would come in wandering tribes to spend the winter along the shores of the fresh-water lakes below Henlopen. There for four or five months they would live upon fish and clams and wild ducks and geese, chipping their arrow-heads, and making their earthenware pots and pans under the lee of the sand-hills and pine woods below the Capes.

Sometimes on Sundays, when the Rev. Hillary Jones would be preaching in the little log church back in the woods, these half-clad red savages would come in from the cold, and sit squatting in the back part of the church, listening stolidly to the words that had no meaning for them.

But about the wreck of the bark in 1686. Such a wreck as that which then went ashore on the Hen-and-Chicken Shoals was a godsend to the poor and needy settlers in the wilderness where so few good things ever came. For the vessel went to pieces during the night, and the next morning the beach was strewn with wreckage—boxes and barrels, chests and spars, timbers and planks, a plentiful and bountiful harvest to be gathered up by the settlers as they chose, with no one to forbid or prevent them.

The name of the bark, as found painted on some of the water-barrels and sea-chests, was the *Bristol Merchant*, and she no doubt hailed from England.

As was said, the only soul who escaped alive off the wreck was Tom Chist.

A settler, a fisherman named Matt Abrahamson, and his daughter Molly, found Tom. He was washed up on the beach among the wreckage, in a great wooden box which had been securely tied around with a rope and lashed between two spars—apparently for better protection in beating through the surf. Matt Abrahamson thought he had found something of more than usual value when he came upon this chest; but when he cut the cords and broke open the box with his broadaxe, he could not have been more astonished had he beheld a salamander instead of a baby of nine or ten months old lying half smothered in the blankets that covered the bottom of the chest.

Matt Abrahamson's daughter Molly had had a baby who had died a month or so before. So when she saw the little one lying there in the bottom of the chest, she cried out in a great loud voice that the Good Man had sent her another baby in place of her own.

The rain was driving before the hurricane-storm in dim, slanting sheets, and so she wrapped up the baby in the man's coat she wore and ran off home without waiting to gather up any more of the wreckage.

Page 17

It was Parson Jones who gave the foundling his name. When the news came to his ears of what Matt Abrahamson had found, he went over to the fisherman's cabin to see the child. He examined the clothes in which the baby was dressed. They were of fine linen and handsomely stitched, and the reverend gentleman opined that the foundling's parents must have been of quality. A kerchief had been wrapped around the baby's neck and under its arms and tied behind, and in the corner, marked with very fine needlework, were the initials T.C.

"What d'ye call him, Molly?" said Parson Jones. He was standing, as he spoke, with his back to the fire, warming his palms before the blaze. The pocket of the great-coat he wore bulged out with a big case-bottle of spirits which he had gathered up out of the wreck that afternoon. "What d'ye call him, Molly?"

"I'll call him Tom, after my own baby."

"That goes very well with the initial on the kerchief," said Parson Jones. "But what other name d'ye give him? Let it be something to go with the C."

"I don't know," said Molly.

"Why not call him 'Chist,' since he was born in a chist out of the sea? 'Tom Chist'—the name goes off like a flash in the pan." And so "Tom Chist" he was called and "Tom Chist" he was christened.

So much for the beginning of the history of Tom Chist. The story of Captain Kidd's treasure-box does not begin until the late spring of 1699.

That was the year that the famous pirate captain, coming up from the West Indies, sailed his sloop into the Delaware Bay, where he lay for over a month waiting for news from his friends in New York.

For he had sent word to that town asking if the coast was clear for him to return home with the rich prize he had brought from the Indian seas and the coast of Africa, and meantime he lay there in the Delaware Bay waiting for a reply. Before he left he turned the whole of Tom Chist's life topsy-turvy with something that he brought ashore.

By that time Tom Chist had grown into a strong-limbed, thick-jointed boy of fourteen or fifteen years of age. It was a miserable dog's life he lived with old Matt Abrahamson, for the old fisherman was in his cups more than half the time, and when he was so there was hardly a day passed that he did not give Tom a curse or a buffet or, as like as not, an actual beating. One would have thought that such treatment would have broken the spirit of the poor little foundling, but it had just the opposite effect upon Tom Chist, who was one of your stubborn, sturdy, stiff-willed fellows who only grow harder and more tough the more they are ill-treated. It had been a long time now since he had made any

outcry or complaint at the hard usage he suffered from old Matt. At such times he would shut his teeth and bear whatever came to him, until sometimes the half-drunken old man would be driven almost mad by his stubborn silence. Maybe he would stop in the midst of the beating he

Page 18

was administering, and, grinding his teeth, would cry out: "Won't ye say naught? Won't ye say naught? Well, then, I'll see if I can't make ye say naught." When things had reached such a pass as this Molly would generally interfere to protect her foster-son, and then she and Tom would together fight the old man until they had wrenched the stick or the strap out of his hand. Then old Matt would chase them out-of-doors and around and around the house for maybe half an hour until his anger was cool, when he would go back again, and for a time the storm would be over.

Besides his foster-mother, Tom Chist had a very good friend in Parson Jones, who used to come over every now and then to Abrahamson's hut upon the chance of getting a half-dozen fish for breakfast. He always had a kind word or two for Tom, who during the winter evenings would go over to the good man's house to learn his letters, and to read and write and cipher a little, so that by now he was able to spell the words out of the Bible and the almanac, and knew enough to change tuppence into four ha'pennies.

This is the sort of boy Tom Chist was, and this is the sort of life he led.

In the late spring or early summer of 1699 Captain Kidd's sloop sailed into the mouth of the Delaware Bay and changed the whole fortune of his life.

And this is how you come to the story of Captain Kidd's treasure-box.

II

Old Matt Abrahamson kept the flat-bottomed boat in which he went fishing some distance down the shore, and in the neighborhood of the old wreck that had been sunk on the Shoals. This was the usual fishing-ground of the settlers, and here Old Matt's boat generally lay drawn up on the sand.

There had been a thunder-storm that afternoon, and Tom had gone down the beach to bale out the boat in readiness for the morning's fishing.

It was full moonlight now, as he was returning, and the night sky was full of floating clouds. Now and then there was a dull flash to the westward, and once a muttering growl of thunder, promising another storm to come.

All that day the pirate sloop had been lying just off the shore back of the Capes, and now Tom Chist could see the sails glimmering pallidly in the moonlight, spread for drying after the storm. He was walking up the shore homeward when he became aware that at some distance ahead of him there was a ship's boat drawn up on the little narrow beach, and a group of men clustered about it. He hurried forward with a good deal of curiosity to see who had landed, but it was not until he had come close to them that he



could distinguish who and what they were. Then he knew that it must be a party who had come off the pirate sloop. They had evidently just landed, and two men were lifting out a chest from the boat. One of them was a negro, naked to the waist, and the other was a white man in his shirt-sleeves, wearing

Page 19

petticoat breeches, a Monterey cap upon his head, a red bandanna handkerchief around his neck, and gold ear-rings in his ears. He had a long, plaited queue hanging down his back, and a great sheath-knife dangling from his side. Another man, evidently the captain of the party, stood at a little distance as they lifted the chest out of the boat. He had a cane in one hand and a lighted lantern in the other, although the moon was shining as bright as day. He wore jack-boots and a handsome laced coat, and he had a long, drooping mustache that curled down below his chin. He wore a fine, feathered hat, and his long black hair hung down upon his shoulders.

All this Tom Chist could see in the moonlight that glinted and twinkled upon the gilt buttons of his coat.

They were so busy lifting the chest from the boat that at first they did not observe that Tom Chist had come up and was standing there. It was the white man with the long, plaited queue and the gold ear-rings that spoke to him. "Boy, what do you want here, boy?" he said, in a rough, hoarse voice. "Where d'ye come from?" And then dropping his end of the chest, and without giving Tom time to answer, he pointed off down the beach, and said, "You'd better be going about your own business, if you know what's good for you; and don't you come back, or you'll find what you don't want waiting for you."

Tom saw in a glance that the pirates were all looking at him, and then, without saying a word, he turned and walked away. The man who had spoken to him followed him threateningly for some little distance, as though to see that he had gone away as he was bidden to do. But presently he stopped, and Tom hurried on alone, until the boat and the crew and all were dropped away behind and lost in the moonlight night. Then he himself stopped also, turned, and looked back whence he had come.

There had been something very strange in the appearance of the men he had just seen, something very mysterious in their actions, and he wondered what it all meant, and what they were going to do. He stood for a little while thus looking and listening. He could see nothing, and could hear only the sound of distant talking. What were they doing on the lonely shore thus at night? Then, following a sudden impulse, he turned and cut off across the sand-hummocks, skirting around inland, but keeping pretty close to the shore, his object being to spy upon them, and to watch what they were about from the back of the low sand-hills that fronted the beach.

He had gone along some distance in his circuitous return when he became aware of the sound of voices that seemed to be drawing closer to him as he came towards the speakers. He stopped and stood listening, and instantly, as he stopped, the voices stopped also. He crouched there silently in the bright, glimmering moonlight,

surrounded by the silent stretches of sand, and the stillness seemed to press upon him like a

Page 20

heavy hand. Then suddenly the sound of a man's voice began again, and as Tom listened he could hear some one slowly counting. "Ninety-one," the voice began, "ninety-two, ninety-three, ninety-four, ninety-five, ninety-six, ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine, one hundred, one hundred and one"—the slow, monotonous count coming nearer and nearer to him—"one hundred and two, one hundred and three, one hundred and four," and so on in its monotonous reckoning.

Suddenly he saw three heads appear above the sand-hill, so close to him that he crouched down quickly with a keen thrill, close beside the hummock near which he stood. His first fear was that they might have seen him in the moonlight; but they had not, and his heart rose again as the counting voice went steadily on. "One hundred and twenty," it was saying—"and twenty-one, and twenty-two, and twenty-three, and twenty-four," and then he who was counting came out from behind the little sandy rise into the white and open level of shimmering brightness.

[Illustration: "... And twenty-one and twenty-two"]

It was the man with the cane whom Tom had seen some time before—the captain of the party who had landed. He carried his cane under his arm now, and was holding his lantern close to something that he held in his hand, and upon which he looked narrowly as he walked with a slow and measured tread in a perfectly straight line across the sand, counting each step as he took it. "And twenty-five, and twenty-six, and twenty-seven, and twenty-eight, and twenty-nine, and thirty."

Behind him walked two other figures; one was the half-naked negro, the other the man with the plaited queue and the ear-rings, whom Tom had seen lifting the chest out of the boat. Now they were carrying the heavy box between them, laboring through the sand with shuffling tread as they bore it onward.

As he who was counting pronounced the word "thirty," the two men set the chest down on the sand with a grunt, the white man panting and blowing and wiping his sleeve across his forehead. And immediately he who counted took out a slip of paper and marked something down upon it. They stood there for a long time, during which Tom lay behind the sand-hummock watching them, and for a while the silence was uninterrupted. In the perfect stillness Tom could hear the washing of the little waves beating upon the distant beach, and once the far-away sound of a laugh from one of those who stood by the ship's boat.

One, two, three minutes passed, and then the men picked up the chest and started on again; and then again the other man began his counting. "Thirty and one, and thirty and two, and thirty and three, and thirty and four"—he walked straight across the level open, still looking intently at that which he held in his hand—"and thirty and five, and thirty and

six, and thirty and seven,” and so on, until the three figures disappeared in the little hollow between the two sand-hills on the opposite side of the open, and still Tom could hear the sound of the counting voice in the distance.

Page 21

Just as they disappeared behind the hill there was a sudden faint flash of light; and by-and-by, as Tom lay still listening to the counting, he heard, after a long interval, a far-away muffled rumble of distant thunder. He waited for a while, and then arose and stepped to the top of the sand-hummock behind which he had been lying. He looked all about him, but there was no one else to be seen. Then he stepped down from the hummock and followed in the direction which the pirate captain and the two men carrying the chest had gone. He crept along cautiously, stopping now and then to make sure that he still heard the counting voice, and when it ceased he lay down upon the sand and waited until it began again.

Presently, so following the pirates, he saw the three figures again in the distance, and, skirting around back of a hill of sand covered with coarse sedge-grass, he came to where he overlooked a little open level space gleaming white in the moonlight.

The three had been crossing the level of sand, and were now not more than twenty-five paces from him. They had again set down the chest, upon which the white man with the long queue and the gold ear-rings had seated to rest himself, the negro standing close beside him. The moon shone as bright as day and full upon his face. It was looking directly at Tom Chist, every line as keen cut with white lights and black shadows as though it had been carved in ivory and jet. He sat perfectly motionless, and Tom drew back with a start, almost thinking he had been discovered. He lay silent, his heart beating heavily in his throat; but there was no alarm, and presently he heard the counting begin again, and when he looked once more he saw they were going away straight across the little open. A soft, sliding hillock of sand lay directly in front of them. They did not turn aside, but went straight over it, the leader helping himself up the sandy slope with his cane, still counting and still keeping his eyes fixed upon that which he held in his hand. Then they disappeared again behind the white crest on the other side.

So Tom followed them cautiously until they had gone almost half a mile inland. When next he saw them clearly it was from a little sandy rise which looked down like the crest of a bowl upon the floor of sand below. Upon this smooth, white floor the moon beat with almost dazzling brightness.

The white man who had helped to carry the chest was now kneeling, busied at some work, though what it was Tom at first could not see. He was whittling the point of a stick into a long wooden peg, and when, by-and-by, he had finished what he was about, he arose and stepped to where he who seemed to be the captain had stuck his cane upright into the ground as though to mark some particular spot. He drew the cane out of the sand, thrusting the stick down in its stead. Then he drove the long peg down with a wooden mallet which the negro handed to him. The sharp rapping of the mallet upon the top of the peg sounded loud in the perfect stillness, and Tom lay watching and wondering what it all meant.

Page 22

The man, with quick-repeated blows, drove the peg farther and farther down into the sand until it showed only two or three inches above the surface. As he finished his work there was another faint flash of light, and by-and-by another smothered rumble of thunder, and Tom as he looked out towards the westward, saw the silver rim of the round and sharply outlined thundercloud rising slowly up into the sky and pushing the other and broken drifting clouds before it.

The two white men were now stooping over the peg, the negro man watching them. Then presently the man with the cane started straight away from the peg, carrying the end of a measuring-line with him, the other end of which the man with the plaited queue held against the top of the peg. When the pirate captain had reached the end of the measuring-line he marked a cross upon the sand, and then again they measured out another stretch of space.

So they measured a distance five times over, and then, from where Tom lay, he could see the man with the queue drive another peg just at the foot of a sloping rise of sand that swept up beyond into a tall white dune marked sharp and clear against the night sky behind. As soon as the man with the plaited queue had driven the second peg into the ground they began measuring again, and so, still measuring, disappeared in another direction which took them in behind the sand-dune, where Tom no longer could see what they were doing.

The negro still sat by the chest where the two had left him, and so bright was the moonlight that from where he lay Tom could see the glint of it twinkling in the whites of his eyeballs.

Presently from behind the hill there came, for the third time, the sharp rapping sound of the mallet driving still another peg, and then after a while the two pirates emerged from behind the sloping whiteness into the space of moonlight again.

They came direct to where the chest lay, and the white man and the black man lifting it once more, they walked away across the level of open sand, and so on behind the edge of the hill and out of Tom's sight.

III

Tom Chist could no longer see what the pirates were doing, neither did he dare to cross over the open space of sand that now lay between them and him. He lay there speculating as to what they were about, and meantime the storm cloud was rising higher and higher above the horizon, with louder and louder mutterings of thunder following each dull flash from out the cloudy, cavernous depths. In the silence he could hear an occasional click as of some iron implement, and he opined that the pirates were burying the chest, though just where they were at work he could neither see nor tell.



Still he lay there watching and listening, and by-and-by a puff of warm air blew across the sand, and a thumping tumble of louder thunder leaped from out the belly of the storm cloud, which every minute was coming nearer and nearer. Still Tom Chist lay watching.

Page 23

Suddenly, almost unexpectedly, the three figures reappeared from behind the sand-hill, the pirate captain leading the way, and the negro and white man following close behind him. They had gone about half-way across the white, sandy level between the hill and the hummock behind which Tom Chist lay, when the white man stopped and bent over as though to tie his shoe.

This brought the negro a few steps in front of his companion.

That which then followed happened so suddenly, so unexpectedly, so swiftly, that Tom Chist had hardly time to realize what it all meant before it was over. As the negro passed him the white man arose suddenly and silently erect, and Tom Chist saw the white moonlight glint upon the blade of a great dirk-knife which he now held in his hand. He took one, two silent, catlike steps behind the unsuspecting negro. Then there was a sweeping flash of the blade in the pallid light, and a blow, the thump of which Tom could distinctly hear even from where he lay stretched out upon the sand. There was an instant echoing yell from the black man, who ran stumbling forward, who stopped, who regained his footing, and then stood for an instant as though rooted to the spot.

Tom had distinctly seen the knife enter his back, and even thought that he had seen the glint of the point as it came out from the breast.

Meantime the pirate captain had stopped, and now stood with his hand resting upon his cane looking impassively on.

Then the black man started to run. The white man stood for a while glaring after him; then he too started after his victim upon the run. The black man was not very far from Tom when he staggered and fell. He tried to rise, then fell forward again, and lay at length. At that instant the first edge of the cloud cut across the moon, and there was a sudden darkness; but in the silence Tom heard the sound of another blow and a groan, and then presently a voice calling to the pirate captain that it was all over.

He saw the dim form of the captain crossing the level sand, and then, as the moon sailed out from behind the cloud, he saw the white man standing over a black figure that lay motionless upon the sand.

Then Tom Chist scrambled up and ran away, plunging down into the hollow of sand that lay in the shadows below. Over the next rise he ran, and down again into the next black hollow, and so on over the sliding, shifting ground, panting and gasping. It seemed to him that he could hear footsteps following, and in the terror that possessed him he almost expected every instant to feel the cold knife-blade slide between his own ribs in such a thrust from behind as he had seen given to the poor black man.

So he ran on like one in a nightmare. His feet grew heavy like lead, he panted and gasped, his breath came hot and dry in his throat. But still he ran and ran until at last he

found himself in front of old Matt Abrahamson's cabin, gasping, panting, and sobbing for breath, his knees relaxed and his thighs trembling with weakness.

Page 24

As he opened the door and dashed into the darkened cabin (for both Matt and Molly were long ago asleep in bed) there was a flash of light, and even as he slammed to the door behind him there was an instant peal of thunder, heavy as though a great weight had been dropped upon the roof of the sky, so that the doors and windows of the cabin rattled.

IV

Then Tom Chist crept to bed, trembling, shuddering, bathed in sweat, his heart beating like a trip-hammer, and his brain dizzy from that long, terror-inspired race through the soft sand in which he had striven to outstrip he knew not what pursuing horror.

For a long, long time he lay awake, trembling and chattering with nervous chills, and when he did fall asleep it was only to drop into monstrous dreams in which he once again saw ever enacted, with various grotesque variations, the tragic drama which his waking eyes had beheld the night before.

Then came the dawning of the broad, wet daylight, and before the rising of the sun Tom was up and out-of-doors to find the young day dripping with the rain of overnight.

His first act was to climb the nearest sandhill and to gaze out towards the offing where the pirate ship had been the day before.

It was no longer there.

Soon afterwards Matt Abrahamson came out of the cabin and he called to Tom to go get a bite to eat, for it was time for them to be away fishing.

All that morning the recollection of the night before hung over Tom Chist like a great cloud of boding trouble. It filled the confined area of the little boat and spread over the entire wide spaces of sky and sea that surrounded them. Not for a moment was it lifted. Even when he was hauling in his wet and dripping line with a struggling fish at the end of it a recurrent memory of what he had seen would suddenly come upon him, and he would groan in spirit at the recollection. He looked at Matt Abrahamson's leathery face, at his lantern jaws cavernously and stolidly chewing at a tobacco leaf, and it seemed monstrous to him that the old man should be so unconscious of the black cloud that wrapped them all about.

When the boat reached the shore again he leaped scrambling to the beach, and as soon as his dinner was eaten he hurried away to find the Dominie Jones.

He ran all the way from Abrahamson's hut to the Parson's house, hardly stopping once, and when he knocked at the door he was panting and sobbing for breath.



The good man was sitting on the back-kitchen door-step smoking his long pipe of tobacco out into the sunlight, while his wife within was rattling about among the pans and dishes in preparation of their supper, of which a strong, porky smell already filled the air.

Then Tom Chist told his story, panting, hurrying, tumbling one word over another in his haste, and Parson Jones listened, breaking every now and then into an ejaculation of wonder. The light in his pipe went out and the bowl turned cold.

Page 25

"And I don't see why they should have killed the poor black man," said Tom, as he finished his narrative.

"Why, that is very easy enough to understand," said the good reverend man. "'Twas a treasure-box they buried!"

In his agitation Mr. Jones had risen from his seat and was now stumping up and down, puffing at his empty tobacco-pipe as though it were still alight.

"A treasure-box!" cried out Tom.

"Aye, a treasure-box! And that was why they killed the poor black man. He was the only one, d'ye see, besides they two who knew the place where 'twas hid, and now that they've killed him out of the way, there's nobody but themselves knows. The villains—Tut, tut, look at that now!" In his excitement the dominie had snapped the stem of his tobacco-pipe in two.

"Why, then," said Tom, "if that is so, 'tis indeed a wicked, bloody treasure, and fit to bring a curse upon anybody who finds it!"

"'Tis more like to bring a curse upon the soul who buried it," said Parson Jones, "and it may be a blessing to him who finds it. But tell me, Tom, do you think you could find the place again where 'twas hid?"

"I can't tell that," said Tom, "'twas all in among the sand-humps, d'ye see, and it was at night into the bargain. Maybe we could find the marks of their feet in the sand," he added.

"'Tis not likely," said the reverend gentleman, "for the storm last night would have washed all that away."

"I could find the place," said Tom, "where the boat was drawn up on the beach."

"Why, then, that's something to start from, Tom," said his friend. "If we can find that, then maybe we can find whither they went from there."

"If I was certain it was a treasure-box," cried out Tom Chist, "I would rake over every foot of sand betwixt here and Henlopen to find it."

"'Twould be like hunting for a pin in a haystack," said the Rev. Hilary Jones.

As Tom walked away home, it seemed as though a ton's weight of gloom had been rolled away from his soul. The next day he and Parson Jones were to go treasure-hunting together; it seemed to Tom as though he could hardly wait for the time to come.

V

The next afternoon Parson Jones and Tom Chist started off together upon the expedition that made Tom's fortune forever. Tom carried a spade over his shoulder and the reverend gentleman walked along beside him with his cane.

As they jogged along up the beach they talked together about the only thing they could talk about—the treasure-box. “And how big did you say 'twas?” quoth the good gentleman.

“About so long,” said Tom Chist, measuring off upon the spade, “and about so wide, and this deep.”

“And what if it should be full of money, Tom?” said the reverend gentleman, swinging his cane around and around in wide circles in the excitement of the thought, as he strode along briskly. “Suppose it should be full of money, what then?”

Page 26

"By Moses!" said Tom Chist, hurrying to keep up with his friend, "I'd buy a ship for myself, I would, and I'd trade to Injy and to Chiny to my own boot, I would. Suppose the chist was all full of money, sir, and suppose we should find it; would there be enough in it, d'ye suppose, to buy a ship?"

"To be sure there would be enough, Tom; enough and to spare, and a good big lump over."

"And if I find it 'tis mine to keep, is it, and no mistake?"

"Why, to be sure it would be yours!" cried out the Parson, in a loud voice. "To be sure it would be yours!" He knew nothing of the law, but the doubt of the question began at once to ferment in his brain, and he strode along in silence for a while. "Whose else would it be but yours if you find it?" he burst out. "Can you tell me that?"

"If ever I have a ship of my own," said Tom Chist, "and if ever I sail to Injy in her, I'll fetch ye back the best chist of tea, sir, that ever was fetched from Cochin Chiny."

Parson Jones burst out laughing. "Thankee, Tom," he said; "and I'll thankee again when I get my chist of tea. But tell me, Tom, didst thou ever hear of the farmer girl who counted her chickens before they were hatched?"

It was thus they talked as they hurried along up the beach together, and so came to a place at last where Tom stopped short and stood looking about him. "'Twas just here," he said, "I saw the boat last night. I know 'twas here, for I mind me of that bit of wreck yonder, and that there was a tall stake drove in the sand just where yon stake stands."

Parson Jones put on his barnacles and went over to the stake towards which Tom pointed. As soon as he had looked at it carefully, he called out: "Why, Tom, this hath been just drove down into the sand. 'Tis a brand-new stake of wood, and the pirates must have set it here themselves as a mark, just as they drove the pegs you spoke about down into the sand."

Tom came over and looked at the stake. It was a stout piece of oak nearly two inches thick; it had been shaped with some care, and the top of it had been painted red. He shook the stake and tried to move it, but it had been driven or planted so deeply into the sand that he could not stir it. "Aye, sir," he said, "it must have been set here for a mark, for I'm sure 'twas not here yesterday or the day before." He stood looking about him to see if there were other signs of the pirates' presence. At some little distance there was the corner of something white sticking up out of the sand. He could see that it was a scrap of paper, and he pointed to it, calling out: "Yonder is a piece of paper, sir. I wonder if they left that behind them?"

It was a miraculous chance that placed that paper there. There was only an inch of it showing, and if it had not been for Tom's sharp eyes, it would certainly have been overlooked and passed by. The next wind-storm would have covered it up, and all that afterwards happened never would have occurred. "Look sir," he said, as he struck the sand from it, "it hath writing on it."

Page 27

"Let me see it," said Parson Jones. He adjusted the spectacles a little more firmly astride of his nose as he took the paper in his hand and began conning it. "What's all this?" he said; "a whole lot of figures and nothing else." And then he read aloud, "'Mark—S.S.W. by S.' What d'ye suppose that means, Tom?"

"I don't know, sir," said Tom. "But maybe we can understand it better if you read on."

"Tis all a great lot of figures," said Parson Jones, "without a grain of meaning in them so far as I can see, unless they be sailing directions." And then he began reading again: "'Mark—S.S.W. by S. 40, 72, 91, 130, 151, 177, 202, 232, 256, 271'—d'ye see, it must be sailing directions—'299, 335, 362, 386, 415, 446, 469, 491, 522, 544, 571, 598'—what a lot of them there be—'626, 652, 676, 695, 724, 851, 876, 905, 940, 967. Peg. S.E. by E. 269 foot. Peg. S.S.W. by S. 427 foot. Peg. Dig to the west of this six foot.'"

"What's that about a peg?" exclaimed Tom. "What's that about a peg? And then there's something about digging, too!" It was as though a sudden light began shining into his brain. He felt himself growing quickly very excited. "Read that over again, sir," he cried. "Why, sir, you remember I told you they drove a peg into the sand. And don't they say to dig close to it? Read it over again, sir—read it over again!"

"Peg?" said the good gentleman. "To be sure it was about a peg. Let's look again. Yes, here it is. 'Peg S.E. by E. 269 foot.'"

"Aye!" cried out Tom Chist again, in great excitement. "Don't you remember what I told you, sir, 269 foot? Sure that must be what I saw 'em measuring with the line." Parson Jones had now caught the flame of excitement that was blazing up so strongly in Tom's breast. He felt as though some wonderful thing was about to happen to them. "To be sure, to be sure!" he called out, in a great big voice. "And then they measured out 427 foot south-southwest by south, and then they drove another peg, and then they buried the box six foot to the west of it. Why, Tom—why, Tom Chist! if we've read this aright, thy fortune is made."

Tom Chist stood staring straight at the old gentleman's excited face, and seeing nothing but it in all the bright infinity of sunshine. Were they, indeed, about to find the treasure-chest? He felt the sun very hot upon his shoulders, and he heard the harsh, insistent jarring of a tern that hovered and circled with forked tail and sharp white wings in the sunlight just above their heads; but all the time he stood staring into the good old gentleman's face.

It was Parson Jones who first spoke. "But what do all these figures mean?" And Tom observed how the paper shook and rustled in the tremor of excitement that shook his hand. He raised the paper to the focus of his spectacles and began to read again. "'Mark 40, 72, 91—'"

“Mark?” cried out Tom, almost screaming. “Why, that must mean the stake yonder; that must be the mark.” And he pointed to the oaken stick with its red tip blazing against the white shimmer of sand behind it.

Page 28

“And the 40 and 72 and 91,” cried the old gentleman, in a voice equally shrill—“why, that must mean the number of steps the pirate was counting when you heard him.”

“To be sure that’s what they mean!” cried Tom Chist. “That is it, and it can be nothing else. Oh, come, sir—come, sir; let us make haste and find it!”

“Stay! stay!” said the good gentleman, holding up his hand; and again Tom Chist noticed how it trembled and shook. His voice was steady enough, though very hoarse, but his hand shook and trembled as though with a palsy. “Stay! stay! First of all, we must follow these measurements. And ’tis a marvellous thing,” he croaked, after a little pause, “how this paper ever came to be here.”

“Maybe it was blown here by the storm,” suggested Tom Chist.

“Like enough; like enough,” said Parson Jones. “Like enough, after the wretches had buried the chest and killed the poor black man, they were so buffeted and bowled about by the storm that it was shook out of the man’s pocket, and thus blew away from him without his knowing aught of it.”

“But let us find the box!” cried out Tom Chist, flaming with his excitement.

“Aye, aye,” said the good man; “only stay a little, my boy, until we make sure what we’re about. I’ve got my pocket-compass here, but we must have something to measure off the feet when we have found the peg. You run across to Tom Brooke’s house and fetch that measuring-rod he used to lay out his new byre. While you’re gone I’ll pace off the distance marked on the paper with my pocket-compass here.”

VI

Tom Chist was gone for almost an hour, though he ran nearly all the way and back, upborne as on the wings of the wind. When he returned, panting, Parson Jones was nowhere to be seen, but Tom saw his footsteps leading away inland, and he followed the scuffling marks in the smooth surface across the sand-humps and down into the hollows, and by-and-by found the good gentleman in a spot he at once knew as soon as he laid his eyes upon it.

It was the open space where the pirates had driven their first peg, and where Tom Chist had afterwards seen them kill the poor black man. Tom Chist gazed around as though expecting to see some sign of the tragedy, but the space was as smooth and as undisturbed as a floor, excepting where, midway across it, Parson Jones who was now stooping over something on the ground, had trampled it all around about.

When Tom Chist saw him, he was still bending over, scraping the sand away from something he had found.

It was the first peg!

Inside of half an hour they had found the second and third pegs, and Tom Chist stripped off his coat, and began digging like mad down into the sand, Parson Jones standing over him watching him. The sun was sloping well towards the west when the blade of Tom Chist's spade struck upon something hard.

Page 29

If it had been his own heart that he had hit in the sand his breast could hardly have thrilled more sharply.

It was the treasure-box!

Parson Jones himself leaped down into the hole, and began scraping away the sand with his hands as though he had gone crazy. At last, with some difficulty, they tugged and hauled the chest up out of the sand to the surface, where it lay covered all over with the grit that clung to it.

It was securely locked and fastened with a padlock, and it took a good many blows with the blade of the spade to burst the bolt. Parson Jones himself lifted the lid.

Tom Chist leaned forward and gazed down into the open box. He would not have been surprised to have seen it filled full of yellow gold and bright jewels. It was filled half full of books and papers, and half full of canvas bags tied safely and securely around and around with cords of string.

Parson Jones lifted out one of the bags, and it jingled as he did so. It was full of money.

He cut the string, and with trembling, shaking hands handed the bag to Tom, who, in an ecstasy of wonder and dizzy with delight, poured out with swimming sight upon the coat spread on the ground a cataract of shining silver money that rang and twinkled and jingled as it fell in a shining heap upon the coarse cloth.

Parson Jones held up both hands into the air, and Tom stared at what he saw, wondering whether it was all so, and whether he was really awake. It seemed to him as though he was in a dream.

There were two-and-twenty bags in all in the chest: ten of them full of silver money, eight of them full of gold money, three of them full of gold-dust, and one small bag with jewels wrapped up in wad cotton and paper.

[Illustration: *“‘Tis enough,’ cried out parson Jones, ‘to make us both rich men’”]*

“‘Tis enough,” cried out Parson Jones, “to make us both rich men as long as we live.”

The burning summer sun, though sloping in the sky, beat down upon them as hot as fire; but neither of them noticed it. Neither did they notice hunger nor thirst nor fatigue, but sat there as though in a trance, with the bags of money scattered on the sand around them, a great pile of money heaped upon the coat, and the open chest beside them. It was an hour of sundown before Parson Jones had begun fairly to examine the books and papers in the chest.

Of the three books, two were evidently log-books of the pirates who had been lying off the mouth of the Delaware Bay all this time. The other book was written in Spanish, and was evidently the log-book of some captured prize.

It was then, sitting there upon the sand, the good old gentleman reading in his high, cracking voice, that they first learned from the bloody records in those two books who it was who had been lying inside the Cape all this time, and that it was the famous Captain Kidd. Every now and then the reverend gentleman would stop to exclaim, "Oh, the bloody wretch!" or, "Oh, the desperate, cruel villains!" and then would go on reading again a scrap here and a scrap there.

Page 30

And all the while Tom Chist sat and listened, every now and then reaching out furtively and touching the heap of money still lying upon the coat.

One might be inclined to wonder why Captain Kidd had kept those bloody records. He had probably laid them away because they so incriminated many of the great people of the colony of New York that, with the books in evidence, it would have been impossible to bring the pirate to justice without dragging a dozen or more fine gentlemen into the dock along with him. If he could have kept them in his own possession, they would doubtless have been a great weapon of defence to protect him from the gallows. Indeed, when Captain Kidd was finally brought to conviction and hung, he was not accused of his piracies, but of striking a mutinous seaman upon the head with a bucket and accidentally killing him. The authorities did not dare try him for piracy. He was really hung because he was a pirate, and we know that it was the log-books that Tom Chist brought to New York that did the business for him; he was accused and convicted of manslaughter for killing of his own ship-carpenter with a bucket.

So Parson Jones, sitting there in the slanting light, read through these terrible records of piracy, and Tom, with the pile of gold and silver money beside him, sat and listened to him.

What a spectacle, if any one had come upon them! But they were alone, with the vast arch of sky empty above them and the wide white stretch of sand a desert around them. The sun sank lower and lower, until there was only time to glance through the other papers in the chest.

They were nearly all goldsmiths' bills of exchange drawn in favor of certain of the most prominent merchants of New York. Parson Jones, as he read over the names, knew of nearly all the gentlemen by hearsay. Aye, here was this gentleman; he thought that name would be among 'em. What? Here is Mr. So-and-so. Well, if all they say is true, the villain has robbed one of his own best friends. "I wonder," he said, "why the wretch should have hidden these papers so carefully away with the other treasures, for they could do him no good?" Then, answering his own question: "Like enough because these will give him a hold over the gentlemen to whom they are drawn so that he can make a good bargain for his own neck before he gives the bills back to their owners. I tell you what it is, Tom," he continued, "it is you yourself shall go to New York and bargain for the return of these papers. 'Twill be as good as another fortune to you."

The majority of the bills were drawn in favor of one Richard Chillingsworth, Esquire. "And he is," said Parson Jones; "one of the richest men in the province of New York. You shall go to him with the news of what we have found."

"When shall I go?" said Tom Chist.

“You shall go upon the very first boat we can catch,” said the Parson. He had turned, still holding the bills in his hand, and was now fingering over the pile of money that yet lay tumbled out upon the coat. “I wonder, Tom,” said he, “if you could spare me a score or so of these doubloons?”

Page 31

"You shall have fifty score, if you choose," said Tom, bursting with gratitude and with generosity in his newly found treasure.

"You are as fine a lad as ever I saw, Tom," said the Parson, "and I'll thank you to the last day of my life."

Tom scooped up a double handful of silver money. "Take it, sir," he said, "and you may have as much more as you want of it."

He poured it into the dish that the good man made of his hands, and the Parson made a motion as though to empty it into his pocket. Then he stopped, as though a sudden doubt had occurred to him. "I don't know that 'tis fit for me to take this pirate money, after all," he said.

"But you are welcome to it," said Tom.

Still the Parson hesitated. "Nay," he burst out, "I'll not take it; 'tis blood-money." And as he spoke he chucked the whole double handful into the now empty chest, then arose and dusted the sand from his breeches. Then, with a great deal of bustling energy, he helped to tie the bags again and put them all back into the chest.

They reburied the chest in the place whence they had taken it, and then the Parson folded the precious paper of directions, placed it carefully in his wallet, and his wallet in his pocket.

"Tom," he said, for the twentieth time, "your fortune has been made this day."

And Tom Chist, as he rattled in his breeches pocket the half-dozen doubloons he had kept out of his treasure, felt that what his friend had said was true.

* * * * *

As the two went back homeward across the level space of sand, Tom Chist suddenly stopped stock still and stood looking about him. "'Twas just here," he said, digging his heel down into the sand, "that they killed the poor black man."

"And here he lies buried for all time," said Parson Jones; and as he spoke he dug his cane down into the sand. Tom Chist shuddered. He would not have been surprised if the ferrule of the cane had struck something soft beneath that level surface. But it did not, nor was any sign of that tragedy ever seen again. For, whether the pirates had carried away what they had done and buried it elsewhere, or whether the storm in blowing the sand had completely levelled off and hidden all sign of that tragedy where it was enacted, certain it is that it never came to sight again—at least so far as Tom Chist and the Reverend Hillary Jones ever knew.

VII

This is the story of the treasure-box. All that remains now is to conclude the story of Tom Chist, and to tell of what came of him in the end.

He did not go back again to live with old Matt Abrahamson. Parson Jones had now taken charge of him and his fortunes, and Tom did not have to go back to the fisherman's hut.

Old Abrahamson talked a great deal about it, and would come in his cups and harangue good Parson Jones, making a vast protestation of what he would do to Tom—if he ever caught him—for running away. But Tom on all these occasions kept carefully out of his way, and nothing came of the old man's threatenings.

Page 32

Tom used to go over to see his foster-mother now and then, but always when the old man was from home. And Molly Abrahamson used to warn him to keep out of her father's way. "He's in as vile a humor as ever I see, Tom," she said; "he sits sulking all day long, and 'tis my belief he'd kill ye if he caught ye."

Of course Tom said nothing, even to her, about the treasure, and he and the reverend gentleman kept the knowledge thereof to themselves. About three weeks later Parson Jones managed to get him shipped aboard of a vessel bound for New York town, and a few days later Tom Chist landed at that place. He had never been in such a town before, and he could not sufficiently wonder and marvel at the number of brick houses, at the multitude of people coming and going along the fine, hard, earthen sidewalk, at the shops and the stores where goods hung in the windows, and, most of all, the fortifications and the battery at the point, at the rows of threatening cannon, and at the scarlet-coated sentries pacing up and down the ramparts. All this was very wonderful, and so were the clustered boats riding at anchor in the harbor. It was like a new world, so different was it from the sand-hills and the sedgy levels of Henlopen.

Tom Chist took up his lodgings at a coffeehouse near to the town-hall, and thence he sent by the post-boy a letter written by Parson Jones to Master Chillingsworth. In a little while the boy returned with a message, asking Tom to come up to Mr. Chillingsworth's house that afternoon at two o'clock.

Tom went thither with a great deal of trepidation, and his heart fell away altogether when he found it a fine, grand brick house, three stories high, and with wrought-iron letters across the front.

The counting-house was in the same building; but Tom, because of Mr. Jones's letter, was conducted directly into the parlor, where the great rich man was awaiting his coming. He was sitting in a leather-covered arm-chair, smoking a pipe of tobacco, and with a bottle of fine old Madeira close to his elbow.

Tom had not had a chance to buy a new suit of clothes yet, and so he cut no very fine figure in the rough dress he had brought with him from Henlopen. Nor did Mr. Chillingsworth seem to think very highly of his appearance, for he sat looking sideways at Tom as he smoked.

"Well, my lad," he said; "and what is this great thing you have to tell me that is so mightily wonderful? I got what's-his-name—Mr. Jones's— letter, and now I am ready to hear what you have to say."

But if he thought but little of his visitor's appearance at first, he soon changed his sentiments towards him, for Tom had not spoken twenty words when Mr. Chillingsworth's whole aspect changed. He straightened himself up in his seat, laid



aside his pipe, pushed away his glass of Madeira, and bade Tom take a chair. He listened without a word as Tom Chist told of the buried treasure, of how he had

Page 33

seen the poor negro murdered, and of how he and Parson Jones had recovered the chest again. Only once did Mr. Chillingsworth interrupt the narrative. "And to think," he cried, "that the villain this very day walks about New York town as though he were an honest man, ruffling it with the best of us! But if we can only get hold of these log-books you speak of. Go on; tell me more of this."

When Tom Chist's narrative was ended, Mr. Chillingsworth's bearing was as different as daylight is from dark. He asked a thousand questions, all in the most polite and gracious tone imaginable, and not only urged a glass of his fine old Madeira upon Tom, but asked him to stay to supper. There was nobody to be there, he said, but his wife and daughter.

Tom, all in a panic at the very thought of the two ladies, sturdily refused to stay even for the dish of tea Mr. Chillingsworth offered him.

He did not know that he was destined to stay there as long as he should live.

"And now," said Mr. Chillingsworth, "tell me about yourself."

"I have nothing to tell, your honor," said Tom, "except that I was washed up out of the sea."

"Washed up out of the sea!" exclaimed Mr. Chillingsworth. "Why, how was that? Come, begin at the beginning, and tell me all."

Thereupon Tom Chist did as he was bidden, beginning at the very beginning and telling everything just as Molly Abrahamson had often told it to him. As he continued, Mr. Chillingsworth's interest changed into an appearance of stronger and stronger excitement. Suddenly he jumped up out of his chair and began to walk up and down the room.

"Stop! stop!" he cried out at last, in the midst of something Tom was saying. "Stop! stop! Tell me; do you know the name of the vessel that was wrecked, and from which you were washed ashore?"

"I've heard it said," said Tom Chist, "'twas the *Bristol Merchant*."

"I knew it! I knew it!" exclaimed the great man, in a loud voice, flinging his hands up into the air. "I felt it was so the moment you began the story. But tell me this, was there nothing found with you with a mark or a name upon it?"

"There was a kerchief," said Tom, "marked with a T and a C."

“Theodosia Chillingsworth!” cried out the merchant. “I knew it! I knew it! Heavens! to think of anything so wonderful happening as this! Boy! boy! dost thou know who thou art? Thou art my own brother’s son. His name was Oliver Chillingsworth, and he was my partner in business, and thou art his son.” Then he ran out into the entryway, shouting and calling for his wife and daughter to come.

So Tom Chist—or Thomas Chillingsworth, as he now was to be called—did stay to supper, after all.

This is the story, and I hope you may like it. For Tom Chist became rich and great, as was to be supposed, and he married his pretty cousin Theodosia (who had been named for his own mother, drowned in the *Bristol Merchant*).

Page 34

He did not forget his friends, but had Parson Jones brought to New York to live.

As to Molly and Matt Abrahamson, they both enjoyed a pension of ten pounds a year for as long as they lived; for now that all was well with him, Tom bore no grudge against the old fisherman for all the drubbings he had suffered.

The treasure-box was brought on to New York, and if Tom Chist did not get all the money there was in it (as Parson Jones had opined he would) he got at least a good big lump of it. And it is my belief that those log-books did more to get Captain Kidd arrested in Boston town and hanged in London than anything else that was brought up against him.

III. THE GHOST OF CAPTAIN BRAND

Being a Narrative of Certain Extraordinary Adventures that Befell Barnaby True, Esquire, of the Town of New York, in the Year 1753.

I

It is not so easy to tell why discredit should be cast upon a man because of something his grandfather may have done amiss, but the world, which is never over-nice in its discrimination as to where to lay the blame, is often pleased to make the innocent suffer instead of the guilty.

Barnaby True was a good, honest boy, as boys go, but yet was he not ever allowed altogether to forget that his grandfather had been that very famous pirate, Captain William Brand, who, after so many marvellous adventures (if one may believe the catchpenny stories and ballads that were writ about him), was murdered in Jamaica by Captain John Malyoe, the commander of his own consort, the *Adventure* galley.

It hath never been denied, that ever I heard, that up to the time of Captain Brand's being commissioned against the South Sea pirates, he had always been esteemed as honest, reputable a sea-captain as could be. When he started out upon that adventure it was with a ship, the *Royal Sovereign*, fitted out by some of the most decent merchants of New York. Governor Van Dam himself had subscribed to the adventure, and himself had signed Captain Brand's commission. So, if the unfortunate man went astray, he must have had great temptation to do so; many others behaving no better when the opportunity offered in these far-away seas, when so many rich purchases might very easily be taken and no one the wiser.

To be sure those stories and ballads made our captain to be a most wicked, profane wretch; and if he were, why God knows he suffered and paid for it, for he laid his bones in Jamaica, and never saw his home or his wife or his daughter after he had sailed

away on the *Royal Sovereign* on that long, misfortunate voyage, leaving his family behind him in New York to the care of strangers.

Page 35

At the time when Captain Brand so met his fate in Port Royal Harbor he had increased his flotilla to two vessels—the *Royal Sovereign* (which was the vessel that had been fitted out for him in New York, a fine brigantine and a good sailer), and the *Adventure* galley, which he had captured somewhere in the South Seas. This latter vessel he placed in command of a certain John Malyoe whom he had picked up no one knows where—a young man of very good family in England, who had turned red-handed pirate. This man, who took no more thought of a human life than he would of a broom straw, was he who afterwards murdered Captain Brand, as you shall presently hear.

With these two vessels, the *Royal Sovereign* and the *Adventure*, Captain Brand and Captain Malyoe swept the Mozambique Channel as clear as a boatswain's whistle, and after three years of piracy, having gained a great booty of gold and silver and pearls, sailed straight for the Americas, making first the island of Jamaica and the harbor of Port Royal, where they dropped anchor to wait for news from home.

But by this time the authorities had been so stirred up against our pirates that it became necessary for them to hide their booty until such time as they might make their peace with the Admiralty Courts at home. So one night Captain Brand and Captain Malyoe, with two others of the pirates, went ashore with two great chests of treasure, which they buried somewhere on the banks of the Cobra River near the place where the old Spanish fort had stood.

What happened after the treasure was thus buried no one may tell. 'Twas said that Captain Brand and Captain Malyoe fell a-quarrelling and that the upshot of the matter was that Captain Malyoe shot Captain Brand through the head, and that the pirate who was with him served Captain Brand's companion after the same fashion with a pistol bullet through the body.

After that the two murderers returned to their vessel, the *Adventure* galley, and sailed away, carrying the bloody secret of the buried treasure with them.

[Illustration: "CAPTAIN MALYOE SHOT CAPTAIN BRAND THROUGH THE HEAD"]

But this double murder of Captain Brand and his companion happened, you are to understand, some twenty years before the time of this story, and while our hero was but one year old. So now to our present history.

It is a great pity that any one should have a grandfather who ended his days in such a sort as this; but it was no fault of Barnaby True's, nor could he have done anything to prevent it, seeing he was not even born into the world at the time that his grandfather turned pirate, and that he was only one year old when Captain Brand so met his death on the Cobra River. Nevertheless, the boys with whom he went to school never tired of calling him "Pirate," and would sometimes sing for his benefit that famous catchpenny ballad beginning thus:



“Oh! my name was Captain Brand,
A-sailing,
And a-sailing;
Oh! my name was Captain Brand,
A-sailing free.
Oh! my name was Captain Brand,
And I sinned by sea and land,
For I broke God’s just command,
A-sailing free.”

Page 36

'Twas a vile thing to sing at the grandson of so unfortunate a man, and oftentimes Barnaby True would double up his little fists and would fight his tormentors at great odds, and would sometimes go back home with a bloody nose or a bruised eye to have his poor mother cry over him and grieve for him.

Not that his days were all of teasing and torment, either; for if his comrades did sometimes treat him so, why then there were other times when he and they were as great friends as could be, and used to go a-swimming together in the most amicable fashion where there was a bit of sandy strand below the little bluff along the East River above Fort George.

There was a clump of wide beech-trees at that place, with a fine shade and a place to lay their clothes while they swam about, splashing with their naked white bodies in the water. At these times Master Barnaby would bawl as lustily and laugh as loud as though his grandfather had been the most honest ship-chandler in the town, instead of a bloody-handed pirate who had been murdered in his sins.

Ah! It is a fine thing to look back to the days when one was a boy! Barnaby may remember how, often, when he and his companions were paddling so in the water, the soldiers off duty would come up from the fort and would maybe join them in the water, others, perhaps, standing in their red coats on the shore, looking on and smoking their pipes of tobacco.

Then there were other times when maybe the very next day after our hero had fought with great valor with his fellows he would go a-rambling with them up the Bouwerie Road with the utmost friendliness; perhaps to help them steal cherries from some old Dutch farmer, forgetting in such an adventure what a thief his own grandfather had been.

But to resume our story.

When Barnaby True was between sixteen and seventeen years old he was taken into employment in the counting-house of his stepfather, Mr. Roger Hartright, the well-known West Indian merchant, a most respectable man and one of the kindest and best of friends that anybody could have in the world.

This good gentleman had courted the favor of Barnaby's mother for a long time before he had married her. Indeed, he had so courted her before she had ever thought of marrying Jonathan True. But he not venturing to ask her in marriage, and she being a brisk, handsome woman, she chose the man who spoke out his mind, and so left the silent lover out in the cold. But so soon as she was a widow and free again, Mr. Hartright resumed his wooing, and so used to come down every Tuesday and Friday evening to sit and talk with her. Among Barnaby True's earliest memories was a recollection of the good, kind gentleman sitting in old Captain Brand's double-nailed



arm-chair, the sunlight shining across his knees, over which he had spread a great red silk handkerchief, while he sipped a dish of tea with a dash of rum in it. He kept up this habit of visiting the Widow True for a long time before he could fetch himself to the point of asking anything more particular of her, and so Barnaby was nigh fourteen years old before Mr. Hartright married her, and so became our hero's dear and honored foster-father.

Page 37

It was the kindness of this good man that not only found a place for Barnaby in the counting-house, but advanced him so fast that, against our hero was twenty-one years old, he had made four voyages as supercargo to the West Indies in Mr. Hartright's ship, the *Belle Helen*, and soon after he was twenty-one undertook a fifth.

Nor was it in any such subordinate position as mere supercargo that he sailed upon these adventures, but rather as the confidential agent of Mr. Hartright, who, having no likelihood of children of his own, was jealous to advance our hero to a position of trust and responsibility in the counting-house, and so would have him know all the particulars of the business and become more intimately acquainted with the correspondents and agents throughout those parts of the West Indies where the affairs of the house were most active. He would give to Barnaby the best sort of letters of introduction, so that the correspondents of Mr. Hartright throughout those parts, seeing how that gentleman had adopted our hero's interests as his own, were always at considerable pains to be very polite and obliging in showing every attention to him.

Especially among these gentlemen throughout the West Indies may be mentioned Mr. Ambrose Greenfield, a merchant of excellent standing who lived at Kingston, Jamaica. This gentleman was very particular to do all that he could to make our hero's stay in these parts as agreeable and pleasant to him as might be. Mr. Greenfield is here spoken of with a greater degree of particularity than others who might as well be remarked upon, because, as the reader shall presently discover for himself, it was through the offices of this good friend that our hero first became acquainted, not only with that lady who afterwards figured with such conspicuousness in his affairs, but also with a man who, though graced with a title, was perhaps the greatest villain who ever escaped a just fate upon the gallows.

So much for the history of Barnaby True up to the beginning of this story, without which you shall hardly be able to understand the purport of those most extraordinary adventures that afterwards befell him, nor the logic of their consequence after they had occurred.

II

Upon the occasion of our hero's fifth voyage into the West Indies he made a stay of some six or eight weeks at Kingston, in the island of Jamaica, and it was at that time that the first of those extraordinary adventures befell him, concerning which this narrative has to relate.

It was Barnaby's habit, when staying at Kingston, to take lodging with a very decent, respectable widow, by name Mrs. Anne Bolles, who, with three extremely agreeable and pleasant daughters, kept a very clean and well-served house for the accommodation of strangers visiting that island.

Page 38

One morning as he sat sipping his coffee, clad only in loose cotton drawers and a jacket of the same material, and with slippers upon his feet (as is the custom in that country, where every one endeavors to keep as cool as may be), Miss Eliza, the youngest of the three daughters—a brisk, handsome miss of sixteen or seventeen—came tripping into the room and handed him a sealed letter, which she declared a stranger had just left at the door, departing incontinently so soon as he had eased himself of that commission. You may conceive of Barnaby's astonishment when he opened the note and read the remarkable words that here follow:

"Mr. Barnaby True.

"Sir,—Though you don't know me, I know you, and I tell you this: if you will be at Pratt's Ordinary on Friday next at eight o'clock in the evening, and will accompany the man who shall say to you, 'The Royal Sovereign is come in' you shall learn of something the most to your advantage that ever befell you. Sir, keep this note and give it to him who shall address those words to you, so to certify that you are the man he seeks. Sir, this is the most important thing that can concern you, so you will please say nothing to nobody about it."

Such was the wording of the note which was writ in as cramped and villanous handwriting as our hero ever beheld, and which, excepting his own name, was without address, and which possessed no superscription whatever.

The first emotion that stirred Barnaby True was one of extreme and profound astonishment; the second thought that came into his mind was that maybe some witty fellow—of whom he knew a good many in that place, and wild, mad rakes they were as ever the world beheld—was attempting to play off a smart, witty jest upon him. Indeed, Miss Eliza Bolles, who was of a lively, mischievous temper, was not herself above playing such a prank should the occasion offer. With this thought in his mind Barnaby inquired of her with a good deal of particularity concerning the appearance and condition of the man who had left the note, to all of which Miss replied with so straight a face and so candid an air that he could no longer suspect her of being concerned in any trick against him, and so eased his mind of any such suspicion. The bearer of the note, she informed him, was a tall, lean man, with a red neckerchief tied around his neck and with copper buckles to his shoes, and he had the appearance of a sailor-man, having a great queue of red hair hanging down his back. But, Lord! what was such a description as that in a busy seaport town full of scores of men to fit such a likeness? Accordingly, our hero put the note away into his wallet, determining to show it to his good friend Mr. Greenfield that evening, and to ask his advice upon it.

This he did, and that gentleman's opinion was the same as his: to wit, that some wag was minded to play off a hoax upon him, and that the matter of the letter was all nothing but smoke.

Page 39

III

Nevertheless, though Barnaby was thus confirmed in his opinion as to the nature of the communication he had received, he yet determined in his own mind that he would see the business through to the end and so be at Pratt's Ordinary, as the note demanded, upon the day and at the time appointed therein.

Pratt's Ordinary was at that time a very fine and famous place of its sort, with good tobacco and the best rum in the West Indies, and had a garden behind it that, sloping down to the harbor front, was planted pretty thick with palms and ferns, grouped into clusters with flowers and plants. Here were a number of tables, some in little grottos, like our Vauxhall in New York, with red and blue and white paper lanterns hung among the foliage. Thither gentlemen and ladies used sometimes to go of an evening to sit and drink lime-juice and sugar and water (and sometimes a taste of something stronger), and to look out across the water at the shipping and so to enjoy the cool of the day.

Thither, accordingly, our hero went a little before the time appointed in the note, and, passing directly through the Ordinary and to the garden beyond, chose a table at the lower end and close to the water's edge, where he could not readily be seen by any one coming into the place, and yet where he could easily view whoever should approach. Then, ordering some rum and water and a pipe of tobacco, he composed himself to watch for the arrival of those witty fellows whom he suspected would presently come thither to see the end of their prank and to enjoy his confusion.

The spot was pleasant enough, for the land breeze, blowing strong and cool, set the leaves of the palm-tree above his head to rattling and clattering continually against the darkness of the sky, where, the moon then being half full, they shone every now and then like blades of steel. The waves, also, were splashing up against the little landing-place at the foot of the garden, sounding mightily pleasant in the dusk of the evening, and sparkling all over the harbor where the moon caught the edges of the water. A great many vessels were lying at anchor in their ridings, with the dark, prodigious form of a man-of-war looming up above them in the moonlight.

There our hero sat for the best part of an hour, smoking his pipe of tobacco and sipping his rum and water, yet seeing nothing of those whom he suspected might presently come thither to laugh at him.

It was not far from half after the hour when a row-boat came suddenly out of the night and pulled up to the landing-place at the foot of the garden, and three or four men came ashore in the darkness. They landed very silently and walked up the garden pathway without saying a word, and, sitting down at an adjacent table, ordered rum and water

and began drinking among themselves, speaking every now and then a word or two in a tongue that Barnaby did not well understand,

Page 40

but which, from certain phrases they let fall, he suspected to be Portuguese. Our hero paid no great attention to them, till by-and-by he became aware that they had fallen to whispering together and were regarding him very curiously. He felt himself growing very uneasy under this observation, which every moment grew more and more particular, and he was just beginning to suspect that this interest concerning himself might have somewhat more to do with him than mere idle curiosity, when one of the men, who was plainly the captain of the party, suddenly says to him, "How now, messmate; won't you come and have a drop of drink with us?"

At this address Barnaby instantly began to be aware that the affair he had come upon was indeed no jest, as he had supposed it to be, but that he had walked into what promised to be a very pretty adventure. Nevertheless, not wishing to be too hasty in his conclusions, he answered very civilly that he had drunk enough already, and that more would only heat his blood.

"Well," says the stranger, "I may be mistook, but I believe you are Mr. Barnaby True."

"You are right, sir, and that is my name," acknowledged Barnaby. "But still I cannot guess how that may concern you, nor why it should be a reason for my drinking with you." "That I will presently tell you," says the stranger, very composedly. "Your name concerns me because I was sent here to tell Mr. Barnaby True that '*the Royal Sovereign is come in.*'"

To be sure our hero's heart jumped into his throat at those words. His pulse began beating at a tremendous rate, for here, indeed, was an adventure suddenly opening to him such as a man may read about in a book, but which he may hardly expect to befall him in the real happenings of his life. Had he been a wiser and an older man he might have declined the whole business, instead of walking blindly into that of which he could see neither the beginning nor the ending; but being barely one-and-twenty years of age, and possessing a sanguine temper and an adventurous disposition that would have carried him into almost anything that possessed a smack of uncertainty or danger, he contrived to say, in a pretty easy tone (though God knows how it was put on for the occasion):

"Well, if that be so, and if the *Royal Sovereign* is indeed come in, why, then, I'll join you, since you are so kind as to ask me." Therewith he arose and went across to the other table, carrying his pipe with him, and sat down and began smoking, with all the appearance of ease he could command upon the occasion.

At this the other burst out a-laughing. "Indeed," says he, "you are a cool blade, and a chip of the old block. But harkee, young gentleman," and here he fell serious again. "This is too weighty a business to chance any mistake in a name. I believe that you are,

as you say, Mr. Barnaby True; but, nevertheless, to make perfectly sure, I must ask you first to show me a note that you have about you and which you are instructed to show to me."

Page 41

"Very well," said Barnaby; "I have it here safe and sound, and you shall see it." And thereupon and without more ado he drew out his wallet, opened it, and handed the other the mysterious note which he had kept carefully by him ever since he had received it. His interlocutor took the paper, and drawing to him the candle, burning there for the convenience of those who would smoke tobacco, began immediately reading it.

This gave Barnaby True a moment or two to look at him. He was a tall, lean man with a red handkerchief tied around his neck, with a queue of red hair hanging down his back, and with copper buckles on his shoes, so that Barnaby True could not but suspect that he was the very same man who had given the note to Miss Eliza Bolles at the door of his lodging-house.

"'Tis all right and straight and as it should be," the other said, after he had so examined the note. "And now that the paper is read" (suiting his action to his words), "I'll just burn it for safety's sake."

And so he did, twisting it up and setting it to the flame of the candle. "And now," he said, continuing his address, "I'll tell you what I am here for. I was sent to ask if you're man enough to take your life in your hands and to go with me in that boat down yonder at the foot of the garden. Say 'Yes,' and we'll start away without wasting more time, for the devil is ashore here at Jamaica—though you don't know what that means—and if he gets ahead of us, why then we may whistle for what we are after, for all the good 'twill do us. Say 'No,' and I go away, and I promise you you shall never be troubled more in this sort of a way. So now speak up plain, young gentleman, and tell us what is your wish in this business, and whether you will adventure any further or no."

If our hero hesitated it was not for long, and when he spoke up it was with a voice as steady as could be.

"To be sure I'm man enough to go with you," says he; "and if you mean me any harm I can look out for myself; and if I can't, then here is something can look out for me." And therewith he lifted up the flap of his pocket and showed the butt of a pistol he had fetched with him when he had set out from his lodging-house that evening.

At this the other burst out a-laughing for a second time. "Come," says he; "you are indeed of right mettle, and I like your spirit. All the same, no one in all the world means you less ill than I, and so, if you have to use that barker, 'twill not be upon us who are your friends, but only upon one who is more wicked than the devil himself. So now if you are prepared and have made up your mind and are determined to see this affair through to the end, 'tis time for us to be away." Whereupon, our hero indicating his acquiescence, his interlocutor and the others (who had not spoken a single word for all this time), rose together from the table, and the stranger having paid the scores of all,

they went down together to the boat that lay plainly awaiting their coming at the bottom of the garden.

Page 42

Thus coming to it, our hero could see that it was a large yawl-boat manned by half a score of black men for rowers, and that there were two lanterns in the stern-sheets, and three or four shovels.

The man who had conducted the conversation with Barnaby True for all this time, and who was, as has been said, plainly the captain of the expedition, stepped immediately down into the boat; our hero followed, and the others followed after him; and instantly they were seated the boat shoved off and the black men began pulling straight out into the harbor, and so, at some distance away, around under the stern of the man-of-war.

Not a word was spoken after they had thus left the shore, and they might all have been so many spirits for the silence of the party. Barnaby True was too full of his own thoughts to talk (and serious enough thoughts they were by this time, with crimps to trepan a man at every turn, and press-gangs to carry him off so that he might never be heard of again). As for the others, they did not seem to choose to say anything now that they had been fairly embarked upon their enterprise, and so the crew pulled away for the best part of an hour, the leader of the expedition directing the course of the boat straight across the harbor, as though towards the mouth of the Cobra River. Indeed, this was their destination, as Barnaby could after a while see for himself, by the low point of land with a great, long row of cocoanut-palms growing upon it (the appearance of which he knew very well), which by-and-by began to loom up from the dimness of the moonlight. As they approached the river they found the tide was running very violently, so that it gurgled and rippled alongside the boat as the crew of black men pulled strongly against it. Thus rowing slowly against the stream they came around what appeared to be either a point of land or an islet covered with a thick growth of mangrove-trees; though still no one spoke a single word as to their destination, or what was the business they had in hand.

The night, now that they had come close to the shore, appeared to be full of the noises of running tide-water, and the air was heavy with the smell of mud and marsh. And over all was the whiteness of the moonlight, with a few stars pricking out here and there in the sky; and everything was so strange and mysterious and so different from anything that he had experienced before that Barnaby could not divest himself of the feeling that it was all a dream from which at any moment he might awaken. As for the town and the Ordinary he had quitted such a short time before, so different were they from this present experience, it was as though they might have concerned another life than that which he was then enjoying.

Meantime, the rowers bending to the oars, the boat drew slowly around into the open water once more. As it did so the leader of the expedition of a sudden called out in a loud, commanding voice, whereat the black men instantly ceased rowing and lay on their oars, the boat drifting onward into the night.

Page 43

At the same moment of time our hero became aware of another boat coming down the river towards where they lay. This other boat, approaching thus strangely through the darkness, was full of men, some of them armed; for even in the distance Barnaby could not but observe that the light of the moon glimmered now and then as upon the barrels of muskets or pistols. This threw him into a good deal of disquietude of mind, for whether they or this boat were friends or enemies, or as to what was to happen next, he was altogether in the dark.

Upon this point, however, he was not left very long in doubt, for the oarsmen of the approaching boat continuing to row steadily onward till they had come pretty close to Barnaby and his companions, a man who sat in the stern suddenly stood up, and as they passed by shook a cane at Barnaby's companion with a most threatening and angry gesture. At the same moment, the moonlight shining full upon him, Barnaby could see him as plain as daylight—a large, stout gentleman with a round red face, and clad in a fine, laced coat of red cloth. In the stern of the boat near by him was a box or chest about the bigness of a middle-sized travelling-trunk, but covered all over with cakes of sand and dirt. In the act of passing, the gentleman, still standing, pointed at this chest with his cane—an elegant gold-headed staff—and roared out in a loud voice: “Are you come after this, Abram Dowling? Then come and take it.” And thereat, as he sat down again, burst out a-laughing as though what he had said was the wittiest jest conceivable.

Either because he respected the armed men in the other boat, or else for some reason best known to himself, the Captain of our hero's expedition did not immediately reply, but sat as still as any stone. But at last, the other boat having drifted pretty far away, he suddenly found words to shout out after it: “Very well, Jack Malyoe! Very well, Jack Malyoe! You've got the better of us once more. But next time is the third, and then it'll be our turn, even if William Brand must come back from the grave to settle with you himself.”

But to this my fine gentleman in t'other boat made no reply except to burst out once more into a great fit of laughter.

There was, however, still another man in the stern of the enemy's boat—a villanous, lean man with lantern-jaws, and the top of his head as bald as an apple. He held in his hand a great pistol, which he flourished about him, crying out to the gentleman beside him, “Do but give me the word, your honor, and I'll put another bullet through the son of a sea cook.” But the other forbade him, and therewith the boat presently melted away into the darkness of the night and was gone.

This happened all in a few seconds, so that before our hero understood what was passing he found the boat in which he still sat drifting silently in the moonlight (for no one spoke for awhile) and the oars of the other boat sounding farther and farther away into the distance.

Page 44

By-and-by says one of those in Barnaby's boat, in Spanish, "Where shall you go now?"

At this the leader of the expedition appeared suddenly to come back to himself and to find his tongue again. "Go?" he roared out. "Go to the devil! Go? Go where you choose! Go? Go back again—that's where well go!" And therewith he fell a-cursing and swearing, frothing at the lips as though he had gone clean crazy, while the black men, bending once more to their oars, rowed back again across the harbor as fast as ever they could lay oars to the water.

They put Barnaby True ashore below the old custom-house, but so bewildered and amazed by all that had happened, and by what he had seen, and by the names he had heard spoken, that he was only half conscious of the familiar things among which he suddenly found himself transported. The moonlight and the night appeared to have taken upon them a new and singular aspect, and he walked up the street towards his lodging like one drunk or in a dream. For you must remember that "John Malyoe" was the captain of the *Adventure* galley—he who had shot Barnaby's own grandfather—and "Abram Dowling," I must tell you, had been the gunner of the *Royal Sovereign*—he who had been shot at the same time that Captain Brand met his tragical end. And yet these names he had heard spoken—the one from one boat, and the other from the other, so that he could not but wonder what sort of beings they were among whom he had fallen.

As to that box covered all over with mud, he could only offer a conjecture as to what it contained and as to what the finding of it signified.

But of this our hero said nothing to any one, nor did he tell any one what he suspected, for, though he was so young in years, he possessed a continent disposition inherited from his father (who had been one of ten children born to a poor but worthy Presbyterian minister of Bluefield, Connecticut), so it was that not even to his good friend Mr. Greenfield did Barnaby say a word as to what had happened to him, going about his business the next day as though nothing of moment had occurred.

But he was not destined yet to be done with those beings among whom he had fallen that night; for that which he supposed to be the ending of the whole affair was only the beginning of further adventures that were soon to befall him.

IV

Mr. Greenfield lived in a fine brick house just outside of the town, on the Mona Road. His family consisted of a wife and two daughters— handsome, lively young ladies with very fine, bright teeth that shone whenever they laughed, and with a-plenty to say for themselves. To this pleasant house Barnaby True was often asked to a family dinner, after which he and his good kind host would maybe sit upon the veranda, looking out

towards the mountain, smoking their cigarros while the young ladies laughed and talked, or played upon the guitar and sang.

Page 45

A day or two before the *Belle Helen* sailed from Kingston, upon her return voyage to New York, Mr. Greenfield stopped Barnaby True as he was passing through the office, and begged him to come to dinner that night. (For within the tropics, you are to know, they breakfast at eleven o'clock and take dinner in the cool of the evening, because of the heat, and not at mid-day, as we do in more temperate latitudes). "I would," says Mr. Greenfield, "have you meet Sir John Malyoe and Miss Marjorie, who are to be your chief passengers for New York, and for whom the state cabin and the two state-rooms are to be fitted as here ordered"—showing a letter—"for Sir John hath arranged," says Mr. Greenfield, "for the Captain's own state-room."

Then, not being aware of Barnaby True's history, nor that Captain Brand was his grandfather, the good gentleman—calling Sir John "Jack" Malyoe—goes on to tell our hero what a famous pirate he had been, and how it was he who had shot Captain Brand over t'other side of the harbor twenty years before. "Yes," says he, "'tis the same Jack Malyoe, though grown into repute and importance now, as who would not who hath had the good-fortune to fall heir to a baronetcy and a landed estate?"

And so it befell that same night that Barnaby True once again beheld the man who had murdered his own grandfather, meeting him this time face to face.

That time in the harbor he had seen Sir John Malyoe at a distance and in the darkness; now that he beheld him closer, it seemed to him that he had never seen a countenance more distasteful to him in all his life. Not that the man was altogether ugly, for he had a good enough nose and a fine double chin; but his eyes stood out from his face and were red and watery, and he winked them continually, as though they were always a-smarting. His lips were thick and purple-red, and his cheeks mottled here and there with little clots of veins.

When he spoke, his voice rattled in his throat to such a degree that it made one wish to clear one's own throat to listen to him. So, what with a pair of fat, white hands, and that hoarse voice, and his swollen face, and his thick lips a-sticking out, it appeared to Barnaby True he had never beheld a countenance that pleased him so little.

But if Sir John Malyoe suited our hero's taste so ill, the granddaughter was in the same degree pleasing to him. She had a thin, fair skin, red lips, and yellow hair—though it was then powdered pretty white for the occasion—and the bluest eyes that ever he beheld in all of his life. A sweet, timid creature, who appeared not to dare so much as to speak a word for herself without looking to that great beast, her grandfather, for leave to do so, for she would shrink and shudder whenever he would speak of a sudden to her or direct a glance upon her. When she did pluck up sufficient courage to say anything, it was in so low a voice that Barnaby was obliged to bend his head to hear her; and when she smiled she would as like as not catch herself short and look up as though to see if she did amiss to be cheerful.

Page 46

As for Sir John, he sat at dinner and gobbled and ate and drank, smacking his lips all the while, but with hardly a word of civility either to Mr. Greenfield or to Mrs. Greenfield or to Barnaby True; but wearing all the while a dull, sullen air, as though he would say, "Your damned victuals and drink are no better than they should be, but, such as they are, I must eat 'em or eat nothing."

It was only after dinner was over and the young lady and the two misses off in a corner together that Barnaby heard her talk with any degree of ease. Then, to be sure, her tongue became loose enough, and she prattled away at a great rate; though hardly above her breath. Then of a sudden her grand-father called out, in his hoarse, rattling voice, that it was time to go, upon which she stopped short in what she was saying and jumped up from her chair, looking as frightened as though he were going to strike her with that gold-headed cane of his that he always carried with him.

Barnaby True and Mr. Greenfield both went out to see the two into their coach, where Sir John's man stood holding the lantern. And who should he be, to be sure, but that same lean villain with bald head who had offered to shoot the Captain of Barnaby's expedition out on the harbor that night! For one of the circles of light shining up into his face, Barnaby True knew him the moment he clapped eyes upon him. Though he could not have recognized our hero, he grinned at him in the most impudent, familiar fashion, and never so much as touched his hat either to him or to Mr. Greenfield; but as soon as his master and his young mistress had entered the coach, banged to the door and scrambled up on the seat alongside the driver, and so away without a word, but with another impudent grin, this time favoring both Barnaby and the old gentleman.

Such were Sir John Malyoe and his man, and the ill opinion our hero conceived of them was only confirmed by further observation.

The next day Sir John Malyoe's travelling-cases began to come aboard the *Belle Helen*, and in the afternoon that same lean, villanous man-servant comes skipping across the gangplank as nimble as a goat, with two black men behind him lugging a great sea-chest. "What!" he cries out, "and so you is the supercargo, is you? Why, to be sure, I thought you was more account when I saw you last night a-sitting talking with his honor like his equal. Well, no matter," says he, "'tis something to have a brisk, genteel young fellow for a supercargo. So come, my hearty, lend a hand and help me set his honor's cabin to rights."

What a speech was this to endure from such a fellow! What with our hero's distaste for the villain, and what with such odious familiarity, you may guess into what temper so impudent an address must have cast him. Says he, "You'll find the steward in yonder, and he'll show you the cabin Sir John is to occupy." Therewith he turned and walked away with prodigious dignity, leaving the other standing where he was.

Page 47

As he went below to his own state-room he could not but see, out of the tail of his eye, that the fellow was still standing where he had left him, regarding him with a most evil, malevolent countenance, so that he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had an enemy aboard for that voyage who was not very likely to forgive or forget what he must regard as so mortifying a slight as that which Barnaby had put upon him.

The next day Sir John Malyoe himself came aboard, accompanied by his granddaughter, and followed by his man, and he followed again by four black men, who carried among them two trunks, not large in size, but vastly heavy in weight. Towards these two trunks Sir John and his follower devoted the utmost solicitude and care to see that they were properly carried into the cabin he was to occupy. Barnaby True was standing in the saloon as they passed close by him; but though Sir John looked hard at him and straight in the face, he never so much as spoke a single word to our hero, or showed by a look or a sign that he had ever met him before. At this the serving-man, who saw it all with eyes as quick as a cat's, fell to grinning and chuckling to see Barnaby in his turn so slighted.

The young lady, who also saw it, blushed as red as fire, and thereupon delivered a courtesy to poor Barnaby, with a most sweet and gracious affability.

There were, besides Sir John and the young lady, but two other passengers who upon this occasion took the voyage to New York: the Reverend Simon Styles, master of a flourishing academy at Spanish Town, and his wife. This was a good, worthy couple of an extremely quiet disposition, saying little or nothing, but contented to sit in the great cabin by the hour together reading in some book or other. So, what with the retiring humor of the worthy pair, and what with Sir John Malyoe's fancy for staying all the time shut up in his own cabin with those two trunks he held so precious, it fell upon Barnaby True in great part to show that attention to the young lady that the circumstances demanded. This he did with a great deal of satisfaction to himself—as any one may suppose who considers a spirited young man of one-and-twenty years of age and a sweet and beautiful young miss of seventeen or eighteen thrown thus together day after day for above two weeks.

Accordingly, the weather being very fair and the ship driving freely along before a fine breeze, and they having no other occupation than to sit talking together all day, gazing at the blue sea and the bright sky overhead, it is not difficult to conceive of what was to befall.

But oh, those days when a man is young and, whether wisely or no, fallen into such a transport of passion as poor Barnaby True suffered at that time! How often during that voyage did our hero lie awake in his berth at night, tossing this way and that without finding any refreshment of sleep—perhaps all because her hand had touched his, or because she had spoken some word to him that had possessed him with a ravishing disquietude?

Page 48

All this might not have befallen him had Sir John Malyoe looked after his granddaughter instead of locking himself up day and night in his own cabin, scarce venturing out except to devour his food or maybe to take two or three turns across the deck before returning again to the care of those chests he appeared to hold so much more precious than his own flesh and blood.

Nor was it to be supposed that Barnaby would take the pains to consider what was to become of it all, for what young man so situated as he but would be perfectly content to live so agreeably in a fool's paradise, satisfying himself by assigning the whole affair to the future to take care of itself. Accordingly, our hero endeavored, and with pretty good success, to put away from him whatever doubts might arise in his own mind concerning what he was about, satisfying himself with making his conversation as agreeable to his companion as it lay in his power to do.

So the affair continued until the end of the whole business came with a suddenness that promised for a time to cast our hero into the utmost depths of humiliation and despair.

At that time the *Belle Helen* was, according to Captain Manly's reckoning, computed that day at noon, bearing about five-and-fifty leagues northeast-by-east off the harbor of Charleston, in South Carolina.

Nor was our hero likely to forget for many years afterwards even the smallest circumstance of that occasion. He may remember that it was a mightily sweet, balmy evening, the sun not having set above half an hour before, and the sky still suffused with a good deal of brightness, the air being extremely soft and mild. He may remember with the utmost nicety how they were leaning over the rail of the vessel looking out towards the westward, she fallen mightily quiet as though occupied with very serious thoughts.

Of a sudden she began, without any preface whatever, to speak to Barnaby about herself and her affairs, in a most confidential manner, such as she had never used to him before. She told him that she and her grandfather were going to New York that they might take passage thence to Boston, in Massachusetts, where they were to meet her cousin Captain Malyoe, who was stationed in garrison at that place. Continuing, she said that Captain Malyoe was the next heir to the Devonshire estate, and that she and he were to be married in the fall.

You may conceive into what a confusion of distress such a confession as this, delivered so suddenly, must have cast poor Barnaby. He could answer her not a single word, but stood staring in another direction than hers, endeavoring to compose himself into some equanimity of spirit. For indeed it was a sudden, terrible blow, and his breath came as hot and dry as ashes in his throat. Meanwhile the young lady went on to say, though in a mightily constrained voice, that she had liked him from the very first moment she had seen him, and had been very happy for these days she had passed in his society, and

that she would always think of him as a dear friend who had been very kind to her, who had so little pleasure in her life.

Page 49

At last Barnaby made shift to say, though in a hoarse and croaking voice, that Captain Malyoe must be a very happy man, and that if he were in Captain Malyoe's place he would be the happiest man in the world. Thereupon, having so found his voice, he went on to tell her, though in a prodigious confusion and perturbation of spirit, that he too loved her, and that what she had told him struck him to the heart, and made him the most miserable, unhappy wretch in the whole world.

She exhibited no anger at what he said, nor did she turn to look at him, but only replied, in a low voice, that he should not talk so, for that it could only be a pain to them both to speak of such things, and that whether she would or no, she must do everything her grandfather bade her, he being indeed a terrible man.

To this poor Barnaby could only repeat that he loved her with all his heart, that he had hoped for nothing in his love, but that he was now the most miserable man in the world.

It was at this moment, so momentous to our hero, that some one who had been hiding unseen nigh them for all the while suddenly moved away, and Barnaby, in spite of the gathering darkness, could perceive that it was that villain man-servant of Sir John Malyoe's. Nor could he but know that the wretch must have overheard all that had been said.

As he looked he beheld this fellow go straight to the great cabin, where he disappeared with a cunning leer upon his face, so that our hero could not but be aware that the purpose of the eavesdropper must be to communicate all that he had overheard to his master. At this thought the last drop of bitterness was added to his trouble, for what could be more distressing to any man of honor than to possess the consciousness that such a wretch should have overheard so sacred a conversation as that which he had enjoyed with the young lady. She, upon her part, could not have been aware that the man had listened to what she had been saying, for she still continued leaning over the rail, and Barnaby remained standing by her side, without moving, but so distracted by a tumult of many passions that he knew not how or where to look.

After a pretty long time of this silence, the young lady looked up to see why her companion had not spoken for so great a while, and at that very moment Sir John Malyoe comes flinging out of the cabin without his hat, but carrying his gold-headed cane. He ran straight across the deck towards where Barnaby and the young lady stood, swinging his cane this way and that with a most furious and threatening countenance, while the informer, grinning like an ape, followed close at his heels. As Sir John approached them, he cried out in so loud a voice that all on deck might have heard him, "You hussy!" (And all the time, you are to remember, he was swinging his cane as though he would have struck the young lady, who, upon her part, shrank back from him almost upon the deck as though to escape such a blow.) "You hussy! What do you do here, talking with a misbred Yankee supercargo not fit for a gentlewoman to wipe her feet upon, and you stand there and listen to his fool talk! Go to your room, you

hussy”—only ’twas something worse he called her this time—“before I lay this cane across you!”

Page 50

You may suppose into what fury such words as these, spoken in Barnaby's hearing, not to mention that vile slur set upon himself, must have cast our hero. To be sure he scarcely knew what he did, but he put his hand against Sir John Malyoe's breast and thrust him back most violently, crying out upon him at the same time for daring so to threaten a young lady, and that for a farthing he would wrench the stick out of his hand and throw it overboard.

A little farther and Sir John would have fallen flat upon the deck with the push Barnaby gave him. But he contrived, by catching hold of the rail, to save his balance. Whereupon, having recovered himself, he came running at our hero like a wild beast, whirling his cane about, and I do believe would have struck him (and God knows then what might have happened) had not his man-servant caught him and held him back.

"Keep back!" cried out our hero, still mighty hoarse. "Keep back! If you strike me with that stick I'll fling you overboard!"

By this time, what with the sound of loud voices and the stamping of feet, some of the crew and others aboard were hurrying up to the scene of action. At the same time Captain Manly and the first mate, Mr. Freesden, came running out of the cabin. As for our hero, having got set agoing, he was not to be stopped so easily.

"And who are you, anyhow," he cries, his voice mightily hoarse even in his own ears, "to threaten to strike me! You may be a bloody pirate, and you may shoot a man from behind, as you shot poor Captain Brand on the Cobra River, but you won't dare strike me face to face. I know who you are and what you are!"

As for Sir John Malyoe, had he been struck of a sudden by palsy, he could not have stopped more dead short in his attack upon our hero. There he stood, his great, bulging eyes staring like those of a fish, his face as purple as a cherry. As for Master Informer, Barnaby had the satisfaction of seeing that he had stopped his grinning by now and was holding his master's arm as though to restrain him from any further act of violence.

By this time Captain Manly had come bustling up and demanded to know what all the disturbance meant. Whereupon our hero cried out, still in the extremity of passion:

"The villain insulted me and insulted the young lady; he threatened to strike me with his cane. But he sha'n't strike me. I know who he is and what he is. I know what he's got in his cabin in those two trunks, and I know where he found it, and whom it belongs to."

At this Captain Manly clapped his hand upon our hero's shoulder and fell to shaking him so that he could hardly stand, crying out to him the while to be silent. Says he: "How do you dare, an officer of this ship, to quarrel with a passenger of mine! Go straight to your cabin, and stay there till I give you leave to come out again."

At this Master Barnaby came somewhat back to himself. "But he threatened to strike me with his cane," he says, "and that I won't stand from any man!"

Page 51

"No matter for that," says Captain Manly, very sternly. "Go to your cabin, as I bid you, and stay there till I tell you to come out again, and when we get to New York I'll take pains to inform your step-father of how you have behaved. I'll have no such rioting as this aboard my ship."

By this time, as you may suppose, the young lady was gone. As for Sir John Malyoe, he stood in the light of a lantern, his face that had been so red now gone as white as ashes, and if a look could kill, to be sure he would have destroyed Barnaby True where he stood.

It was thus that the events of that memorable day came to a conclusion. How little did any of the actors of the scene suspect that a portentous Fate was overhanging them, and was so soon to transform all their present circumstances into others that were to be perfectly different!

And how little did our hero suspect what was in store for him upon the morrow, as with hanging head he went to his cabin, and shutting the door upon himself, and flinging himself down upon his berth, there yielded himself over to the profoundest depths of humiliation and despair.

V

From his melancholy meditations Barnaby, by-and-by and in spite of himself, began dropping off into a loose slumber, disturbed by extravagant dreams of all sorts, in which Sir John Malyoe played some important and malignant part.

From one of these dreams he was aroused to meet a new and startling fate, by hearing the sudden and violent explosion of a pistol-shot ring out as though in his ears. This was followed immediately by the sound of several other shots exchanged in rapid succession as coming from the deck above. At the same instant a blow of such excessive violence shook the *Belle Helen* that the vessel heeled over before it, and Barnaby was at once aware that another craft—whether by accident or with intention he did not know—must have run afoul of them.

Upon this point, and as to whether or not the collision was designed, he was, however, not left a moment in doubt, for even as the *Belle Helen* righted to her true keel, there was the sound of many footsteps running across the deck and down into the great cabin. Then proceeded a prodigious uproar of voices, together with the struggling of men's bodies being tossed about, striking violently against the partitions and bulkheads. At the same instant arose a screaming of women's voices, and one voice, that of Sir John Malyoe, crying out as in the greatest extremity: "You villains! You damned villains!" and with that the sudden detonation of a pistol fired into the close space of the great cabin.

Page 52

Long before this time Barnaby was out in the middle of his own cabin. Taking only sufficient time to snatch down one of the pistols that hung at the head of his berth, he flung out into the great cabin, to find it as black as night, the lantern slung there having been either blown out or dashed out into darkness. All was as black as coal, and the gloom was filled with a hubbub of uproar and confusion, above which sounded continually the shrieking of women's voices. Nor had our hero taken above a couple of steps before he pitched headlong over two or three men struggling together upon the deck, falling with a great clatter and the loss of his pistol, which, however, he regained almost immediately.

What all the uproar portended he could only guess, but presently hearing Captain Manly's voice calling out, "You bloody pirate, would you choke me to death?" he became immediately aware of what had befallen the *Belle Helen*, and that they had been attacked by some of those buccaneers who at that time infested the waters of America in prodigious numbers.

It was with this thought in his mind that, looking towards the companionway, he beheld, outlined against the darkness of the night without, the form of a man's figure, standing still and motionless as a statue in the midst of all this tumult, and thereupon, as by some instinct, knew that that must be the master-maker of all this devil's brew. Therewith, still kneeling upon the deck, he covered the bosom of that figure point-blank, as he supposed, with his pistol, and instantly pulled the trigger.

In the light of the pistol fire, Barnaby had only sufficient opportunity to distinguish a flat face wearing a large pair of mustachios, a cocked hat trimmed with gold lace, a red scarf, and brass buttons. Then the darkness, very thick and black, again swallowed everything.

But if our hero failed to clearly perceive the countenance towards which he had discharged his weapon, there was one who appeared to have recognized some likeness in it, for Sir John Malyoe's voice, almost at Barnaby's elbow, cried out thrice in loud and violent tones, "William Brand! William Brand! William Brand!" and thereat came the sound of some heavy body falling down upon the deck.

This was the last that our hero may remember of that notable attack, for the next moment whether by accident or design he never knew, he felt himself struck so terrible a blow upon the side of the head, that he instantly swooned dead away and knew no more.

VI

When Barnaby True came back to his senses again, it was to become aware that he was being cared for with great skill and nicety, that his head had been bathed with cold

water, and that a bandage was being bound about it as carefully as though a surgeon was attending to him.

Page 53

He had been half conscious of people about him, but could not immediately recall what had happened to him, nor until he had opened his eyes to find himself in a perfectly strange cabin of narrow dimensions but extremely well fitted and painted with white and gold. By the light of a lantern shining in his eyes, together with the gray of the early day through the deadlight, he could perceive that two men were bending over him—one, a negro in a striped shirt, with a yellow handkerchief around his head and silver ear-rings in his ears; the other, a white man, clad in a strange, outlandish dress of a foreign make, with great mustachios hanging down below his chin, and with gold ear-rings in his ears.

It was this last who was attending to Barnaby's hurt with such extreme care and gentleness.

All this Barnaby saw with his first clear consciousness after his swoon. Then remembering what had befallen him, and his head beating as though it would split asunder, he shut his eyes again, contriving with great effort to keep himself from groaning aloud, and wondering as to what sort of pirates these could be, who would first knock a man in the head so terrible a blow as that which he had suffered, and then take such care to fetch him back to life again, and to make him easy and comfortable.

Nor did he open his eyes again, but lay there marvelling thus until the bandage was properly tied about his head and sewed together. Then once more he opened his eyes and looked up to ask where he was.

Upon hearing him speak, his attendants showed excessive signs of joy, nodding their heads and smiling at him as though to reassure him. But either because they did not choose to reply, or else because they could not speak English, they made no answer, excepting by those signs and gestures. The white man, however, made several motions that our hero was to arise, and, still grinning and nodding his head, pointed as though towards a saloon beyond. At the same time the negro held up our hero's coat and beckoned for him to put it on. Accordingly Barnaby, seeing that it was required of him to quit the place in which he then lay, arose, though with a good deal of effort, and permitted the negro to help him on with his coat, though feeling mightily dizzy and much put about to keep upon his legs—his head beating fit to split asunder and the vessel rolling and pitching at a great rate, as though upon a heavy cross-sea.

So, still sick and dizzy, he went out into what he found was, indeed, a fine saloon beyond, painted in white and gilt like the cabin he had just quitted. This saloon was fitted in the most excellent taste imaginable. A table extended the length of the room, and a quantity of bottles, and glasses clear as crystal, were arranged in rows in a hanging rack above.

Page 54

But what most attracted our hero's attention was a man sitting with his back to him, his figure clad in a rough pea-jacket, and with a red handkerchief tied around his throat. His feet were stretched under the table out before him, and he was smoking a pipe of tobacco with all the ease and comfort imaginable. As Barnaby came in he turned round, and, to the profound astonishment of our hero, presented to him in the light of the lantern, the dawn shining pretty strong through the skylight, the face of that very man who had conducted the mysterious expedition that night across Kingston Harbor to the Cobra River.

VII

This man looked steadily at Barnaby True for above half a minute and then burst out a-laughing. And, indeed, Barnaby, standing there with the bandage about his head, must have looked a very droll picture of that astonishment he felt so profoundly at finding who was this pirate into whose hands he had fallen. "Well," says the other, "and so you be up at last, and no great harm done, I'll be bound. And how does your head feel by now, my young master?"

To this Barnaby made no reply, but, what with wonder and the dizziness of his head, seated himself at the table over against his interlocutor, who pushed a bottle of rum towards him, together with a glass from the hanging rack. He watched Barnaby fill his glass, and so soon as he had done so began immediately by saying: "I do suppose you think you were treated mightily ill to be so handled last night. Well, so you were treated ill enough, though who hit you that crack upon the head I know no more than a child unborn. Well, I am sorry for the way you were handled, but there is this much to say, and of that you may feel well assured, that nothing was meant to you but kindness, and before you are through with us all you will believe that without my having to tell you so."

Here he helped himself to a taste of grog, and sucking in his lips went on again with what he had to say. "Do you remember," says he, "that expedition of ours in Kingston Harbor, and how we were all of us balked that night?" then, without waiting for Barnaby's reply: "And do you remember what I said to that villain Jack Malyoe that night as his boat went by us? I says to him, 'Jack Malyoe,' says I, 'you've got the better of us once again, but next time it will be our turn, even if William Brand himself has to come back from the grave to settle with you.'"

"I remember something of the sort," said Barnaby, "but I profess I am all in the dark as to what you are driving at."

At this the other burst out in a great fit of laughing. "Very well, then," said he, "this night's work is only the ending of what was so ill begun there. Look yonder"—pointing to a corner of the cabin—"and then maybe you will be in the dark no longer." Barnaby turned his head and there beheld in the corner of the saloon those very two travelling-

cases that Sir John Malyoe had been so particular to keep in his cabin and under his own eyes through all the voyage from Jamaica.

Page 55

"I'll show you what is in 'em," says the other, and thereupon arose, and Barnaby with him, and so went over to where the two travelling-cases stood.

Our hero had a strong enough suspicion as to what the cases contained. But, Lord! what were suspicions to what his two eyes beheld when that man lifted the lid of one of them—the locks thereof having already been forced—and, flinging it back, displayed to Barnaby's astonished and bedazzled sight a great treasure of gold and silver, some of it tied up in leathern bags, to be sure, but so many of the coins, big and little, yellow and white, lying loose in the cases as to make our hero think that a great part of the treasures of the Indies lay there before him.

"Well, and what do you think of that?" said the other. "Is it not enough for a man to turn pirate for?" and thereupon burst out a-laughing and clapped down the lid again. Then suddenly turning serious: "Come Master Barnaby," says he. "I am to have some very sober talk with you, so fill up your glass again and then we will heave at it."

Nor even in after years, nor in the light of that which afterwards occurred, could Barnaby repeat all that was said to him upon that occasion, for what with the pounding and beating of his aching head, and what with the wonder of what he had seen, he was altogether in the dark as to the greater part of what the other told him. That other began by saying that Barnaby, instead of being sorry that he was William Brand's grandson, might thank God for it; that he (Barnaby) had been watched and cared for for twenty years in more ways than he would ever know; that Sir John Malyoe had been watched also for all that while, and that it was a vastly strange thing that Sir John Malyoe's debts in England and Barnaby's coming of age should have brought them so together in Jamaica—though, after all, it was all for the best, as Barnaby himself should presently see, and thank God for that also. For now all the debts against that villain Jack Malyoe were settled in full, principal and interest, to the last penny, and Barnaby was to enjoy it the most of all. Here the fellow took a very comfortable sip of his grog, and then went on to say with a very cunning and knowing wink of the eye that Barnaby was not the only passenger aboard, but that there was another in whose company he would be glad enough, no doubt, to finish the balance of the voyage he was now upon. So now, if Barnaby was sufficiently composed, he should be introduced to that other passenger. Thereupon, without waiting for a reply, he incontinently arose and, putting away the bottle of rum and the glasses, went across the saloon—Barnaby watching him all the while like a man in a dream—and opened the door of a cabin like that which Barnaby had occupied a little while before. He was gone only for a moment, for almost immediately he came out again ushering a lady before him.

By now the daylight in the cabin was grown strong and clear, so that the light shining full upon her face, Barnaby True knew her the instant she appeared.

Page 56

It was Miss Marjorie Malyoe, very white, but strangely composed, showing no terror, either in her countenance or in her expression.

* * * * *

It would not be possible for the writer to give any clear idea of the circumstances of the days that immediately followed, and which, within a week, brought Barnaby True and the enchanting object of his affections at once to the ending of their voyage, and of all these marvellous adventures. For when, in after times, our hero would endeavor to revive a memory of the several occurrences that then transpired, they all appeared as though in a dream or a bewitching phantasm.

All that he could recall were long days of delicious enjoyment followed by nights of dreaming. But how enchanting those days! How exquisite the distraction of those nights!

Upon occasions he and his charmer might sit together under the shade of the sail for an hour at a stretch, he holding her hand in his and neither saying a single word, though at times the transports of poor Barnaby's emotions would go far to suffocate him with their rapture. As for her face at such moments, it appeared sometimes to assume a transparency as though of a light shining from behind her countenance.

The vessel in which they found themselves was a brigantine of good size and build, but manned by a considerable crew, the most strange and outlandish in their appearance that Barnaby had ever beheld. For some were white, some were yellow, and some were black, and all were tricked out with gay colors, and gold ear-rings in their ears, and some with long mustachios, and others with handkerchiefs tied around their heads. And all these spoke together a jargon of which Barnaby True could not understand a single word, but which might have been Portuguese from one or two phrases he afterwards remembered. Nor did this outlandish crew, of God knows what sort of men, address any of their conversation either to Barnaby or to the young lady. They might now and then have looked at him and her out of the corners of their yellow eyes, but that was all; otherwise they were, indeed, like the creatures of a dream. Only he who was commander of this strange craft, when he would come down into the saloon to mix a glass of grog or to light a pipe of tobacco, would maybe favor Barnaby with a few words concerning the weather or something of the sort, and then to go on deck again about his business.

Indeed, it may be affirmed with pretty easy security that no such adventure as this ever happened before; for here were these two innocent young creatures upon board of a craft that no one, under such circumstances as those recounted above, could doubt was a pirate or buccaneer, the crew whereof had seen no one knows what wicked deeds; yet they two as remote from all that and as profoundly occupied with the transports of their passion and as innocent in their satisfaction thereof as were Corydon and Phyllis

beside their purling streams and flowery meads, with nymphs and satyrs caracoling about them.

Page 57

VIII

It is probable that the polite reader of this veracious narrative, instead of considering it as the effort of the author to set before him a sober and well-digested history, has been all this while amusing himself by regarding it only as a fanciful tale designed for his entertainment. If this be so, the writer may hardly hope to convince him that what is to follow is a serious narrative of that which, though never so ingenuous in its recapitulation, is an altogether inexplicable phenomenon. Accordingly, it is with extraordinary hesitation that the scribe now invites the confidence of his reader in the succinct truth of that which he has to relate. It is in brief as follows:

That upon the last night of this part of his voyage, Barnaby True was awakened from slumber by flashes of lightning shining into his cabin, and by the loud pealing of approaching thunder. At the same time observing the sound of footsteps moving back and forth as in great agitation overhead, and the loud shouting of orders, he became aware that a violent squall of wind must be approaching the vessel. Being convinced of this he arose from his berth, dressed quickly, and hurried upon deck, where he found a great confusion of men running hither and thither and scrambling up and down the rigging like monkeys, while the Captain, and one whom he had come to know as the Captain's mate, were shouting out orders in a strange foreign jargon.

A storm was indeed approaching with great rapidity, a prodigious circle of rain and clouds whirling overhead like smoke, while the lightning, every now and then, flashed with intense brightness, followed by loud peals of thunder.

By these flashes of lightning Barnaby observed that they had made land during the night, for in the sudden glare of bright light he beheld a mountainous headland and a long strip of sandy beach standing out against the blackness of the night beyond. So much he was able to distinguish, though what coast it might be he could not tell, for presently another flash falling from the sky, he saw that the shore was shut out by the approaching downfall of rain.

This rain came presently streaming down upon them with a great gust of wind and a deal of white foam across the water. This violent gale of wind suddenly striking the vessel, careened it to one side so that for a moment it was with much ado that he was able to keep his feet at all. Indeed, what with the noise of the tempest through the rigging and the flashes of lightning and the pealing of the thunder and the clapping of an unfurled sail in the darkness, and the shouting of orders in a strange language by the Captain of the craft, who was running up and down like a bedlamite, it was like pandemonium with all the devils of the pit broke loose into the night.

Page 58

It was at this moment, and Barnaby True was holding to the back-stays, when a sudden, prolonged flash of lightning came after a continued space of darkness. So sharp and heavy was this shaft that for a moment the night was as bright as day, and in that instant occurred that which was so remarkable that it hath afforded the title of this story itself. For there, standing plain upon the deck and not far from the companionway, as though he had just come up from below, our hero beheld a figure the face of which he had seen so imperfectly once before by the flash of his own pistol in the darkness. Upon this occasion, however, the whole figure was stamped out with intense sharpness against the darkness, and Barnaby beheld, as clear as day, a great burly man, clad in a tawdry tinsel coat, with a cocked hat with gold braid upon his head. His legs, with petticoat breeches and cased in great leathern sea-boots pulled up to his knees, stood planted wide apart as though to brace against the slant of the deck. The face our hero beheld to be as white as dough, with fishy eyes and a bony forehead, on the side of which was a great smear as of blood.

All this, as was said, stood out as sharp and clear as daylight in that one flash of lightning, and then upon the instant was gone again, as though swallowed up into the darkness, while a terrible clap of thunder seemed to split the very heavens overhead and a strong smell as of brimstone filled the air around about.

At the same moment some voice cried out from the darkness, "William Brand, by God!"

Then, the rain clapping down in a deluge, Barnaby leaped into the saloon, pursued by he knew not what thoughts. For if that was indeed the image of old William Brand that he had seen once before and now again, then the grave must indeed have gaped and vomited out its dead into the storm of wind and lightning; for what he beheld that moment, he hath ever averred, he saw as clear as ever he saw his hand before his face.

This is the last account of which there is any record when the figure of Captain William Brand was beheld by the eyes of a living man. It must have occurred just off the Highlands below the Sandy Hook, for the next morning when Barnaby True came upon deck it was to find the sun shining brightly and the brigantine riding upon an even keel, at anchor off Staten Island, three or four cable-lengths distance from a small village on the shore, and the town of New York in plain sight across the water.

'Twas the last place in the world he had expected to see.

IX

And, indeed, it did seem vastly strange to lie there alongside Staten Island all that day, with New York town in plain sight across the water and yet so impossible to reach. For whether he desired to escape or no, Barnaby True could not but observe that both he

and the young lady were so closely watched that they might as well have been prisoners, tied hand and foot and laid in the hold, so far as any hope of getting away was concerned.

Page 59

Throughout that day there was a vast deal of mysterious coming and going aboard the brigantine, and in the afternoon a sail-boat went up to the town, carrying the Captain of the brigantine and a great load in the stern covered over with a tarpaulin. What was so taken up to the town Barnaby did not then guess, nor did he for a moment suspect of what vast importance it was to be for him.

About sundown the small boat returned, fetching the pirate Captain of the brigantine back again. Coming aboard and finding Barnaby on deck, the other requested him to come down into the saloon for he had a few serious words to say to him. In the saloon they found the young lady sitting, the broad light of the evening shining in through the skylight, and making it all pretty bright within.

The Captain commanded Barnaby to be seated, whereupon he chose a place alongside the young lady. So soon as he had composed himself the Captain began very seriously, with a preface somewhat thus: "Though you may think me the Captain of this brigantine, Master Barnaby True, I am not really so, but am under orders of a superior whom I have obeyed in all these things that I have done." Having said so much as this, he continued his address to say that there was one thing yet remaining for him to do, and that the greatest thing of all.

He said that this was something that both Barnaby and the young lady were to be called upon to perform, and he hoped that they would do their part willingly; but that whether they did it willingly or no, do it they must, for those also were the orders he had received.

You may guess how our hero was disturbed by this prologue. He had found the young lady's hand beneath the table and he now held it very closely in his own; but whatever might have been his expectations as to the final purport of the communications the other was about to favor him with, his most extreme expectations could not have equalled that which was demanded of him.

"My orders are these," said his interlocutor, continuing: "I am to take you and the young lady ashore, and to see that you are married before I quit you, and to that end a very good, decent, honest minister who lives ashore yonder in the village was chosen and hath been spoken to, and is now, no doubt, waiting for you to come. That is the last thing I am set to do; so now I will leave you and her young ladyship alone together for five minutes to talk it over, but be quick about it, for whether willing or not, this thing must be done."

Thereupon he incontinently went away, as he had promised, leaving those two alone together, our hero like one turned into stone, and the young lady, her face turned away, as red as fire, as Barnaby could easily distinguish by the fading light.

Page 60

Nor can I tell what Barnaby said to her, nor what words or arguments he used, for so great was the distraction of his mind and the tumult of his emotions that he presently discovered that he was repeating to her over and over again that God knew he loved her, and that with all his heart and soul, and that there was nothing in all the world for him but her. After which, containing himself sufficiently to continue his address, he told her that if she would not have it as the man had said, and if she were not willing to marry him as she was bidden to do, he would rather die a thousand, aye, ten thousand, deaths than lend himself to forcing her to do such a thing as this. Nevertheless, he told her she must speak up and tell him yes or no, and that God knew he would give all the world if she would say “yes.”

All this and much more he said in such a tumult that he was hardly aware of what he was speaking, and she sitting there, as though her breath stifled her. Nor did he know what she replied to him, only that she would marry him. Therewith he took her into his arms and for the first time set his lips to hers, in such a transport of ecstasy that everything seemed to his sight as though he were about to swoon.

So when the Captain returned to the saloon he found Barnaby sitting there holding her hand, she with her face turned away, and he so full of joy that the promise of heaven could not have made him happier.

The yawl-boat belonging to the brigantine was ready and waiting alongside when they came upon deck, and immediately they descended to it and took their seats. Reaching the shore, they landed, and walked up the village street in the twilight, she clinging to our hero's arm as though she would faint away. The Captain of the brigantine and two other men aboard accompanied them to the minister's house, where they found the good man waiting for them, smoking his pipe in the warm evening, and walking up and down in front of his own door. He immediately conducted them into the house, where, his wife having fetched a candle, and two others from the village being present, the good, pious man having asked several questions as to their names and their age and where they were from, and having added his blessing, the ceremony was performed, and the certificate duly signed by those present from the village—the men who had come ashore from the brigantine alone refusing to set their hands to any paper.

The same sail-boat that had taken the Captain up to the town was waiting for Barnaby and the young lady as they came down to the landing-place. There the Captain of the brigantine having wished them godspeed, and having shaken Barnaby very heartily by the hand, he helped to push off the boat, which with the slant of the wind presently sailed swiftly away, dropping the shore and those strange beings, and the brigantine in which they sailed, alike behind them into the night.

They could hear through the darkness the creaking of the sails being hoisted aboard of the pirate vessel; nor did Barnaby True ever set eyes upon it or the crew again, nor, so far as the writer is informed, did anybody else.

Page 61

X

It was nigh midnight when they made Mr. Hartright's wharf at the foot of Beaver Street. There Barnaby and the boatmen assisted the young lady ashore, and our hero and she walked up through the now silent and deserted street to Mr. Hartright's house.

You may conceive of the wonder and amazement of our hero's dear step-father when aroused by Barnaby's continued knocking at the street door, and clad in a dressing-gown and carrying a lighted candle in his hand, he unlocked and unbarred the door, and so saw who it was had aroused him at such an hour of the night, and beheld the young and beautiful lady whom Barnaby had brought home with him.

The first thought of the good man was that the *Belle Helen* had come into port; nor did Barnaby undeceive him as he led the way into the house, but waited until they were all safe and sound together before he should unfold his strange and wonderful story.

"This was left for you by two foreign sailors this afternoon, Barnaby," the good man said, as he led the way through the hall, holding up the candle at the same time, so that Barnaby might see an object that stood against the wainscoting by the door of the dining-room.

It was with difficulty that our hero could believe his eyes when he beheld one of the treasure-chests that Sir John Malyoe had fetched with such particularity from Jamaica.

He bade his step-father hold the light nigher, and then, his mother having come down-stairs by this time, he flung back the lid and displayed to the dazzled sight of all the great treasure therein contained.

You are to suppose that there was no sleep for any of them that night, for what with Barnaby's narrative of his adventures, and what with the thousand questions asked of him, it was broad daylight before he had finished the half of all that he had to relate.

The next day but one brought the *Belle Helen* herself into port, with the terrible news not only of having been attacked at night by pirates, but also that Sir John Malyoe was dead. For whether it was the sudden fright that upset him, or whether it was the strain of passion that burst some blood-vessel upon his brain, it is certain that when the pirates quitted the *Belle Helen*, carrying with them the young lady and Barnaby and the travelling-trunks, they left Sir John Malyoe lying in a fit upon the floor, frothing at the mouth and black in the face, as though he had been choked. It was in this condition that he was raised and taken to his berth, where, the next morning about two o'clock, he died, without once having opened his eyes or spoken a single word.

As for the villain man-servant, no one ever saw him afterwards; though whether he jumped overboard, or whether the pirates who so attacked the ship had carried him away bodily, who shall say?

Page 62

Mr. Hartright had been extremely perplexed as to the ownership of the chest of treasure that had been left by those men for Barnaby, but the news of the death of Sir John Malyoe made the matter very easy for him to decide. For surely if that treasure did not belong to Barnaby, there could be no doubt but that it belonged to his wife—she being Sir John Malyoe's legal heir. Thus it was that he satisfied himself, and thus that great fortune (in actual computation amounting to upward of sixty-three thousand pounds) fell to Barnaby True, the grandson of that famous pirate William Brand.

As for the other case of treasure, it was never heard of again, nor could Barnaby decide whether it was divided as booty among the pirates, or whether they had carried it away with them to some strange and foreign land, there to share it among themselves.

It is thus we reach the conclusion of our history, with only this to observe, that whether that strange appearance of Captain Brand was indeed a ghostly and spiritual visitation, or whether he was present on those two occasions in flesh and blood, he was, as has been said, never heard of again.

IV. A TRUE HISTORY OF THE DEVIL AT NEW HOPE

At the time of the beginning of the events about to be narrated—which the reader is to be informed occurred between the years 1740 and 1742— there stood upon the high and rugged crest of Pick-a-Neck-a-Sock Point (or Pig and Sow Point, as it had come to be called) the wooden ruins of a disused church, known throughout those parts as the Old Free Grace Meeting-house.

This humble edifice had been erected by a peculiar religious sect calling themselves the Free Grace Believers, the radical tenet of whose creed was a denial of the existence of such a place as Hell, and an affirmation of the universal mercy of God, to the intent that all souls should enjoy eternal happiness in the life to come.

For this dangerous heresy the Free Grace Believers were expelled from the Massachusetts Colony, and, after sundry peregrinations, settled at last in the Providence Plantations, upon Pick-a-Neck-a-Sock Point, coadjacent to the town of New Hope. There they built themselves a small cluster of huts, and a church wherein to worship; and there for a while they dwelt, earning a precarious livelihood from the ungenerous soil upon which they had established themselves.

As may be supposed, the presence of so strange a people was entertained with no great degree of complaisance by the vicinage, and at last an old deed granting Pick-a-Neck-a-Sock to Captain Isaiah Applebody was revived by the heirs of that renowned Indian-fighter, whereupon the Free Grace Believers were warned to leave their bleak and rocky refuge for some other abiding-place. Accordingly, driven forth into the world again, they embarked in the snow[1] "Good Companion," of Bristol, for the Province of

Pennsylvania, and were afterwards heard of no more in those parts. Their vacated houses crumbled away into ruins, and their church tottered to decay.

Page 63

[Footnote 1: A two-masted square-rigged vessel.]

So at the beginning of these events, upon the narrative of which the author now invites the reader to embark together with himself.

I

HOW THE DEVIL HAUNTED THE MEETING-HOUSE

At the period of this narrative the settlement of New Hope had grown into a very considerable seaport town, doing an extremely handsome trade with the West Indies in cornmeal and dried codfish for sugar, molasses, and rum.

Among the more important citizens of this now wealthy and elegant community, the most notable was Colonel William Belford—a magnate at once distinguished and honored in the civil and military affairs of the colony. This gentleman was an illegitimate son of the Earl of Clandennie by the daughter of a surgeon of the Sixty-seventh Regiment of Scots, and he had inherited a very considerable fortune upon the death of his father, from which he now enjoyed a comfortable competency.

Our Colonel made no little virtue of the circumstances of his exalted birth. He was wont to address his father's memory with a sobriety that lent to the fact of his illegitimacy a portentous air of seriousness, and he made no secret of the fact that he was the friend and the confidential correspondent of the present Earl of Clandennie. In his intercourse with the several Colonial governors he assumed an attitude of authority that only his lineage could have supported him in maintaining, and, possessing a large and commanding presence, he bore himself with a continent reserve that never failed to inspire with awe those whom he saw fit to favor with his conversation.

This noble and distinguished gentleman possessed in a brother an exact and perfect opposite to himself. Captain Obadiah Belford was a West Indian, an inhabitant of Kingston in the island of Jamaica. He was a cursing, swearing, hard-drinking renegade from virtue; an acknowledged dealer in negro slaves, and reputed to have been a buccaneer, if not an out-and-out pirate, such as then infested those tropical latitudes in prodigious numbers. He was not unknown in New Hope, which he had visited upon several occasions for a week or so at a time. During each period he lodged with his brother, whose household he scandalized by such freaks as smoking his pipe of tobacco in the parlor, offering questionable pleasantries to the female servants, and cursing and swearing in the hallways with a fecundity and an ingenuity that would have put the most godless sailor about the docks to the blush.

Accordingly, it may then be supposed into what a dismay it threw Colonel Belford when one fine day he received a letter from Captain Obadiah, in which our West Indian

desperado informed his brother that he proposed quitting those torrid latitudes in which he had lived for so long a time, and that he intended thenceforth to make his home in New Hope.

Page 64

Addressing Colonel Belford as “My dear Billy,” he called upon that gentleman to rejoice at this determination, and informed him that he proposed in future to live “as decent a limb of grace as ever broke loose from hell,” and added that he was going to fetch as a present for his niece Belinda a “dam pirty little black girl” to carry her prayer-book to church for her.

Accordingly, one fine morning, in pursuance of this promise, our West Indian suddenly appeared at New Hope with a prodigious quantity of chests and travelling-cases, and with so vociferous an acclamation that all the town knew of his arrival within a half-hour of that event.

When, however, he presented himself before Colonel Belford, it was to meet with a welcome so frigid and an address so reserved that a douche of cold water could not have quenched his verbosity more entirely. For our great man had no notion to submit to the continued infliction of the West Indian’s presence. Accordingly, after the first words of greeting had passed, he addressed Captain Obadiah in a strain somewhat after this fashion:

“Indeed, I protest, my dear brother Obadiah, it is with the heartiest regrets in the world that I find myself obliged to confess that I cannot offer you a home with myself and my family. It is not alone that your manners displease me—though, as an elder to a younger, I may say to you that we of these more northern latitudes do not entertain the same tastes in such particulars as doubtless obtain in the West Indies—but the habits of my household are of such a nature that I could not hope to form them to your liking. I can, however, offer as my advice that you may find lodgings at the Blue Lion Tavern, which doubtless will be of a sort exactly to fit your inclinations. I have made inquiries, and I am sure you will find the very best apartments to be obtained at that excellent hostelry placed at your disposal.”

To this astounding address our West Indian could, for a moment, make no other immediate reply than to open his eyes and to glare upon Colonel Belford, so that, what with his tall, lean person, his long neck, his stooping shoulders, and his yellow face stained upon one side an indigo blue by some premature explosion of gunpowder—what with all this and a prodigious hooked beak of a nose, he exactly resembled some hungry predatory bird of prey meditating a pounce upon an unsuspecting victim. At last, finding his voice, and rapping the ferrule of his ivory-headed cane upon the floor to emphasize his declamation, he cried out: “What! What! What! Is this the way to offer a welcome to a brother new returned to your house? Why, ——! who are you? Am not I your brother, who could buy you out twice over and have enough left to live in velvet? Why! Why!—Very well, then, have it your own way; but if I don’t grind your face into the mud and roll you into the dirt my name is not Obadiah Belford!” Thereupon, striving to say more but finding no fit words for the occasion, he swung upon his heel and incontinently departed, banging the door behind him like a clap of thunder, and

cursing and swearing so prodigiously as he strode away down the street that an infernal from the pit could scarcely have exceeded the fury of his maledictions.

Page 65

However, he so far followed Colonel Belford's advice that he took up his lodgings at the Blue Lion Tavern, where, in a little while, he had gathered about him a court of all such as chose to take advantage of his extravagant bounty.

Indeed, he poured out his money with incredible profusion, declaring, with many ingenious and self-consuming oaths, that he could match fortunes with the best two men in New Hope, and then have enough left to buy up his brother from his hair to his boot-leathers. He made no secret of the rebuff he had sustained from Colonel Belford, for his grievance clung to him like hot pitch—itching the more he meddled with it. Sometimes his fury was such that he could scarcely contain himself. Upon such occasions, cursing and swearing like an infernal, he would call Heaven to witness that he would live in New Hope if for no other reason than to bring shame to his brother, and he would declare again and again, with incredible variety of expletives, that he would grind his brother's face into the dirt for him.

[Illustration: "HE WOULD SHOUT OPPROBRIOUS WORDS AFTER THE OTHER IN THE STREETS"]

Accordingly he set himself assiduously at work to tease and torment the good man with every petty and malicious trick his malevolence could invent. He would shout opprobrious words after the other in the streets, to the entertainment of all who heard him; he would parade up and down before Colonel Belford's house singing obstreperous and unseemly songs at the top of his voice; he would even rattle the ferrule of his cane against the palings of the fence, or throw a stone at Madam Belford's cat in the wantonness of his malice.

Meantime he had purchased a considerable tract of land, embracing Pig and Sow Point, and including the Old Free Grace Meeting-House. Here, he declared, it was his intention to erect a house for himself that should put his brother's wooden shed to shame. Accordingly he presently began the erection of that edifice, so considerable in size and occupying so commanding a situation that it was the admiration of all those parts, and was known to fame as Belford's Palace. This magnificent residence was built entirely of brick, and Captain Obadiah made it a boast that the material therefor was brought all the way around from New York in flats. In the erection of this elegant structure all the carpenters and masons in the vicinage were employed, so that it grew up with an amazing rapidity. Meantime, upon the site of the building, rum and Hollands were kept upon draught for all comers, so that the place was made the common resort and the scene for the orgies of all such of the common people as possessed a taste for strong waters, many coming from so far away as Newport to enjoy our Captain's prodigality.

Meantime he himself strutted about the streets in his red coat trimmed with gilt braid, his hat cocked upon one side of his bony head, pleasing himself with the belief that he was the object of universal admiration, and swelling with a vast and consummate self-

satisfaction as he boasted, with strident voice and extravagant enunciation, of the magnificence of the palace he was building.

Page 66

At the same time, having, as he said, shingles to spare, he patched and repaired the Old Free Grace Meeting-House, so that its gray and hoary exterior, while rejuvenated as to the roof and walls, presented in a little while an appearance as of a sudden eruption of bright yellow shingles upon its aged hide. Nor would our Captain offer any other explanation for so odd a freak of fancy than to say that it pleased him to do as he chose with his own.

At last, the great house having been completed, and he himself having entered into it and furnished it to his satisfaction, our Captain presently began entertaining his friends therein with a profuseness of expenditure and an excess of extravagance that were the continued admiration of the whole colony. In more part the guests whom Captain Obadiah thus received with so lavish an indulgence were officers or government officials from the garrisons of Newport or of Boston, with whom, by some means or other, he had scraped an acquaintance. At times these gay gentlemen would fairly take possession of the town, parading up and down the street under conduct of their host, staring ladies out of countenance with the utmost coolness and effrontery, and offering loud and critical remarks concerning all that they beheld about them, expressing their opinions with the greatest freedom and jocularly.

Nor were the orgies at Belford's Palace limited to such extravagances as gaming and dicing and drinking, for sometimes the community would be scandalized by the presence of gayly dressed and high-colored ladies, who came, no one knew whence, to enjoy the convivialities at the great house on the hill, and concerning whom it pleased the respectable folk of New Hope to entertain the gravest suspicion.

At first these things raised such a smoke that nothing else was to be seen, but by-and-by other strange and singular circumstances began to be spoken of—at first among the common people, and then by others. It began to be whispered and then to be said that the Old Free Grace Meeting-House out on the Point was haunted by the Devil.

The first information concerning this dreadful obsession arose from a fisherman, who, coming into the harbor of a nightfall after a stormy day, had, as he affirmed, beheld the old meeting-house all of a blaze of light. Some time after, a tinker, making a short-cut from Stapleton by way of the old Indian road, had a view of a similar but a much more remarkable manifestation. This time, as the itinerant most solemnly declared, the meeting-house was not only seen all alight, but a bell was ringing as a signal somewhere off across the darkness of the water, where, as he protested, there suddenly appeared a red star, that, blazing like a meteor with a surpassing brightness for a few seconds, was presently swallowed up into inky darkness again. Upon another occasion a fiddler, returning home after midnight from Sprowle's Neck, seeing the church alight, had, with a temerity inflamed by rum, approached to a nearer distance, whence, lying in the grass, he had, he said, at the stroke of midnight, beheld a multitude of figures emerge from the building, crying most dolorously, and then had heard a voice,

as of a lost spirit, calling aloud, "Six-and-twenty, all told!" whereat the light in the church was instantly extinguished into an impenetrable darkness.

Page 67

It was said that when Captain Obadiah himself was first apprised of the suspicions entertained of the demoniacal possession of the old meeting-house, he had fixed upon his venturesome informant so threatening and ominous a gaze that the other could move neither hand nor foot under the malignant fury of his observation. Then, at last, clearing his countenance of its terrors, he had burst into a great, loud laugh, crying out: "Well, what then? Why not? You must know that the Devil and I have been very good friends in times past. I saw a deal of him in the West Indies, and I must tell you that I built up the old meeting-house again so that he and I could talk together now and then about old times without having a lot of —, dried, codfish-eating, rum-drinking Yankee bacon-chewers to listen to every word we had to say to each other. If you must know, it was only last night that the ghost of Jezebel and I danced a fandango together in the graveyard up yonder, while the Devil himself sat cross-legged on old Daniel Root's tombstone and blew on a dry, dusty shank-bone by way of a flute. And now" (here he swore a terrific oath) "you know the worst that is to be known, with only this to say: if ever a man sets foot upon Pig and Sow Point again after nightfall to interfere with the Devil's sport and mine, hell suffer for it as sure as fire can burn or brimstone can scorch. So put that in your pipe and smoke it."

These terrible words, however extravagant, were, to be sure, in the nature of a direct confirmation of the very worst suspicion that could have been entertained concerning this dolorous affair. But if any further doubt lingered as to the significance of such malevolent rumors, Captain Obadiah himself soon put an end to the same.

The Reverend Josiah Pettibones was used of a Saturday to take supper at Colonel Belford's elegant residence. It was upon such an occasion and the reverend gentleman and his honored host were smoking a pipe of tobacco together in the library, when there fell a loud and importunate knocking at the house door, and presently the servant came ushering no less a personage than Captain Obadiah himself. After directing a most cunning, mischievous look at his brother, Captain Obadiah addressed himself directly to the Reverend Mr. Pettibones, folding his hands with a most indescribable air of mock humility. "Sir," says he—"Reverend sir, you see before you a humble and penitent sinner, who has fallen so desperately deep into iniquities that he knows not whether even so profound piety as yours can elevate him out of the pit in which he finds himself. Sir, it has got about the town that the Devil has taken possession of my old meeting-house, and, alas! I have to confess—*that it is the truth.*" Here our Captain hung his head down upon his breast as though overwhelmed with the terrible communication he had made.

"What is this that I hear?" cried the reverend gentleman. "Can I believe my ears?"

Page 68

"Believe your ears!" exclaimed Colonel Belford. "To be sure you cannot believe your ears. Do you not see that this is a preposterous lie, and that he is telling it to you to tease and to mortify me?"

At this Captain Obadiah favored his brother with a look of exaggerated and sanctimonious humility. "Alas, brother," he cried out, "for accusing me so unjustly! Fie upon you! Would you check a penitent in his confession? But you must know that it is to this gentleman that I address myself, and not to you." Then directing his discourse once more to the Reverend Mr. Pettibones, he resumed his address thus: "Sir, you must know that while I was in the West Indies I embarked, among other things, in one of those ventures against the Spanish Main of which you may have heard."

"Do you mean piracy?" asked the Reverend Pettibones; and Captain Obadiah nodded his head.

"'Tis a lie!" cried Colonel Belford, smacking his hand upon the table. "He never possessed spirit enough for anything so dangerous as piracy or more mischievous than slave-trading."

"Sir," quoth Captain Obadiah to the reverend gentleman, "again I say 'tis to you I address my confession. Well, sir, one day we sighted a Spanish caravel very rich laden with a prodigious quantity of plate, but were without so much as a capful of wind to fetch us up with her. 'I would,' says I, 'offer the Devil my soul for a bit of a breeze to bring us alongside.' 'Done,' says a voice beside me, and—alas that I must confess it!—there I saw a man with a very dark countenance, whom I had never before beheld aboard of our ship. 'Sign this,' says he, 'and the breeze is yours!' 'What is it upon the pen?' says I. "'Tis blood,' says he. Alas, sir! what was a poor wretch so tempted as I to do?"

"And did you sign?" asked Mr. Pettibones, all agog to hear the conclusion of so strange a narration.

"Woe is me, sir, that I should have done so!" quoth Captain Obadiah, rolling his eyes until little but the whites of them were to be seen.

"And did you catch the Spanish ship?"

"That we did, sir, and stripped her as clean as a whistle."

"'Tis all a prodigious lie!" cried Colonel Belford, in a fury. "Sir, can you sit so complacently and be made a fool of by so extravagant a fable?"

"Indeed it is unbelievable," said Mr. Pettibones.

At this faint reply, Captain Obadiah burst out laughing; then renewing his narrative——
“Indeed, sir,” he declared, “you may believe me or not, as you please. Nevertheless, I may tell you that, having so obtained my prize, and having time to think coolly over the bargain I had made, I says to myself, says I: ‘Obediah Belford! Obadiah Belford, here is a pretty pickle you are in. ’Tis time you quit these parts and lived decent, or else you are damned to all eternity.’ And so I came hither to New Hope, reverend sir, hoping to end my days in quiet. Alas, sir! would you

Page 69

believe it? scarce had I finished my fine new house up at the Point when hither comes that evil being to whom I had sold my sorrowful soul. 'Obadiah,' says he, 'Obadiah Belford, I have a mind to live in New Hope also,' 'Where?' says I. 'Well,' says he, 'you may patch up the old meetinghouse; 'twill serve my turn for a while.' 'Well,' thinks I to myself, 'there can be no harm in that,' And so I did as he bade me— and would not you do as much for one who had served you as well? Alas, your reverence! there he is now, and I cannot get rid of him, and 'tis over the whole town that he has the meeting-house in possession."

"Tis an incredible story!" cried the Reverend Pettibones.

"Tis a lie from beginning to end!" cried the Colonel.

"And now how shall I get myself out of my pickle?" asked Captain Obadiah.

"Sir," said Mr. Pettibones, "if what you tell me is true, 'tis beyond my poor powers to aid you."

"Alas!" cried Captain Obadiah. "Alas! alas! Then, indeed, I'm damned!" And therewith flinging his arms into the air as though in the extremity of despair, he turned and incontinently departed, rushing forth out of the house as though stung by ten thousand furies.

It was the most prodigious piece of gossip that ever fell in the way of the Reverend Josiah, and for a fortnight he carried it with him wherever he went. "'Twas the most unbelievable tale I ever heard," he would cry. "And yet where there is so much smoke there must be some fire. As for the poor wretch, if ever I saw a lost soul I beheld him standing before me there in Colonel Belford's library." And then he would conclude: "Yes, yes, 'tis incredible and past all belief. But if it be true in ever so little a part, why, then there is justice in this—that the Devil should take possession of the sanctuary of that very heresy that would not only have denied him the power that every other Christian belief assigns to him, but would have destroyed that infernal habitation that hath been his dwelling-place for all eternity."

As for Captain Belford, if he desired privacy for himself upon Pig and Sow Point, he had taken the very best means to prevent the curious from spying upon him there after nightfall.

II

HOW THE DEVIL STOLE THE COLLECTOR'S SNUFFBOX

Lieutenant Thomas Goodhouse was the Collector of Customs in the town of New Hope. He was a character of no little notoriety in those parts, enjoying the reputation of being able to consume more pineapple rum with less effect upon his balance than any other man in the community. He possessed the voice of a stentor, a short, thick-set, broad-shouldered person, a face congested to a violent carnation, and red hair of such a color as to add infinitely to the consuming fire of his countenance.

The Custom Office was a little white frame building with green shutters, and overhanging the water as though to topple into the tide. Here at any time of the day betwixt the hours of ten in the morning and of five in the afternoon the Collector was to be found at his desk smoking his pipe of tobacco, the while a thin, phthisical clerk bent with unrelaxing assiduity over a multitude of account-books and papers accumulated before him.

Page 70

For his post of Collectorship of the Royal Customs, Lieutenant Goodhouse was especially indebted to the patronage of Colonel Belford. The worthy Collector had, some years before, come to that gentleman with a written recommendation from the Earl of Clandennie of a very unusual sort. It was the Lieutenant's good-fortune to save the life of the Honorable Frederick Dunburne, second son of the Earl—a wild, rakish, undisciplined youth, much given to such mischievous enterprises as the twisting off of door-knockers, the beating of the watch, and the carrying away of tavern signs.

Having been a very famous swimmer at Eton, the Honorable Frederick undertook while at the Cowes to swim a certain considerable distance for a wager. In the midst of this enterprise he was suddenly seized with a cramp, and would inevitably have drowned had not the Lieutenant, who happened in a boat close at hand, leaped overboard and rescued the young gentleman from the watery grave in which he was about to be engulfed, thus restoring him once more to the arms of his grateful family.

For this fortunate act of rescue the Earl of Clandennie presented to his son's preserver a gold snuffbox filled with guineas, and inscribed with the following legend:

"To Lieutenant Thomas Goodhouse, who, under the Ruling of Beneficent Providence, was the Happy Preserver of a Beautiful and Precious Life of Virtuous Precocity, this Box is presented by the Father of Him whom He saved as a grateful acknowledgment of His Services.

Thomas Monkhouse Dunburne, Viscount of
Dunburne and Earl of Clandennie.

August 17, 1752."

Having thus satisfied the immediate demands of his gratitude, it is very possible that the Earl of Clandennie did not choose to assume so great a responsibility as the future of his son's preserver entailed. Nevertheless, feeling that something should be done for him, he obtained for Lieutenant Goodhouse a passage to the Americas, and wrote him a strong letter of recommendation to Colonel Belford. That gentleman, desiring to please the legitimate head of his family, used his influence so successfully that the Lieutenant was presently granted the position of Collector of Customs in the place of Captain Maull, who had lately deceased.

The Lieutenant, somewhat to the surprise of his patrons, filled his new official position as Collector not only with vigor, but with a not unbecoming dignity. He possessed an infinite appreciation of the responsibilities of his office, and he was more jealous to collect every farthing of the royal duties than he would have been had those moneys been gathered for his own emolument.



Under the old Collectorship of Captain Maull, it was no unusual thing for a barraco of superfine Hollands, a bolt of silk cloth, or a keg of brandy to find its way into the house of some influential merchant or Colonial dignitary. But in no such manner was Lieutenant Goodhouse derelict in his duties. He would have sacrificed his dearest friendship or his most precious attachment rather than fail in his duties to the Crown. In the intermission of his duties it might please him to relax into the softer humors of conviviality, but at ten o'clock in the morning, whatever his condition of sobriety, he assumed at once all the sterner panoply of a Collector of the Royal Customs.

Page 71

Thus he set his virtues against his vices, and struck an even balance between them. When most unsteady upon his legs he most asserted his integrity, declaring that not a gill or a thread came into his port without paying its duty, and calling Heaven to witness that it had been his hand that had saved the life of a noble young gentleman.

Thereupon, perhaps, drawing forth the gleaming token of his prowess—the gold snuffbox—from his breeches-pocket, and holding it tight in his brown and hairy fist, he would first offer his interlocutor a pinch of rappee, and would then call upon him to read the inscription engraved upon the lid of the case, demanding to know whether it mattered a fig if a man did drink a drop too much now and then, provided he collected every farthing of the royal revenues, and had been the means of saving the son of the Earl of Clandennie.

Never for an instant upon such an occasion would he permit his precious box to quit his possession. It was to him an emblem of those virtues that no one knew but himself, wherefore the more he misdoubted his own virtuousness the more valuable did the token of that rectitude become in his eyes. “Yes, you may look at it,” he would say, “but damme if you shall handle it. I would not,” he would cry, “let the Devil himself take it out of my hands.”

The talk concerning the impious possession of the Old Free Grace Meeting-House was at its height when the official consciousness of the Collector, who was just then laboring under his constitutional infirmity, became suddenly seized with an irrepressible alarm. He declared that he smoked something worse than the Devil upon Pig and Sow Point, and protested that it was his opinion that Captain Obadiah was doing a bit of free-trade upon his own account, and that dutiable goods were being smuggled in at night under cover of these incredible stories. He registered a vow, sealing it with the most solemn protestations, and with a multiplicity of ingenious oaths that only a mind stimulated by the heat of intoxication could have invented, that he would make it his business, upon the first occasion that offered, to go down to Pig and Sow Point and to discover for himself whether it was the Devil or smugglers that had taken possession of the Old Free Grace Meeting-House. Thereupon, hauling out his precious snuffbox and rapping upon the lid, he offered a pinch around. Then calling attention to the inscription, he demanded to know whether a man who had behaved so well upon that occasion had need to be afraid of a whole churchful of devils. “I would,” he cried, “offer the Devil a pinch, as I have offered it to you. Then I would bid him read this and tell me whether he dared to say that black was the white of my eye.”

Nor were those words a vain boast upon the Collector’s part, for, before a week had passed, it being reported that there had been a renewal of manifestations at the old church, the Collector, finding nobody with sufficient courage to accompany him, himself entered into a small boat and rowed down alone to Pig and Sow Point to investigate, for his own satisfaction, those appearances that so agitated the community.

Page 72

It was dusk when the Collector departed upon that memorable and solitary expedition, and it was entirely dark before he had reached its conclusion. He had taken with him a bottle of Extra Reserve rum to drive, as he declared, the chill out of his bones. Accordingly it seemed to him to be a surprisingly brief interval before he found himself floating in his boat under the impenetrable shadow of the rocky promontory. The profound and infinite gloom of night overhung him with a portentous darkness, melting only into a liquid obscurity as it touched and dissolved into the stretch of waters across the bay. But above, on the high and rugged shoulder of the Point, the Collector, with dulled and swimming vision, beheld a row of dim and lurid lights, whereupon, collecting his faculties, he opined that the radiance he beheld was emitted from the windows of the Old Free Grace Meeting-House.

Having made fast his boat with a drunken gravity, the Collector walked directly, though with uncertain steps, up the steep and rugged path towards that mysterious illumination. Now and then he stumbled over the stones and cobbles that lay in his way, but he never quite lost his balance, neither did he for a moment remit his drunken gravity. So with a befuddled and obstinate perseverance he reached at last to the conclusion of his adventure and of his fate.

The old meeting-house was two stories in height, the lower story having been formerly used by the Free Grace Believers as a place wherein to celebrate certain obscure mysteries appertaining to their belief. The upper story, devoted to the more ordinary worship of their Sunday meetings, was reached by a tall, steep flight of steps that led from the ground to a covered porch which sheltered the doorway.

The Collector paused only long enough to observe that the shutters of the lower story were tight shut and barred, and that the dull and lurid light shone from the windows above. Then he directly mounted the steps with a courage and a perfect assurance that can only be entirely enjoyed by one in his peculiar condition of inebriety.

He paused to knock at the door, and it appeared to him that his knuckles had hardly fallen upon the panel before the valve was flung suddenly open. An indescribable and heavy odor fell upon him and for the moment overpowered his senses, and he found himself standing face to face with a figure prodigiously and portentously tall.

Even at this unexpected apparition the Collector lost possession of no part of his courage. Rather he stiffened himself to a more stubborn and obstinate resolution. Steadying himself for his address, "I know very well," quoth he, "who you are. You are the Devil, I dare say, but damme if you shall do business here without paying your duties to King George. I may drink a drop too much," he cried, "but I collect my duties—every farthing of 'em." Then drawing forth his snuffbox, he thrust it under the nose of the being to whom he spake. "Take a pinch and read that," he roared, "but don't handle it, for I wouldn't take all hell to let it out of my hand."

Page 73

The being whom he addressed had stood for all this while as though bereft of speech and of movement, but at these last words he appeared to find his voice, for he gave forth a strident bellow of so dreadful and terrible a sort that the Collector, brave as he found himself, stepped back a pace or two before it. The next instant he was struck upon the wrist as though by a bolt of lightning, and the snuffbox, describing a yellow circle against the light of the door, disappeared into the darkness of the night beyond. Ere he could recover himself another blow smote him upon the breast, and he fell headlong from the platform, as through infinite space.

* * * * *

The next day the Collector did not present himself at the office at his accustomed hour, and the morning wore along without his appearing at his desk. By noon serious alarm began to take possession of the community, and about two o'clock, the tide being then set out pretty strong, Mr. Tompkins, the consumptive clerk, and two sailors from the *Sarah Goodrich*, then lying at Mr. Hoppins's wharf, went down in a yawl-boat to learn, if possible, what had befallen him. They coasted along the Point for above a half-hour before they discovered any vestige of the missing Collector. Then at last they saw him lying at a little distance upon a cobbled strip of beach, where, judging from his position and from the way he had composed himself to rest, he appeared to have been overcome by liquor.

At this place Mr. Tompkins put ashore, and making the best of his way over the slippery stones exposed at low water, came at last to where his chief was lying. The Collector was reposing with one arm over his eyes, as though to shelter them from the sun, but as soon as Mr. Tompkins had approached close enough to see his countenance, he uttered a great cry that was like a scream. For, by the blue and livid lips parted at the corners to show the yellow teeth, from the waxy whiteness of the fat and hairy hands—in short, from the appearance of the whole figure, he was aware in an instant that the Collector was dead.

His cry brought the two sailors running. They, with the utmost coolness imaginable, turned the Collector over, but discovered no marks of violence upon him, till of a sudden one of them called attention to the fact that his neck was broke. Upon this the other opined that he had fallen among the rocks and twisted his neck.

The two mariners then made an investigation of his pockets, the clerk standing by the while paralyzed with horror, his face the color of dough, his scalp creeping, and his hands and fingers twitching as though with the palsy. For there was something indescribably dreadful in the spectacle of those living hands searching into the dead's pockets, and he would freely have given a week's pay if he had never embarked upon the expedition for the recovery of his chief.

In the Collector's pockets they found a twist of tobacco, a red bandanna handkerchief of violent color, a purse meagrely filled with copper coins and silver pieces, a silver watch still ticking with a loud and insistent iteration, a piece of tarred string, and a clasp-knife.

Page 74

The snuffbox which the Lieutenant had regarded with such prodigious pride as the one emblem of his otherwise dubious virtue was gone.

III

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG GENTLEMAN OF QUALITY

The Honorable Frederick Dunburne, second son of the Earl of Clandennie, having won some six hundred pounds at ecarte at a single sitting at Pintzennelli's, embarked with his two friends, Captain Blessington and Lord George Fitzhope, to conclude the night with a round of final dissipation in the more remote parts of London. Accordingly they embarked at York Stairs for the Three Cranes, ripe for any mischief. Upon the water the three young gentlemen amused themselves by shouting and singing, pausing only now and then to discharge a broadside of raillery at the occupants of some other and passing boat.

All went very well for a while, some of those in the passing boats laughing and railing in return, others shouting out angry replies. At last they fell in with a broad-beamed, flat-nosed, Dutch-appearing yawl-boat, pulling heavily up against the stream, and loaded with a crew of half-drunken sailors just come into port. In reply to the challenge of our young gentlemen, a man in the stern of the other boat, who appeared to be the captain of the crew—a fellow, as Dunburne could indefinitely perceive by the dim light of the lanthorn and the faint illumination of the misty half-moon, possessing a great, coarse red face and a bullet head surmounted by a mildewed and mangy fur cap—bawled out, in reply, that if they would only put their boat near enough for a minute or two he would give them a bellyful of something that would make them quiet for the rest of the night. He added that he would ask for nothing better than to have the opportunity of beating Dunburne's head to a pudding, and that he would give a crown to have the three of them within arm's-reach for a minute.

Upon this Captain Blessington swore that he should be immediately accommodated, and therewith delivered an order to that effect to the watermen. These obeyed so promptly that almost before Dunburne was aware of what had happened the two boats were side by side, with hardly a foot of space between the gunwales. Dunburne beheld one of the watermen of his own boat knock down one of the crew of the other with the blade of an oar, and then he himself was clutched by the collar in the grasp of the man with the fur cap. Him Dunburne struck twice in the face, and in the moonlight he saw that he had started the blood to running down from his assailant's nose. But his blows produced no other effect than to call forth a volley of the most horrible oaths that ever greeted his ears. Thereupon the boats drifted so far apart that our young gentleman was haled over the gunwale and soused in the cold water of the river. The next moment some one struck him upon the head with a belaying-pin or a billet of wood, a blow so crushing

Page 75

that the darkness seemed to split asunder with a prodigious flaming of lights and a myriad of circling stars, which presently disappeared into the profound and utter darkness of insensibility. How long this swoon continued our young gentleman could never tell, but when he regained so much of his consciousness as to be aware of the things about him, he beheld himself to be confined in a room, the walls whereof were yellow and greasy with dirt, he himself having been laid upon a bed so foul and so displeasing to his taste that he could not but regret the swoon from which he had emerged into consciousness. Looking down at his person, he beheld that his clothes had all been taken away from him, and that he was now clad in a shirt with only one sleeve, and a pair of breeches so tattered that they barely covered his nakedness. While he lay thus, dismally depressed by so sad a pickle as that into which he found himself plunged, he was strongly and painfully aware of an uproarious babble of loud and drunken voices and a continual clinking of glasses, which appeared to sound as from a tap-room beneath, these commingled now and then with oaths and scraps of discordant song bellowed out above the hubbub. His wounded head beat with tremendous and straining painfulness, as though it would burst asunder, and he was possessed by a burning thirst that seemed to consume his very vitals. He called aloud, and in reply a fat, one-eyed woman came, fetching him something to drink in a cup. This he swallowed with avidity, and thereupon (the liquor perhaps having been drugged) he dropped off into unconsciousness once more.

When at last he emerged for a second time into the light of reason, it was to find himself aboard a brig—the *Prophet Daniel*, he discovered her name to be—bound for Baltimore, in the Americas, and then pitching and plunging upon a westerly running stern-sea, and before a strong wind that drove the vessel with enormous velocity upon its course for those remote and unknown countries for which it was bound. The land was still in sight both astern and abeam, but before him lay the boundless and tremendously infinite stretch of the ocean. Dunburne found himself still to be clad in the one-armed shirt and tattered breeches that had adorned him in the house of the crimp in which he had first awakened. Now, however, an old tattered hat with only a part of the crown had been added to his costume. As though to complete the sad disorder of his appearance, he discovered, upon passing his hand over his countenance, that his beard and hair had started a bristling growth, and that the lump on his crown—which was even yet as big as a walnut—was still patched with pieces of dirty sticking-plaster. Indeed, had he but known it, he presented as miserable an appearance as the most miserable of those wretches who were daily ravished from the slums and streets of the great cities to be shipped to the Americas. Nor was he a long time in discovering that he was now one of the several such indentured servants who, upon the conclusion of their voyage, were to be sold for their passage in the plantations of Maryland.

Page 76

Having learned so much of his miserable fate, and being now able to make shift to walk (though with weak and stumbling steps), our young gentleman lost no time in seeking the Captain, to whom he endeavored to explain the several accidents that had befallen him, acknowledging that he was the second son of the Earl of Clandennie, and declaring that if he, the Captain, would put the *Prophet Daniel* back into some English port again, his lordship would make it well worth his while to lose so much time for the sake of one so dear as a second son. To this address the Captain, supposing him either to be drunk or disordered in his mind, made no other reply than to knock him incontinently down upon the deck, bidding him return forward where he belonged.

Thereafter poor Dunburne found himself enjoying the reputation of a harmless madman. The name of the Earl of Rags was bestowed upon him, and the miserable companions of his wretched plight were never tired of tempting him to recount his adventures, for the sake of entertaining themselves by teasing that which they supposed to be his hapless mania.

Nor is it easy to conceive of all the torments that those miserable, obscene wretches were able to inflict upon him. Under the teasing sting of his companions' malevolent pleasantries, there were times when Dunburne might, as he confessed to himself, have committed a murder with the greatest satisfaction in the world. However, he was endowed with no small command of self-restraint, so that he was still able to curb his passions within the bounds of reason and of policy. He was, fortunately, a complete master of the French and Italian languages, so that when the fury of his irritation would become too excessive for him to control, he would ease his spirits by castigating his tormentors with a consuming verbosity in those foreign tongues, which, had his companions understood a single word of that which he uttered, would have earned for him a beating that would have landed him within an inch of his life. However, they attributed all that he said to the irrational gibbering of a maniac.

About midway of their voyage the *Prophet Daniel* encountered a tremendous storm, which drove her so far out of the Captain's reckoning that when land was sighted, in the afternoon of a tempestuous day in the latter part of August, the first mate, who had been for some years in the New England trade, opined that it was the coast of Rhode Island, and that if the Captain chose to do so he might run into New Hope Harbor and lie there until the southeaster had blown itself out. This advice the Captain immediately put into execution, so that by nightfall they had dropped anchor in the comparative quiet of that excellent harbor.

Page 77

Dunburne was a most excellent and practised swimmer. That evening, when the dusk had pretty well fallen, he jumped overboard, dived under the brig, and came up on the other side. Thus leaving all hands aboard looking for him or for his dead body at the starboard side of the *Prophet Daniel*, he himself swam slowly away to the larboard. Now partly under water, now floating on his back, he directed his course towards a point of land about a mile away, whereon, as he had observed before the dark had settled down, there stood an old wooden building resembling a church, and a great brick house with tall, lean chimneys at a little farther distance inland.

The intemperate cold of the water of those parts of America was so much more excessive than Dunburne had been used to swim in that when he dragged himself out upon the rocky, boulder-strewn beach he lay for a considerable time more dead than alive. His limbs appeared to possess hardly any vitality, so benumbed were they by the icy chill that had entered into the very marrow of his bones. Nor did he for a long while recover from this excessive rigor; his limbs still continued at intervals to twitch and shudder as with a convulsion, nor could he at such times at all control their trembling. At last, however, with a huge sigh, he aroused himself to some perception of his surroundings, which he acknowledged were of as dispiriting a sort as he could well have conceived of. His recovering senses were distracted by a ceaseless watery din, for the breaking waves, rushing with a prodigious swiftness from the harbor to the shore before the driving wind, fell with uproarious crashing into white foam among the rocks. Above this watery tumult spread the wet gloom of the night, full of the blackness and pelting chill of a fine slanting rain.

Through this shroud of mist and gloom Dunburne at last distinguished a faint light, blurred by the sheets of rain and darkness, and shining as though from a considerable distance. Cheered by this nearer presence of human life, our young gentleman presently gathered his benumbed powers together, arose, and after a while began slowly and feebly to climb a stony hill that lay between the rocky beach and that faint but encouraging illumination.

So, sorely buffeted by the tempest, he at last reached the black, square form of that structure from which the light shone. The building he perceived to be a little wooden church of two stories in height. The shutters of the lower story were tight fastened, as though bolted from within. Those above were open, and from them issued the light that had guided him in his approach from the beach. A tall flight of wooden steps, wet in the rain, reached to a small, enclosed porch or vestibule, whence a door, now tight shut, gave ingress into the second story of the church.

Page 78

Thence, as Dunburne stood without, he could now distinguish the dull muttering of a man's voice, which he opined might be that of the preacher. Our young gentleman, as may be supposed, was in a wretched plight. He was ragged and unshaven; his only clothing was the miserable shirt and bepatched breeches that had served him as shelter throughout the long voyage. These abominable garments were now wet to the skin, and so displeasing was his appearance that he was forced to acknowledge to himself that he did not possess enough of humility to avow so great a misery to the light and to the eyes of strangers. Accordingly, finding some shelter afforded by the vestibule of the church, he crouched there in a corner, huddling his rags about him, and finding a certain poor warmth in thus hiding away from the buffeting of the chill and penetrating wind. As he so crouched he presently became aware of the sound of many voices, dull and groaning, coming from within the edifice, and then—now and again—the clanking as of a multitude of chains. Then of a sudden, and unexpectedly, the door near him was flung wide open, and a faint glow of reddish light fell across the passage. Instantly the figure of a man came forth, and following him came, not a congregation, as Dunburne might have supposed, but a most dolorous company of nearly, or quite, naked men and women, outlined blackly, as they emerged, against the dull illumination from behind. These wretched beings, sighing and groaning most piteously, with a monotonous wailing of many voices, were chained by the wrist, two and two together, and as they passed by close to Dunburne, his nostrils were overpowered by a heavy and fetid odor that came partly from within the building, partly from the wretched creatures that passed him by.

As the last of these miserable beings came forth from the bowels of that dreadful place, a loud voice, so near to Dunburne as to startle his ears with its sudden exclamation, cried out, "Six-and-twenty, all told," and thereat instantly the dull light from within was quenched into darkness.

In the gloom and the silence that followed, Dunburne could hear for a while nothing but the dash of the rain upon the roof and the ceaseless drip and trickle of the water running from the eaves into the puddles beneath the building.

Then, as he stood, still marvelling at what he had seen, there suddenly came a loud and startling crash, as of a trap-door let fall into its place. A faint circle of light shone within the darkness of the building, as though from a lantern carried in a man's hands. There was a sound of jingling, as of keys, of approaching footsteps, and of voices talking together, and presently there came out into the vestibule the dark figures of two men, one of them carrying a ship's lantern. One of these figures closed and locked the door behind him, and then both were about to turn away without having observed Dunburne, when, of a sudden, a circle from the roof of the lantern lit up his pale and melancholy face, and he instantly became aware that his presence had been discovered.

Page 79

The next moment the lantern was flung up almost into his eyes, and in the light he saw the sharp, round rim of a pistol-barrel directed immediately against his forehead.

In that moment our young gentleman's life hung as a hair in the balance. In the intense instant of expectancy his brain appeared to expand as a bubble, and his ears tingled and hummed as though a cloud of flies were buzzing therein. Then suddenly a voice smote like a blow upon the silence—"Who are you, and what d'ye want?"

"Indeed," said Dunburne, "I do not know."

"What do you do here?"

"Nor do I know that, either."

He who held the lantern lifted it so that the illumination fell still more fully upon Dunburne's face and person. Then his interlocutor demanded, "How did you come here?"

Upon the moment Dunburne determined to answer so much of the truth as the question required. "'Twas by no fault of my own," he cried. "I was knocked on the head and kidnapped in England, with the design of being sold in Baltimore. The vessel that fetched me put into the harbor over yonder to wait for good weather, and I jumped overboard and swam ashore, to stumble into the cursed pickle in which I now find myself."

"Have you, then, an education? To be sure, you talk so."

"Indeed I have," said Dunburne—"a decent enough education to fit me for a gentleman, if the opportunity offered. But what of that?" he exclaimed, desperately. "I might as well have no more learning than a beggar under the bush, for all the good it does me." The other once more flashed the light of his lantern over our young gentleman's miserable and barefoot figure. "I had a mind," says he, "to blow your brains out against the wall. I have a notion now, however, to turn you to some use instead, so I'll just spare your life for a little while, till I see how you behave."

He spoke with so much more of jocularly than he had heretofore used that Dunburne recovered in great part his dawning assurance. "I am infinitely obliged to you," he cried, "for sparing my brains; but I protest I doubt if you will ever find so good an opportunity again to murder me as you have just enjoyed."

This speech seemed to tickle the other prodigiously, for he burst into a loud and boisterous laugh, under cover of which he thrust his pistol back into his coat-pocket again. "Come with me, and I'll fit you with victuals and decent clothes, of both of which you appear to stand in no little need," he said. Thereupon, and without another word, he turned and quitted the place, accompanied by his companion, who for all this time

had uttered not a single sound. A little way from the church these two parted company, with only a brief word spoken between them.

Dunburne's interlocutor, with our young gentleman following close behind him, led the way in silence for a considerable distance through the long, wet grass and the tempestuous darkness, until at last, still in unbroken silence, they reached the confines of an enclosure, and presently stood before a large and imposing house built of brick.

Page 80

Dunburne's mysterious guide, still carrying the lantern, conducted him directly up a broad flight of steps, and opening the door, ushered him into a hallway of no inconsiderable pretensions. Thence he led the way to a dining-room beyond, where our young gentleman observed a long mahogany table, and a sideboard of carved mahogany illuminated by three or four candles. In answer to the call of his conductor, a negro servant appeared, whom the master of the house ordered to fetch some bread and cheese and a bottle of rum for his wretched guest. While the servant was gone to execute the commission the master seated himself at his ease and favored Dunburne with a long and most minute regard. Then he suddenly asked our young gentleman what was his name.

Upon the instant Dunburne did not offer a reply to this interrogation. He had been so miserably abused when he had told the truth upon the voyage that he knew not now whether to confess or deny his identity. He possessed no great aptitude at lying, so that it was with no little hesitation that he determined to maintain his incognito. Having reached this conclusion, he answered his host that his name was Tom Robinson. The other, however, appeared to notice neither his hesitation nor the name which he had seen fit to assume. Instead, he appeared to be lost in a reverie, which he broke only to bid our young gentleman to sit down and tell the story of the several adventures that had befallen him. He advised him to leave nothing untold, however shameful it might be. "Be assured," said he, "that no matter what crimes you may have committed, the more intolerable your wickedness, the better you will please me for the purpose I have in view."

Being thus encouraged, and having already embarked in disingenuousity, our young gentleman, desiring to please his host, began at random a tale composed in great part of what he recollected of the story of *Colonel Jack*, seasoned occasionally with extracts from Mr. Smollett's ingenious novel of *Ferdinand, Count Fathom*. There was hardly a petty crime or a mean action mentioned in either of these entertaining fictions that he was not willing to attribute to himself. Meanwhile he discovered, to his surprise, that lying was not really so difficult an art as he had supposed it to be. His host listened for a considerable while in silence, but at last he was obliged to call upon his penitent to stop. "To tell you the truth, Mr. What's-a-name," he cried, "I do not believe a single word you are telling me. However, I am satisfied that in you I have discovered, as I have every reason to hope, one of the most preposterous liars I have for a long time fell in with. Indeed, I protest that any one who can with so steady a countenance lie so tremendously as you have just done may be capable, if not of a great crime, at least of no inconsiderable deceit, and perhaps of treachery. If this be so, you will suit my purposes very well, though I would rather have had you an escaped criminal or a murderer or a thief."

Page 81

"Sir," said Dunburne, very seriously, "I am sorry that I am not more to your mind. As you say, I can, I find, lie very easily, and if you will give me sufficient time, I dare say I can become sufficiently expert in other and more criminal matters to please even your fancy. I cannot, I fear, commit a murder, nor would I choose to embark upon an attempt at arson; but I could easily learn to cheat at cards; or I could, if it would please you better, make shift to forge your own name to a bill for a hundred pounds. I confess, however, I am entirely in the dark as to why you choose to have me enjoy so evil a reputation."

At these words the other burst into a great and vociferous laugh. "I protest," he cried, "you are the coolest rascal ever I fell in with. But come," he added, sobering suddenly, "what did you say was your name?"

"I declare, sir," said Dunburne, with the most ingenuous frankness, "I have clean forgot. Was it Tom or John Robinson?"

Again the other burst out laughing. "Well," he said, "what does it matter? Thomas or John—'tis all one. I see that you are a ragged, lousy beggar, and I believe you to be a runaway servant. Even if that is the worst to be said of you, you will suit me very well. As for a name, I myself will fit you with one, and it shall be of the best. I will give you a home here in the house, and will for three months clothe you like a lord. You shall live upon the best, and shall meet plenty of the genteelest company the Colonies can afford. All that I demand of you is that you shall do exactly as I tell you for the three months that I so entertain you. Come. Is it a bargain?"

Dunburne sat for a while thinking very seriously. "First of all," said he, "I must know what is the name you have a mind to bestow upon me."

The other looked distrustfully at him for a time, and then, as though suddenly fetching up resolution, he cried out: "Well, what then? What of it? Why should I be afraid? I'll tell you. Your name shall be Frederick Dunburne, and you shall be the second son of the Earl of Clandennie."

Had a thunder-bolt fallen from heaven at Dunburne's feet he could not have been struck more entirely dumb than he was at those astounding words. He knew not for the moment where to look or what to think. At that instant the negro man came into the room, fetching the bottle of rum and the bread and cheese he had been sent for. As the sound of his entrance struck upon our young gentleman's senses he came to himself with the shock, and suddenly exploded into a burst of laughter so shrill and discordant that Captain Obadiah sat staring at him as though he believed his ragged beneficiary had gone clean out of his senses.

IV

A ROMANTIC EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF A YOUNG LADY

Page 82

Miss Belinda Belford, the daughter and only child of Colonel William Belford, was a young lady possessed of no small pretensions to personal charms of the most exalted order. Indeed, many excellent judges in such matters regarded her, without doubt, as the reigning belle of the Northern Colonies. Of a medium height, of a slight but generously rounded figure, she bore herself with an indescribable grace and dignity of carriage. Her hair, which was occasionally permitted to curl in ringlets upon her snowy neck, was of a brown so dark and so soft as at times to deceive the admiring observer into a belief that it was black. Her eyes, likewise of a dark-brown color, were of a most melting and liquid lustre; her nose, though slight, was sufficiently high, and modelled with so exquisite a delicacy as to lend an exceeding charm to her whole countenance. She was easily the belle of every assembly which she graced with her presence, and her name was the toast of every garrison town of the Northern provinces.

Madam Belford and her lovely daughter were engaged one pleasant morning in entertaining a number of friends, in the genteel English manner, with a dish of tea and a bit of gossip. Upon this charming company Colonel Belford suddenly intruded, his countenance displaying an excessive though not displeasing agitation.

“My dear! my dear!” he cried, “what a piece of news have I for you! It is incredible and past all belief! Who, ladies, do you suppose is here in New Hope? Nay, you cannot guess; I shall have to enlighten you. ‘Tis none other than Frederick Dunburne, my lordship’s second son. Yes, you may well look amazed. I saw and spoke with him this very morning, and that not above a half-hour ago. He is travelling incognito, but my brother Obadiah discovered his identity, and is now entertaining him at his new house upon the Point. A large party of young officers from the garrison are there, all very gay with cards and dice, I am told. My noble young gentleman knew me so soon as he clapped eyes upon me. ‘This,’ says he, ‘if I am not mistook, must be Colonel Belford, my father’s honored friend.’ He is,” exclaimed the speaker, “a most interesting and ingenuous youth, with extremely lively and elegant manners, and a person exactly resembling that of his dear and honored father.”

It may be supposed into what a flutter this piece of news cast those who heard it. “My dear,” cried Madam Belford, as soon as the first extravagance of the general surprise had passed by to an easier acceptance of Colonel Belford’s tidings—“my dear, why did you not bring him with you to present him to us all? What an opportunity have you lost!”

“Indeed, my dear,” said Colonel Belford, “I did not forget to invite him hither. He protested that nothing could afford him greater pleasure, did he not have an engagement with some young gentlemen from the garrison. But, believe me, I would not let him go without a promise. He is to dine with us to-morrow at two; and, Belinda, my dear”—here Colonel Belford pinched his daughter’s blushing cheek—“you must assume your best appearance for so serious an occasion. I am informed that my noble gentleman is extremely particular in his tastes in the matter of female excellence.”

Page 83

"Indeed, papa," cried the young lady, with great vivacity, "I shall attempt no extraordinary graces upon my young gentleman's account, and that I promise you. I protest," she exclaimed, with spirit, "I have no great opinion of him who would come thus to New Hope without a single word to you, who are his father's confidential correspondent. Nor do I admire the taste of one who would choose to cast himself upon the hospitality of my uncle Obadiah rather than upon yours."

"My dear," said Colonel Belford, very soberly, "you express your opinion with a most unwarranted levity, considering the exalted position your subject occupies. I may, however, explain to you that he came to America quite unexpectedly and by an accident. Nor would he have declared his incognito, had not my brother Obadiah discovered it almost immediately upon his arrival. He would not, he declared, have visited New Hope at all, had not Captain Obadiah Belford urged his hospitality in such a manner as to preclude all denial."

But to this reproof Miss Belinda who, was, indeed, greatly indulged by her parents, made no other reply than to toss her head with a pretty sauciness, and to pout her cherry lips in an infinitely becoming manner.

But though our young lady protested so emphatically against assuming any unusual charms for the entertainment of their expected visitor, she none the less devoted no small consideration to that very thing that she had so exclaimed against. Accordingly, when she was presented to her father's noble guest, what with her heightened color and her eyes sparkling with the emotions evoked by the occasion, she so impressed our young gentleman that he could do little but stand regarding her with an astonishment that for the moment caused him to forget those graces of deportment that the demands of elegance called upon him to assume.

However, he recovered himself immediately, and proceeded to take such advantage of his introduction that by the time they were seated at the dinner-table he found himself conversing with his fair partner with all the ease and vivacity imaginable. Nor in this exchange of polite raillery did he discover her wit to be in any degree less than her personal charms.

"Indeed, madam," he exclaimed, "I am now more than ready to thank that happy accident that has transported me, however much against my will, from England to America. The scenery, how beautiful! Nature, how fertile! Woman, how exquisite! Your country," he exclaimed, with enthusiasm, "is like heaven!"

"Indeed, sir," cried the young lady, vivaciously, "I do not take your praise for a compliment. I protest I am acquainted with no young gentleman who would not defer his enjoyment of heaven to the very last extremity."

“To be sure,” quoth our hero, “an ambition for the abode of saints is of too extreme a nature to recommend itself to a modest young fellow of parts. But when one finds himself thrown into the society of an houri—”

Page 84

“And do you indeed have houris in England?” exclaimed the young lady. “In America you must be content with society of a much more earthly constitution!”

“Upon my word, miss,” cried our young gentleman, “you compel me to confess that I find myself in the society of one vastly more to my inclination than that of any houri of my acquaintance.”

With such lively badinage, occasionally lapsing into more serious discourse, the dinner passed off with a great deal of pleasantness to our young gentleman, who had prepared himself for something prodigiously dull and heavy. After the repast, a pipe of tobacco in the summer-house and a walk in the garden so far completed his cheerful impressions that when he rode away towards Pig and Sow Point he found himself accompanied by the most lively, agreeable thoughts imaginable. Her wit, how subtle! Her person, how beautiful! He surprised himself smiling with a fatuous indulgence of his enjoyable fancies.

Nor did the young lady's thoughts, though doubtless of a more moderate sort, assume a less pleasing perspective. Our young gentleman was favored with a tall, erect figure, a high nose, and a fine, thin face expressive of excellent breeding. It seemed to her that his manners possessed an elegance and a grace that she had never before discovered beyond the leaves of Mr. Richardson's ingenious novels. Nor was she unaware of the admiration of herself that his countenance had expressed. Upon so slender a foundation she amused herself for above an hour, erecting such castles in the air that, had any one discovered her thought, she would have perished of mortification.

But though our young lady so yielded herself to the enjoyment of such silly dreams as might occur to any miss of a lively imagination and vivacious temperament, the reader is to understand that she has yet so much dignity and spirit as to cover these foolish and romantic fancies with a cloak of so delicate and so subtle a reserve that when the young gentleman called to pay his respects the next afternoon he quitted her presence ten times more infatuated with her charms than he had been the day before.

Nor can it be denied that our young lady knew perfectly well how to make the greatest use of such opportunities. She already possessed a great deal of experience in teasing the other sex with those delicious though innocent torments that cause the eyes of the victim to remain awake at night and the fancy to dream throughout the day.

Such presently became the condition of our young gentleman that at the end of the month he knew not whether his present life had continued for weeks or for years; in the charming infatuation that overpowered him he considered nothing of time, every other consideration being engulfed in his desire for the society of his charmer. Cards and dice lost for him their accustomed pleasure, and when a gay society would be at Belford's Palace it was with the utmost difficulty that he assumed so much patience as

to take his part in those dissipations that there obtained. Relieved from them, he flew with redoubled ardor back to the gratification of his passion again.

Page 85

In the mean time Captain Obadiah had become so accustomed to the presence of his guest that he made no pretence of any concealment of that iniquitous, dreadful avocation that lent to Pig and Sow Point so great a terror in those parts. Rather did the West Indian appear to court the open observation of his dependant.

One exquisite day in the last of October our young gentleman had spent the greater part of the afternoon in the society of the beautiful object of his regard. The leaves, though fallen from the trees in great abundance, appeared thereby only to have admitted of the passage of a riper radiance of golden sunlight through the thinning branches. This and the ardor of his passion had so transported our hero that when he had departed from her presence he seemed to walk as light as a feather, and knew not whether it was the warmth of the sunlight or the heat of his own impetuous transports that filled the universe with so extreme a brightness.

Overpowered with these absorbing and transcendent introspections, he approached his now odious home upon Pig and Sow Point by way of the old meeting-house. There of a sudden he came upon his patron, Captain Obadiah, superintending the burial of the last of three victims of his odious commerce, who had died that afternoon. Two had already been interred, and the third new-made grave was in the process of being filled. Two men, one a negro and the other a white, had nearly completed their labor, tramping down the crumbling earth as they shovelled it into the shallow excavation. Meanwhile Captain Obadiah stood near by, his red coat flaming in the slanting light, himself smoking a pipe of tobacco with all the ease and coolness imaginable. His hands, clasped behind his back, held his ivory-headed cane, and as our hero approached he turned an evil countenance upon him, and greeted him with a grin at once droll, mischievous, and malevolent in the extreme. "And how is our pretty charmer this afternoon?" quoth Captain Obadiah.

Conceive, if you please, of a man floating in the most ecstatic delight of heaven pulled suddenly thence down into the most filthy extremity of hell, and then you shall understand the motions of disgust and repugnance and loathing that overpowered our hero, who, awakening thus suddenly out of his dream of love, found himself in the presence of that grim and obscene spectacle of death—who, arousing from such absorbing and exquisite meditations, heard his ears greeted with so rude and vulgar an address.

Acknowledging to himself that he did not dare offer an immediate reply to his host, he turned upon his heel and walked away, without expressing a single word.

Page 86

He was not, however, permitted to escape thus easily. He had not taken above twenty steps, when, hearing footsteps behind him, he turned his head to discover Captain Obadiah skipping rapidly after him in a prodigious hurry, swinging his cane and chuckling preposterously to himself, as though in the enjoyment of some most exquisite piece of drollery. "What!" he cried, as soon as he could catch his breath from his hurry. "What! What! Can't you answer, you villain? Why, blind my eyes! a body would think you were a lord's son indeed, instead of being, as I know you, a beggarly runaway servant whom I took in like a mangy cat out of the rain. But come, come—no offence, my boy! I'll be no hard master to you. I've heard how the wind blows, and I've kept my ears open to all your doings. I know who is your sweetheart. Harkee, you rascal! You have a fancy for my niece, have you? Well, your apple is ripe if you choose to pick it. Marry your charmer and be damned; and if you'll serve me by taking her thus in hand, I'll pay you twenty pounds upon your wedding-day. Now what do you say to that, you lousy beggar in borrowed clothes?"

Our young gentleman stopped short and looked his tormentor full in the face. The thought of his father's anger alone had saved him from entangling himself in the web of his passions; this he forgot upon the instant. "Captain Obadiah Belford," quoth he, "you're the most consummate villain ever I beheld in all of my life; but if I have the good-fortune to please the young lady, I wish I may die if I don't serve you in this!"

At these words Captain Obadiah, who appeared to take no offence at his guest's opinion of his honesty, burst out into a great boisterous laugh, flinging back his head and dropping his lower jaw so preposterously that the setting sun shone straight down his wide and cavernous gullet.

V

HOW THE DEVIL WAS CAST OUT OF THE MEETING-HOUSE

The news that the Honorable Frederick Dunburne, second son of the Earl of Clandennie, was to marry Miss Belinda Belford, the daughter and only child of Colonel William Belford, of New Hope, was of a sort to arouse the keenest and most lively interest in all those parts of the Northern Colonies of America.

The day had been fixed, and all the circumstances arranged with such particularity that an invitation was regarded as the highest honor that could befall the fortunate recipient. There were to be present on this interesting occasion two Colonial governors and their ladies, an English general, the captain of the flag-ship *Achilles*, and above a score of Colonial magnates and ladies of distinction.

Captain Obadiah had not been bidden to either the ceremony or the breakfast. This rebuff he had accepted with prodigious amusement, which, not limiting itself to the

immediate occasion, broke forth at intervals for above two weeks. Now it might express itself in chuckles of the most delicious entertainment, vented as our Captain walked up and down the hall of his great house, smoking his pipe and cracking the knuckles of his fingers; at other times he would burst forth into uncontrollable fits of laughter at the extravagant deceit which he believed himself to be imposing upon his brother, Colonel Belford.

Page 87

At length came the wedding-day, with such circumstances of pomp and display as the exceeding wealth and Colonial dignity of Colonel Belford could surround it. For the wedding-breakfast the great folding-doors between the drawing-room and the dining-room of Colonel Belford's house were flung wide open, and a table extending the whole length of the two apartments was set with the most sumptuous and exquisite display of plate and china. Around the board were collected the distinguished company, and the occasion was remarkable not less for the richness of its display than for the exquisite nature of the repast intended to celebrate so auspicious an occasion.

At the head of the board sat the young couple, radiant with an engrossing happiness that took no thought of what the future might have in store for it, but was contented with the triumphant ecstasy of the moment.

These elegant festivities were at their height, when there suddenly arose a considerable disputation in the hallway beyond, and before any one could inquire as to what was occurring, Captain Obadiah Belford came stumping into the room, swinging his ivory-headed cane, and with an expression of the most malicious triumph impressed upon his countenance. Directing his address to the bridegroom, and paying no attention to any other one of the company, he cried out: "Though not bidden to this entertainment, I have come to pay you a debt I owe. Here is twenty pounds I promised to pay you for marrying my niece."

Therewith he drew a silk purse full of gold pieces from his pocket, which he hung over the ferrule of his cane and reached across the table to the bridegroom. That gentleman, upon his part (having expected some such episode as this), arose, and with a most polite and elaborate bow accepted the same and thrust it into his pocket.

"And now, my young gentleman," cried Captain Obadiah, folding his arms and tucking his cane under his armpit, looking the while from under his brows upon the company with a most malevolent and extravagant grin—"and now, my young gentleman, perhaps you will favor the ladies and gentlemen here present with an account of what services they are I thus pay for."

"To be sure I will," cried out our hero, "and that with the utmost willingness in the world."

During all this while the elegant company had sat as with suspended animation, overwhelmed with wonder at the singular address of the intruder. Even the servants stood still with the dishes in their hands the better to hear the outcome of the affair. The bride, overwhelmed by a sudden and inexplicable anxiety, felt the color quit her face, and reaching out, seized her lover's hand, who took hers very readily, holding it tight within his grasp. As for Colonel and Madam Belford, not knowing what this remarkable address portended, they sat as though turned to stone, the one gone as white as ashes, and the other as red in the face as a cherry. Our young gentleman,

Page 88

however, maintained the utmost coolness and composure of demeanor. Pointing his finger towards the intruder, he exclaimed: "In Captain Obadiah Belford, ladies and gentlemen, you behold the most unmitigated villain that ever I met in all of my life. With an incredible spite and vindictiveness he not only pursued my honored father-in-law, Colonel Belford, but has sought to wreak an unwarranted revenge upon the innocent and virtuous young lady whom I have now the honor to call my wife. But how has he overreached himself in his machinations! How has he entangled his feet in the net which he himself has spread! I will tell you my history, as he bids me to do, and you may then judge for yourselves!"

At this unexpected address Captain Obadiah's face fell from its expression of malicious triumph, growing longer and longer, until at last it was overclouded with so much doubt and anxiety that, had he been threatened by the loss of a thousand pounds, he could not have assumed a greater appearance of mortification and dejection. Meantime, regarding him with a mischievous smile, our young gentleman began the history of all those adventures that had befallen him from the time he embarked upon the memorable expedition with his two companions in dissipation from York Stairs. As his account proceeded Captain Obadiah's face altered by degrees from its natural brown to a sickly yellow, and then to so leaden a hue that it could not have assumed a more ghastly appearance were he about to swoon dead away. Great beads of sweat gathered upon his forehead and trickled down his cheeks. At last he could endure no more, but with a great and strident voice, such as might burst forth from a devil tormented, he cried out: "'Tis a lie! 'Tis all a monstrous lie! He is a beggarly runaway servant whom I took in out of the rain and fed and housed—to have him turn thus against me and strike the hand that has benefited him!"

"Sir," replied our young gentleman, with a moderate and easy voice, "what I tell you is no lie, but the truth. If any here misdoubts my veracity, see, here is a letter received by the last packet from my honored father. You, Colonel Belford, know his handwriting perfectly well. Look at this and tell me if I am deceiving you."

At these words Colonel Belford took the letter with a hand that trembled as though with palsy. He cast his eyes over it, but it is to be doubted whether he read a single word therein contained. Nevertheless, he saw enough to satisfy his doubts, and he could have wept, so great was the relief from the miserable and overwhelming anxiety that had taken possession of him since the beginning of his brother's discourse.

Meantime our young gentleman, turning to Captain Obadiah, cried out, "Sir, I am indeed an instrument of Providence sent hither to call your wickedness to account," and this he spoke with so virtuous an air as to command the admiration of all who heard him. "I have," he continued, "lived with you now for nearly three odious months, and I know every particular of your habits and such circumstances of your life as you are aware of.

I now proclaim how you have wickedly and sacrilegiously turned the Old Free Grace Meeting-House into a slave-pen, whence for above a year you have conducted a nefarious and most inhuman commerce with the West Indies."

Page 89

At these words Captain Obadiah, being thrown so suddenly upon his defence, forced himself to give forth a huge and boisterous laugh. "What then?" he cried. "What wickedness is there in that? What if I have provided a few sugar plantations with negro slaves? Are there not those here present who would do no better if the opportunity offered? The place is mine, and I break no law by a bit of quiet slave-trading."

"I marvel," cried our young gentleman, still in the same virtuous strain—"I marvel that you can pass over so wicked a thing thus easily. I myself have counted above fifty graves of your victims on Pig and Sow Point. Repent, sir, while there is yet time."

But to this adjuration Captain Obadiah returned no other reply than to burst into a most wicked, impudent laugh.

"Is it so?" cried our young gentleman. "Do you dare me to further exposures? Then I have here another evidence to confront you that may move you to a more serious consideration." With these words he drew forth from his pocket a packet wrapped in soft white paper. This he unfolded, holding up to the gaze of all a bright and shining object. "This," he exclaimed, "I found in Captain Obadiah's writing-desk while I was hunting for some wax with which to seal a letter." It was the gold snuffbox of the late Collector Goodhouse. "What," he cried, "have you, sir, to offer in explanation of the manner in which this came into your possession? See, here engraved upon the lid is the owner's name and the circumstance of his having saved my own poor life. It was that first called my attention to it, for I well recollect how my father compelled me to present it to my savior. How came it into your possession, and why have you hidden it away so carefully for all this while? Sir, in the death of Lieutenant Goodhouse I suspect you of a more sinister fault than that of converting yonder poor sanctuary into a slave-pen. So soon as Captain Morris of your slave-ship returns from Jamaica I shall have him arrested, and shall compel him to explain what he knows of the circumstances of the Lieutenant's unfortunate murder."

At the sight of so unexpected an object in the young gentleman's hand Captain Obadiah's jaw fell, and his cavernous mouth gaped as though he had suddenly been stricken with a palsy. He lifted a trembling hand and slowly and mechanically passed it along that cheek which was so discolored with gunpowder stain. Then, suddenly gathering himself together and regaining those powers that appeared for a moment to have fled from him, he cried out, aloud: "I swear to God 'twas all an accident! I pushed him down the steps, and he fell and broke his neck!"

Our young gentleman regarded him with a cold and collected smile. "That, sir," said he, "you shall have the opportunity to explain to the proper authorities—unless," he added, "you choose to take yourself away from these parts, and to escape the just resentment of those laws to which you may be responsible for your misdemeanors."

Page 90

"I shall," roared Captain Obadiah, "stand my trial in spite of you all! I shall live to see you in torments yet! I shall—" He gaped and stuttered, but could find no further words with which to convey his infinite rage and disappointed spite. Then turning, and with a furious gesture, he rushed forth and out of the house, thrusting those aside who stood in his way, and leaving behind him a string of curses fit to set the whole world into a blaze.

He had destroyed all the gaiety of the wedding-breakfast, but the relief from the prodigious doubts and anxieties that had at first overwhelmed those whom he had intended to ruin was of so great a nature that they thought nothing of so inconsiderable a circumstance.

As for our young gentleman, he had come forth from the adventure with such dignity of deportment and with so exalted an air of generous rectitude that those present could not sufficiently admire at the continent discretion of one so young. The young lady whom he had married, if she had before regarded him as a Paris and an Achilles incorporated into one person, now added the wisdom of a Nestor to the category of his accomplishments.

Captain Obadiah, in spite of the defiance he had fulminated against his enemies, and in spite of the determination he had expressed to remain and to stand his trial, was within a few days known to have suddenly and mysteriously departed from New Hope. Whether or not he misdoubted his own rectitude too greatly to put it to the test of a trial, or whether the mortification incident upon the failure of his plot was too great for him to support, it was clearly his purpose never to return again. For within a month the more valuable of his belongings were removed from his great house upon Pig and Sow Point and were loaded upon a bark that came into the harbor for that purpose. Thence they were transported no one knew whither, for Captain Obadiah was never afterwards observed in those parts.

Nor was the old meeting-house ever again disturbed by such manifestations as had terrified the community for so long a time. Nevertheless, though the Devil was thus exorcised from his abiding-place, the old church never lost its evil reputation, until it was finally destroyed by fire about ten years after the incidents herein narrated.

In conclusion it is only necessary to say that when the Honorable Frederick Dunburne presented his wife to his noble family at home, he was easily forgiven his *mesalliance* in view of her extreme beauty and vivacity. Within a year or two Lord Carrickford, his elder brother, died of excessive dissipation in Florence, where he was then attached to the English Embassy, so that our young gentleman thus became the heir-apparent to his father's title, and so both branches of the family were united into one.

THE END