SIXTY AND SIXTEEN.

She coveted a birthday ring,
One winter, long ago;
And said, in playful, bantering way:
"I'm sweet sixteen, you know."

I acquiesced, but half forgot
My promise to the maid;
So when at last the ring I brought,
'Twas my birthday instead.

She gave me thanks in her sweet way
Kisses, with smiles between,
And said: "I'll have it marked inside,
Just 'Sixty and Sixteen.' "

The years have fled in our sad home
Her voice is heard no more;
The sunshine of her happy smile
Falls not within the door.

The others of our household group
Are scattered far and wide;
With chosen mates and little ones
In earthly homes they bide.

But she who wore the birthday ring
In fairer lands, I ween,
Untouched by Time, unchanged by earth,
She still is sweet sixteen.

—Mary A. Simpson, in Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

PART V.

MY SEA ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW I BEGAN MY SEA ADVENTURE.

There was no return of the mutineers—not so much as another shot out of the woods. They had "got their rations for that day," as the captain put it, and we had the place to ourselves and a quiet time to overhaul the wounded and get dinner. Squire and I cooked outside in spite of the danger, and even outside we could hardly tell what we were at, for the horror of the loud groans that reached us from the doctor's patients.

Out of the eight men who had fallen in the action only three still breathed—that one of the pirates who had been shot at the loop-hole; Hunter, and Capt. Smollett; and of these the first two were as good as dead; the mutineer, indeed, died under the doctor's knife, and Hunter, do what we could, never recovered consciousness in this world. He lingered all day, breathing loudly like the old buccaneer at home in his apoplectic fit; but the bones of his chest had been crushed by the blow, and his skull fractured in falling, and some time in the following night, without sign or sound, he went to his Maker.

As for the captain, his wounds were grievous, indeed, but not dangerous. No organ was fatally injured. Anderson's ball—for it was Job that shot him first—had broken his shoulder-blade and touched the lung, not badly; the second had only torn and displaced some muscles in the calf. He was sure to recover, the doctor said, but, in the meantime and for weeks to come, he must not walk or move his arm, nor so much as speak when he could help it.

My own accident cut across the knuckles was a fleabite. Dr. Livesey patched it up with plaster, and pulled my ears for me into the bargain.

After dinner the squire and the doctor sat by the captain's side awhile in consultation; and when they had talked to their heart's content, it being then a little past noon, the doctor took up his hat and pistols, girt on a cutlass, put the chart in his pocket, and with a musket over his shoulder, crossed the palisade on the north side, and set off briskly through the trees.

Gray and I were sitting together at the far end of the block-house, to be out of earshot of our officers consulting; and Gray took his pipe out of his mouth and fairly forgot to put it back again, so thunder-struck he was at this occurrence.

"Why, in the name of Davy Jones," said he, "is Dr. Livesey mad?"

"Why, no," says I. "He's about the last of this crew for that, I take it."

"Well, shipmate," said Gray, "mad he may not be; but if he's not, mark my words, I am."

"I take it," replied I, "the doctor has his idea; and if I am right, he's going now to see Ben Gunn."

I was right, as appeared later; but in the meantinme, the house being stifling hot, and the little patch of sand inside the palisade ablaze with midday sun, I began to get another thought into my head, which was not by any means so right. What I began to do was to envy the doctor, walking in the cool shadow of the woods, with the birds about him, and the pleasant smell of the pines, while I sat grilling, with my clothes stuck to the hot resin, and so much blood about me, and so many poor dead bodies lying all around, that I took a disgust of the place that was almost as strong as fear.

All the time I was washing out the block-house, and then washing up the things from dinner, this disgust and envy kept growing stronger and stronger, till at last, being near a bread-bag, and no one then observing me, I took the first step toward my escapade, and filled both pockets of my coat with biscuits.

I was a fool, if you like, and certainly I was going to do a foolish, overbold act; but I was determined to do it with all the precautions in my power. These biscuits, should anything befall me, would keep me, at least from starving, till far on in the next day.

The next thing I laid hold of was a brace of pistols, and, as I already had a powder-horn and bullets, I felt myself well supplied with arms.

As for the scheme I had in my head, it was not a bad one in itself. It was to go down the sandy spit that divides the anchorage on the east from the open sea, find the white rock I had observed last evening, and ascertain whether it was there or not that Ben Gunn had hidden his boat; a thing quite worth doing, as I still believe. But as I was certain I should not be allowed to leave the inclosure, my only plan was to take French leave, and slip out when nobody was watching; and that was so bad a way of doing it as made the thing itself wrong. But I was only a boy, and I had made my mind up.

Well, as things at last fell out, I found an admirable opportunity. The squire and Gray were busy helping the captain with his bandages; the coast was clear; I made a bolt for it over the stockade and into the thickest of the trees, and before my absence was observed I was out of cry of companions.

This was my second folly, far worse than the first, as I left but two sound men to guard the house; but, like the first, it was a help toward saving all of us.

I took my way straight for the east coast of the island, for I was determined to go down the sea side of the spit to avoid all chance of observation from the anchorage. It was already late in the afternoon, although still warm and sunny. As I continued to thread the tall woods I could hear from far before me not only the continuous thunder of the surf, but a certain tossing of foliage and grinding of boughs which showed me the sea breeze had set in higher than usual. Soon cool draughts of air began to reach me; and a few steps further I came forth into the open borders of the grove and saw the sea lying blue and sunny to the horizon and the surf tumbling and tossing its foam along the beach.

I have never seen the sea quiet round Treasure island. The sun might blaze overhead, the air be without a breath, the surface smooth and blue, but still these great rollers would be running along all the external coast, thundering and thundering by day and night; and I scarce believe there is one spot in the island where a man would be out of earshot of their noise.

I walked along beside the surf with great enjoyment, till, thinking I was now got far enough to the south, I took the cover of some thick bushes and crept warily up to the ridge of the spit.

Behind me was the sea, in front the anchorage. The sea breeze, as though it had the sooner blown itself out by its unusual violence, was already at an end; it had been succeeded by light, variable airs from the south and southeast, carrying great banks of fog; and the anchorage, under lee of Skeleton island, lay still and leaden as when first we entered it. The "Hispaniola" in that unbroken mirror was exactly portrayed from the truck to the water line, the Jolly Roger hanging from her peak.

Alongside lay one of the gigs, Silver in the stern sheets—him I could always recognize—while a couple of men were leaning over the stern bulwarks, one of them with a red cap—the very rogue I had seen some hours before stride-legs upon the palisade. Apparently they were talking and laughing, though at that distance—upward of a mile—I could, of course, hear no word of what was said. All at once there began the most horrid, unearthly screaming, which at first startled me badly, though I had soon remembered the voice of Capt. Flint, and even thought I could make out the bird by her bright plumage as she sat perched upon her master's wrist.

Soon after the jolly-boat shoved off and pulled for shore, and the man with the red cap and his comrade went below by the cabin companion.

Just about the same time the sun had gone down behind the Spy-glass, and as the fog was collecting rapidly it began to grow dark in earnest. I saw I must lose no time if I were to find the boat that evening.

The white rock, visible enough above the brush, was still some eighth of a mile further down the spit, and it took me a goodish while to get up with it, crawling often on all fours among the scrub. Night had almost come when I laid my hand on its rough sides. Right below it there was an exceedingly small hollow of green turf, hidden by banks and a thick underwood about knee-deep, that grew there very plentifully; and in the center of the dell, sure enough, a little tent of goatskins like what the gypsies carry about with them in England.

I dropped into the hollow, lifted the side of the tent, and there was Ben Gunn's boat—homemade if ever anything was homemade; a rude, lop-sided framework of tough wood, and stretched upon that a covering of goatskin, with the hair inside. The thing was extremely small, even for me, and I can hardly imagine that it could have floated with a full-sized man. There was one thwart set as low as possible, a kind of stretcher in the bows, and a double paddle for propulsion.

I had not then seen a coracle, such as the ancient Britons made, but I have seen once since, and I can give you no fairer idea of Ben Gunn's boat than by saying it was like the first and the worst coracle ever made by man. But the great advantage if the coracle it certainly possessed, for it was exceedingly light and portable.

Well, now that I had found the boat, you would have thought I had had enough of truantry for once; but in the meantime I had taken another notion, and become so obstinately fond of it that I would have carried it out, I believe, in the teeth of Capt. Smollett himself. This was to slip out under cover of the night, cut the "Hispaniola" adrift, and let her go ashore where she fancied. I had quite made up my mind that the mutineers, after their repulse of the morning, had nothing nearer their hearts than to up anchor and away to sea; this, I thought, it would be a fine thing to prevent, and now that I had seen how they left their watchmen unprovided with a boat, I thought it might be done with little risk.

Down I sat to wait for darkness, and made a hearty meal of biscuit. It was a night out of ten thousand for my purpose. The fog had now buried all heaven. As the last rays of daylight dwindled and disappeared, absolute blackness settled down on Treasure island. And when, at last, I shouldered the coracle, and groped my way stumblingly out of the hollow where I had supped, there were but two points visible on the whole anchorage.

One was the great fire on shore, by which the defeated pirates lay carousing in the swamp. The other, a mere blur of light upon the darkness, indicated the position of the anchored ship. She had swung round to the ebb—her bow was now toward me—the only lights on board were in the cabin; and what I saw was merely a reflection on the fog of the strong rays that flowed from the stern window.

The ebb had already run some time, and I had to wade through the long belt of swampy sand, where I sunk several times above the ankle, before I came to the edge of the retreating water, and, wading a little way in, with some strength and dexterity set my coracle, keel downward, on the surface.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE EBB-TIDE RUNS.

The coracle—as I had ample reason to know before I was done with her—was a very safe boat for a person of my height and weight, both buoyant and clever in a seaway; but she was the most cross-grained, lop-sided craft to manage. Do as you pleased, she always made more leeway than anything else, and turning round and round was the maneuver she was best at. Even Ben Gunn himself has admitted that she was "queer to handle till you knew her way."

Certainly I did not know her way. She turned in every direction but one, the one I was bound to go; the most part of the time we were broadside on, and I am very sure I never should have made the ship at all but for the tide. By good fortune, paddle as I pleased, the tide was still sweeping me down; and there lay the "Hispaniola" right in the fair way, hardly to be missed.

First she loomed before me like a blot of something yet blacker than darkness, then her spars and hull began to take shape, and the next moment, as it seemed (for the further I went the brisker grew the current of the ebb), I was alongside her hawser, and had laid hold.

The hawser was as taut as a bow-string—so strong she pulled upon her anchor. All round the hull, in the blackness, the rippling current bubbled and chattered like a little mountain stream. One cut with my sea gully and the "Hispaniola" would go humming down the tide.

So far so good; but it next occurred to my recollection that a taut hawser,

Each with a hand on the other's throat.

suddenly cut, is a thing as dangerous as a kicking horse. Ten to one, if I were so foolhardy as to cut the "Hispaniola" from her anchor, I and the coracle would be knocked clean out of the water.

This brought me to a full stop, and if fortune had not again particularly favored me, I should have had to abandon my design. But the light airs which had begun blowing from the southeast and south had hauled round after nightfall into the southwest. Just while I was meditating, a puff came, caught the "Hispaniola" and forced her up into the current; and, to my great joy, I felt the hawser slacken in my grasp, and the hand by which I held it dip for a second under water.

With that I made my mind up, took out my gully, opened it with my teeth, and cut one strand after another, till the vessel swung by two. Then I lay quiet, waiting to sever these last when the strain should be once more lightened by a breath of wind.

All this time I had heard the sound of loud voices from the cabin; but, to say truth, my mind had been so entirely taken up with other thoughts that I had scarcely given ear. Now, however, when I had nothing else to do, I began to pay more heed.

One I recognized for the cockswain's, Israel Hands, that had been Flint's gunner in former days. The other was, of course, my friend of the red night-cap. Both men were plainly the worse of drink, and they were still drinking; for, even while I was listening, one of them with a drunken cry opened the stern window and threw out something, which I divined to be an empty bottle. But they were not only tipsy; it was plain that they were furiously angry. Oaths flew like hailstones, and every now and then there came forth such an explosion as I thought was sure to end in blows. But each time the quarrel passed off, and the voices grumbled lower for awhile, until the next crisis came, and, in turn, passed away without result.

On shore, I could see the glow of the great campfire burning warmly through the shore-side trees. Some one was singing, a dull old droning sailor's song, with a droop and a quaver at the end of every verse, and seemingly no end to it at all but the patience of the singer. I had heard it on the voyage more than once, and remembered these words:

"But one man of the crew alive,
What put to sea with seventy-five."

And I thought it was a ditty rather too dolefully appropriate for a company that had met such cruel losses in the morning. But, indeed, from what I saw, all these buccaneers were as callous as the sea they sailed on.

At last the breeze came; the schooner sidled and drew nearer in the dark; I felt the hawser slacken once more, and with a good, tough effort cut the last fibers through.

The breeze had but little action on the coracle, and I was almost instantly swept against the bows of the "Hispaniola." At the same time the schooner began to turn upon her heel, spinning slowly, end for end, across the current.

I wrought like a fiend, for I expected every moment to be swamped; and since I found I could not push the coracle directly off, I now shoved straight astern. At length I was clear of my dangerous neighbor; and just as I gave the last impulsion, my hands came across the stern bulwarks. Instantly I grasped it.

Why I should have done so I can hardly say. It was at first mere instinct; but once I had it in my hands and found it fast, curiosity began to get the upper hand, and I determined I should have one look through the cabin window.

I pulled in hand over hand on the cord, and, when I judged myself near enough, rose at infinite risk to about half my height, and thus commanded the roof and a slice of the interior of the cabin.

By this time the schooner and her little consort were gliding pretty swiftly through the water; indeed, we had already fetched up level with the campfire. The ship was talking, as sailors say, loudly, treading the innumerable ripples with an incessant weltering splash; and until I got my eye above the window sill I could not comprehend why the watchman had taken no alarm. One glance, however, was sufficient; and it was only one glance that I durst take from that unsteady skiff. It showed me Hands and his companion locked together in deadly wrestle, each with a hand upon the other's throat.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DREAMER AND SCHEMER.

Napoleon Thought He Could Win Glory in Mexico.

When the Mexican empire was planned our civil war had been raging for nearly two years. From the standpoint of the French rulers, the moment seemed auspicious for France to interfere in American affairs. The establishment of a great Latin empire, founded under French protection and developed in the interest of France, which must necessarily derive the principal benefit of the stupendous wealth which Mexico held ready to pour into the lap of French capitalists—of an empire which in the west might put a limit to the supremacy of the United States, as well as counterbalance the British supremacy in the east, thus opposing a formidable check to the encroachments of the Anglo-Saxon race in the interest of the Latin nations—such was Napoleon's plan, and I have been told by one who was close to the imperial family at that time that the emperor himself fondly regarded it as "the conception of his reign."

Napoleon III. labored under the disadvantage of reigning beneath the shadow of a great personality which, consciously or unconsciously, he ever strove to emulate. But however clever he may be, man who, anxious to appear or even to be great, forces fate and creates impossible situations that he may act a leading part before the world, is only a schemer. This is the key to the character of Napoleon III. and to his failures. He looked far away and dreamed of universal achievements, when at home, at his very door, were the threatening issues he should have mastered. The story is told of him that one evening, at the Tuileries, when the imperial party were playing games, chance brought to the emperor the question: "What is your favorite occupation?" to which he answered: "To seek the solution of unsolvable problems." It is also related that in his younger days a favorite axiom of his was: "Follow the ideas of your time, they carry you along; struggle against them, they overcome you; preceed them, they support you." True enough, but only on condition that you will not mistake the shrill charms of a few interested courtiers and speculators for the vioce of your time, nor imagine that you precede your generation because you stand alone. He dreamed of far-away glory and his flatterers told him his dreams were prophetic.—Cornelius Stevens, in Century.

Another Gas Trust.

She—George, dear, don't turn the gas too low.

He—Why not, sweetheart?

She—Because I read in the paper last week about a man who turned the gas so low that the lack of pressure extinguished the spark and he was asphyxiated.

He—Don't be alarmed, darling. Just feel the muscle of that strong, right arm; there isn't going to be any lack of pressure about this spark.—Chicago News.

A Hindrance to Courtship.

Mr. Hilow—I hear that Miss Munn, whom you call upon so frequently, is quite wealthy in her own right.

Mr. Hudson—So I hear.

Mr. Hilow—Any incumbrances?

Mr. Hudson — A seven-year-old brother.—Judge.

Grand Opportunity.

He—Darling, will you miss me when I am away in a foreign land?

She—Yes, dear; but you will write to me often, won't you? What a chance it will be for me to increase my collection of foreign stamps!—Tit-Bits.

Bronze Casting.

"Whatabliar Wickwire is. He says that they taught bronze casting at school when he was a boy."

"He is not a liar. I learned to pitch pennies at school myself."—Indianapolis Journal.

PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL.

Professional etiquette prevents French judges and judicial officials from riding in omnibuses.

Sister Ellen Joseph, of Baltimore, enjoys the distinction of being the oldest religieuse in the country. She has just passed her one hundred and seventh birthday.

A Toronto dentist gratuitously cares for the teeth of children whose parents are too poor to pay for the service. Last year he attended over 2,000 children.

Robert Planquette, the composer of "Rip Van Winkle" and the "Chimes of Normandy," has been made a chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the French president.

Midshipman Morres, of the Vizcaya, mourns the loss of a collection of nearly 25,000 postage stamps, including many rare European varieties, which were destroyed in the Spanish ship.

Richard P. Rothwell, editor of the Engineering and Mining Journal, has received the gold medal of the Societe d'Encouragement pour l'Industrie Nationale of France.

George B. Richmond, who died at Lansing, Mich., was the original inventor of the electric telephone which was in use before the Bell patent was filed. He never realized anything from his invention.

A soldier's widow, a resident of Philadelphia, died there in 1877. For 13 years she had been a pensioner. It has just been discovered that her daughter has been personating her for the past 21 years, and drawing her pension.

Two little pigs caused contention between a couple of neighboring farmers in Shannon county, Mo. Each claimed both pigs. They went to law about them, and when the costs had amounted to $99 the litigants compromised by each taking a pig.

Charles Brasso, now in Havana, writes to a friend in New York that the "jack flag" of the Maine is now offered for sale in Havana by a Spaniard, who wants $5,000 for it. The Spaniard showed Brasso a written offer from Spain of $1,500 for the flag.

The chaplain of one of our war vessels, on learning that there would be a naval battle on the morrow, is reported to have uttered this prayer: "Oh, Lord, shield us from the shells of the enemy, but if any missiles do come to our vessel, I pray Thee that they may be distributed as prize money is distributed, mostly among the officers."

A rude remark by William Jennings caused Justice Robert M. Bowling, of Kansas City, to adjourn court for 15 minutes. They went outside, and in less than five minutes Jennings was a vanquished man, with a battered face and two black eyes. As the justice was about to resume his seat on the bench he said: "Any man who insults this court will have to fight."

BUFFALO HERDS IN OLD DAYS.

There Is a Great Difference Between Seeing 10,000 Animals and One Lone Bull.

Gazing on the scraggy remnants of buffalo in an inclosure at Glen island, a Colorado tourist in the east said:

"They are buffaloes, I don't dispute that, but they are not the kind that used to make the west look like a moving sea. I reckon you have read a great deal about extinct buffalo. Ten years ago I heard that the last buffalo had been killed—the last one in captivity. But the buffalo, like the Indian, dies hard. And I read about the last Indian long before I began shedding my hair.

"There is a herd of buffalo in Colorado that has been knocking about for 30 years at least, and a man in that state who has made the buffalo a life study tells me he knows of two herds. In 1865 there was a big herd in the country known as Middle Park. As the country was settled by whites the buffalo fell back. Hunters followed that herd to Big river, but in the winter of 1875 the weather was so severe that the hunters gave up the chase. That was the great snow winter in Colorado. The snow was so deep that buffalo couldn't get around. That's an actual fact. But it never gets too deep for Indians. That winter a band of Indians went after the buffalo and killed more than could be brought away. Next spring a lot of whites went out and got the tallow from the dead buffaloes and made money out of it.

"The white hunters brought back the news that the Indians had killed every buffalo in the herd. But that was like other buffalo stories. A few weeks later a herd was found on the headwaters of Troublesome river. It was a part of the herd which was snowbound. White hunters killed some of this herd and brought the meat to market and got into trouble for it, because there is a law against killing buffalo in Colorado. This law operates against a white man, but an Indian can hunt and kill anything he likes and the law never touches him.

"The last man I saw who had seen buffalo in Colorado told me that he had counted ten buffaloes up on the North Park slope. That was four years ago. Think of it! He had seen buffalo, because he had counted 'em. Ten of 'em! I wonder what he would 'a' thought if he had seen 10,000 in a herd. And I can remember the time when it took 10,000 to make a herd. But never again will any man see such a herd. When buffalo herds get scattered they don't even multiply."—N. Y. Sun.

A Naval Hero.

Skates—If Germany ever goes to war with this country I'll enlist in the navy. I am confident I should become distinguished.

Winks—Why?

"I have such a great capacity for downing those German schooners."—Up to Date.