

PIECES OF EIGHT

BEING THE AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE OF A TREASURE DISCOVERED IN THE BAHAMA ISLANDS IN THE YEAR 1903. NOW FIRST GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC.

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THE POCK-MARKED MAN.

Synopsis—The man who tells this story—call him the hero, for short—is visiting his friend John Saunders, British official in Nassau, Bahama Islands. Charlie Webster, a local merchant, completes the trio of friends. Conversation turns upon buried pirate treasure. Saunders produces a written document purporting to be the death-bed statement of Henry P. Tobias, a successful pirate, made by him in 1859. It gives two spots where two millions and a half of treasure were buried by him and his companions. The conversation of the three friends is overheard by a stranger, whose face is deeply pitted by small pox.

CHAPTER III.

I Charter the "Maggie Darling." As luck would have it, the loss, or rather the theft of Henry P. Tobias' narrative was not so serious as it at first seemed, for it fortunately chanced that John Saunders had had it copied; but the theft remained none the less mysterious.

However, leaving that mystery for later solution, John Saunders, Charlie Webster and I spent the next evening in a general and particular criticism of the narrative itself. There were several obvious objections to be made against its authenticity. To start with, Tobias, at the time of his deposition, was an old man—seventy-five years old—and it was more than probable that his experiences as a pirate would date from his early manhood; they were hardly likely to have taken place as late as his fortieth year. The narrative, indeed, suggested their taking place much earlier, and there would thus be a space of at least forty years between the burial of the treasure and his deathbed revelation. It was natural to ask: Why during all those years did he not return and retrieve the treasure for himself? Various circumstances may have prevented him, the inability from lack of means to make the journey, or what not; but certainly one would need to imagine circumstances of peculiar power that should be strong enough to keep a man with so valuable a secret in his possession so many years from taking advantage of it.

For a long while, too, the names given to the purported sites of the treasure caches puzzled us. Modern maps give no such places as "Dead Men's Shoes" and "Short Shift Island," but at last, in a map dating back to 1763, we came upon one of the two names. So far the veracity



Then Tom Came Up With My Breakfast.

of Tobias was supported. "Dead Men's Shoes" proved to be the old name for a certain cove some twenty miles long, about a day and a half's sail from Nassau, one of the long string of coral islands now known as the "Exuma Cays." But of "Short Shift Island" we sought in vain for a trace.

"All the same," said I, "the adventure calls me; the adventure and that million and a half dollars—and those 'Dead Men's Shoes'—and I intend to undertake it. I am not going to let your middle-aged skepticism discourage me. Treasure or no treasure, there will be the excitement of the quest, and all the fun of the sea."

"And some duck perhaps," added Charlie.

"And some shark fishing for certain," said John.

The next thing was to set about getting a boat and a crew.

After looking over much likely and unlikely craft we finally decided on a two-masted schooner of trim but solid build, the Maggie Darling, 42 feet over all and 13 beam; something

under twenty tons, with an auxiliary gasoline engine of 24 horse power, and an alleged speed of ten knots.

Next, the crew. "You will need a captain, a cook, an engineer and a deckhand," said Charlie, "and I have the captain and the cook all ready for you."

That afternoon we rounded them all up, including the engineer and the deckhand, and we arranged to start, weather permitting, with the morning tide, which set east at six o'clock on July 13, 1903.

Ship's stores were the next detail, and these, including fifty gallons of gasoline, over and above the tanks and three barrels of water, being duly got aboard, on the evening of July 12 all was ready for the start; an evening which was naturally spent in a parting conclave in John Saunders' snugery.

"Why, one important thing you've forgotten," said Charlie. "Machetes— and spades and pickaxes. And I'd take a few sticks of dynamite along with you too. I can let you have the lot. We'll get them aboard tonight."

"It's a pity you have to give it away that it's a treasure hunt," said John, "but then you can't keep the crew from knowing. And they're a queer lot on the subject of treasure, have some of the rummier superstitions. I hope you won't have any trouble with them."

"Had any experience in handling niggers?" asked Charlie.

"Not the least."

"That makes me wish I were coming with you. They are rum beggars. Awful cowards, and just like a pack of children. You know about sailing anyhow. That's a good thing. You can captain your own boat, if need be. That's all to the good. Particularly if you strike any dirty weather. But let me give you one word of advice: Be kind, of course, with them—but keep your distance all the same. And be careful about losing your temper. You get more out of them by coaxing—hard as it is, at times. And, by the way, how would you like to take old 'Sailor' with you?"

"Sailor" was a great Labrador retriever, who at that moment turned up his big head with a devoted sigh from behind his master's chair.

"Rather," I said. So "Sailor" was thereupon enrolled as a further addition to the crew.

"Old Tom," the cook, was first on hand next morning. I took to him at once. A simple, kindly old "darky" of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" type, with faithfulness written all over him, and a certain sad wisdom in his old face.

"You'll find Tom a great cook," said Charlie, patting the old man on the shoulder. "Many a trip we've taken together after duck, haven't we, Tom?"

"That's right, sah. That's right," said the old man, his eyes twinkling with pleasure.

Then came the captain—Capt. Jabez Williams—a younger man, with an intelligent, self-respecting manner, somewhat noncommittal, businesslike, evidently not particularly anxious as to whether he pleased or not, but looking competent and civil enough.

Next came the engineer, a young hulking bronze giant, a splendid physical specimen, but rather heavy and sullen and not over-intelligent to look at. The deckhand proved to be a shakily, rather silly, effeminate fellow, suggesting idiocy, but doubtless wiry and good enough for the purpose.

While they were busy getting up the anchor of the Maggie Darling I went down into my cabin to arrange various odds and ends, and presently came the captain, touching his hat.

"There's a party," he said, "outside here wants to know if you'll take him passenger to Spanish Wells."

"We're not taking passengers," I answered, "but I will look him over."

A man was standing up in a row-boat, leaning against the ship's side. "You'd do me a great favor, sir," he began to say in a soft, ingratiating voice.

I looked at him with a start of recognition. He was my pockmarked friend, who had made such an unpleasant impression on me at John Saunders' office. He was rather more gentlemanly looking than he had seemed at the first view, and I saw that, though he was a halfbreed the white blood predominated.

"I don't want to intrude," he said, "but I have urgent need of getting to Spanish Wells, and there's no boat going that way for a week. I've just missed the mail."

"I didn't think of taking any passengers," I said.

"I know," he said. "I know it's a great favor I ask." He spoke with a certain cultivation of manner. "But I am willing of course to pay anything you think well for my food and my passage."

I waived that suggestion aside and stood irresolutely looking at him, with no very hospitable expression in my eyes, I dare say. But really my distaste for him was an unreasoning prejudice, and Charlie Webster's phrase came to my mind—"His face is against the poor devil!"

It certainly was. Then at last I said, surely not over-

graciously: "Very well. Get aboard. You can help work the boat;" and with that I turned away to my cabin.

CHAPTER IV.

In Which Tom Catches an Enchanted Fish, and Discourses of the Dangers of Treasure Hunting.

The morning was a little overcast, but a brisk northeast wind soon set the clouds moving as it went humming in our sails, and the sun, coming out in its glory over the crystalline waters, made a fine flashing world of it, full of exhilaration and the very breath of youth and adventure, very uplifting to the heart.

Nassau looked very pretty in the morning sunlight, with its pink and white houses nestling among palm trees and the masts of its sponging schooners, and soon we were abreast of the picturesque low-lying fort, Fort Montague, that Major Bruce, nearly two hundred years ago, had such a time building as a protection against pirates entering from the east end of the harbor. It looked like a veritable piece of the past, and set the imagination dreaming of those old days of Spanish galleons and the black flag, and brought my thoughts eagerly



"Tom and You and I."

back to the object of my trip, those doubloons and pieces of eight that lay in glittering heaps somewhere out in those island wildernesses.

Then Tom came up with my breakfast. The old fellow stood by to serve me as I ate, with a pathetic touch of the old slavery days in his deferential, half-fatherly manner, dropping a quaint remark every now and again; as, when drawing my attention to the sun bursting through the clouds, he said, "The poor man's blanket is coming out, sah"—phrases in which there seemed a whole lot of pathos to me.

Presently, when breakfast was over, and I stood looking over the side into the incredibly clear water, in which it seems hardly possible that a boat can go on floating, suspended as she seems over gleaming gulfs of liquid space, down through which at every moment it seems she must dizzily fall.

As Tom and I gazed down, lost in those rainbow depths, I heard a voice at my elbow saying with peculiarly sickening unctiousness:

"The wonderful works of God."

It was my unwelcome passenger, who had silently edged up to where we stood. I looked at him, with the question very clear in my eyes as to what kind of disagreeable animal he was.

"Precisely," I said, and moved away. I had been trying to feel more kindly toward him, wondering whether I could summon up the decency to offer him a cigar, but "the wonderful works of God" finished me.

"Hello! captain," I said presently, pointing to some sails coming up rapidly behind us. "What's this? I thought we'd got the fastest boat in the harbor."

"It's the Susan B., sponger," said the captain.

The captain was a man of few words.

The Susan B. was a rakish-looking craft with a black hull, and she certainly could sail. No doubt it was pure imagination, but I did fancy that I noticed our passenger signal to them in a peculiar way.

I confess that his presence was beginning to get on my nerves, and I was ready to get "edgy" at anything or nothing—an irritated state of mind which I presently took out on George the engineer, who did not belie his hulking appearance, and who was forever letting the engine stop and taking forever to get it going again. One could almost have sworn he did it on purpose.

My language was more forcible than classical—had quite a piratical flavor, in fact; and my friend of "the wonderful works of God" looked up with a deprecating air. Its effect on George was nil, except perhaps to further deepen his sulks.

And this I did notice, after a while, that my remarks to George seemed to have set up a certain sympathetic acquaintance between him and my passenger, the shakily deckhand being apparently taken in as an humble third. They sat for'ard, talking together, and my passenger read to them, on one occasion, from a piece of printed paper that fluttered in the wind.

The captain was occupied with his helm, and the thoughts he didn't seem to feel the necessity of sharing; a quiet, poised, probably stupid man, for whom I could not deny the respect we must always give to content, however simple. He was a sailor, and I don't know what better to say of a man.

So for companionship I was thrown back upon Tom. I felt, too, that he was my only friend on board, and a vague feeling had come over me that within the next few hours I might need a friend.

"Are we going too fast for fishing, Tom?" I asked.

"Not too fast for a barracouta," said Tom; so we put out lines and watched the stretched strings, and listened to the sea. After a while Tom's line grew taut, and we hauled in a five-foot barracouta.

"Look!" said Tom, as he pointed to a little writhing eel-like shape, about nine inches long, attached to the belly of the barracouta.

"A sucking fish!" said Tom. "That's good luck;" and he proceeded to turn over the poor creature and cut from his back, immediately below his head, a flat inch and a half of skin lined and stamped like a rubber sole—the device by which he held on to the belly of the barracouta much as the circle of wet leather holds the stone in a schoolboy's sling.

"Now," he said, when he had it clean and neat in his fingers, "we must hang this up and dry it in the northeast wind; the wind is just right—nor-nor-east—and there is no mascot like it, specially when—" Old Tom hesitated, with a slyly innocent smile in his eyes.

"What is it, Tom?" I asked.

"Well, sir, I meant to say that this particular part of a sucking fish, properly dried in the northeast wind, is a wonderful mascot—when you're going after treasure."

"Who said I was going after treasure?" I asked.

"Aren't you, sah?" replied Tom, "asking your pardon."

"Let's talk it over later on, when you bring me my dinner, Tom."

Later, as Tom stood, serving my coffee, I took it up with him again.

"What was that you were saying about treasure, Tom?" I asked.

"Well, sir, what I meant was this: that going after treasure is a dangerous business. . . . It's not only the living you're to think of— Here Tom threw a careful eye for'ard.

"The crew, you mean?"

"He nodded.

"But it's the dead too."

"The dead, Tom?"

"Well, sir, there was never a buried treasure yet that didn't claim its victim. Not one or two either. Six or eight of them, to my knowledge—and the treasure just where it was for all that. I daresay it sounds all foolishness, but it's true for all that. Something or other'll come, mark my word—just when they think they've got their hands on it: a hurricane or a tidal wave or an earthquake. And—well, the ghost laughs, but the treasure stays there all the same."

"The ghost laughs?" I asked.

"Eh! of course; didn't you know every treasure is guarded by a ghost? He's got to keep watch there till the next fellow comes along, to relieve sentry duty, so to speak. He doesn't give it away. My no! He doesn't do that. But the minute someone else is killed, coming looking for it, then he's free—and the new ghost has got to go on sitting there, waiting for ever so long till someone else comes looking for it."

"But what has this sucking fish got to do with it?" And I pointed to the red membrane already drying in Tom's hand.

"Well, the man who carries this in his pocket won't be the next ghost," he answered.

"Take good care of it for me, then, Tom," I said, "and when it's properly dried let me have it. For I've a sort of idea I may have need of it, after all."

And just then old Sailor, the quietest member of the crew, put up his head into my hands, as though to say that he had been unfairly lost sight of.

"Yes, and you too, old chap—that's right, Tom and you and I."

And then I turned in for the night.

The pockmarked man proves an interesting passenger and the voyage is far from monotonous

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Statement That Counts.

Do not let the man who says, "This is the year when I am going to show you how to farm it," think that he will have all clear sailing. He will meet wildcats and bears at every turn, and he may consider himself lucky if he gets off with a whole hide. The big thing is to stand on the far end of the field when the harvest is gathered in and be able to say, "I did what I said I would!"—Exchange.

ONLY FEW COLORS

Women Must Use Shades That Are Picked for Them.

FEATHERS, HAT AND PARASOL

Wearers of Garments Have Little or No Chance to Exercise Own Taste, Says Writer.

Launching a new color nowadays is attended with as much ceremony as the launching of a battleship. Amy E. Hogeboom writes in the New York Herald. Not that there is such a thing as a new color, nor that colors are scarce. Neither has it anything to do with the dye situation, but the fact is that the manufacturers assemble each season and decide to allow certain shades to be placed on the market at that season. If you should wish for any shade which they have decided is not to be you may as well give up in the beginning. This does not happen as often as it might were the majority of the well-dressed women not cleverly cajoled into wanting the shade that the manufacturers have decided they shall want.

Allowing only a few colors out of the bag at one time has its advantages, for when the popularity of one has worn off a bit there are plenty of others left from which to select the next one for the center of the stage. The disadvantage is that as far as the woman herself is concerned she has little or no opportunity to exercise her own taste; she is almost as helpless in the matter as she would be had she no color sense at all. She may find a dressmaker willing to cut her gown somewhat as she wishes or a tailor who may humor her in a like manner, but unless she has special dyeing done for her she must select from the colors set before her.

Last fall some one hit upon a shade which he called henna as an especial attraction. It might have been inspired by some canon of art or it might have been suggested by the Russian dressing of the business man's luncheon, but the women wore it, and that is all they had to say about it.

For the greater part the women are willing sheep in matters of dress, be it color or line, and if not naturally thus inclined they show good sense not to try to stray too far away. Having purchased one article in a color not approved by the color censor, for really we have censors for everything nowadays, it will be found impossible to match the color in anything else and an utterly hopeless task.

ONE NEW BATHING COSTUME



A stunning bathing costume on new lines with the knee-fitting breeches which are the very latest thing. A quite elaborate hat is worn to match the suit.

THEY ARE SURE TO SHRINK

When Buying Housedresses, or Making Them, Allow for One Size Larger.

Always have enough housedresses. To be sure cottons are high priced, but if you make them yourself or buy them at a store where the prices are not exorbitant the cost should not be prohibitive. If you buy them ready made do make sure to get them a size larger than your regular size. They are sure to shrink and it is almost never that the manufacturer shrinks the materials before the dresses are cut out. If you make your own then you have the advantage in being able to shrink it well beforehand. Even then you must remember that the goods will probably shrink a little more in the third and fourth washing so do not make them a bit scrippy, but add a little for this later shrinkage.

There is one great advantage in the



Feathers are the really fashionable trimming this season. This hat and parasol are of the most handsome shade of robin's egg blue; the feathers are blue, too, while a rosebud on the brim is a blushing pink rambler.

all-white-wash dress and that is that it can be boiled and dried in the sun without fear of losing color. How many dresses have you had to discard or have you wished that you might discard because they have faded? You know what an unbecoming yellow green becomes toward the end of the season, how brownish the most attractive violet, while blue turns gray and gray turns brown. White cotton materials dried in the sun and air only become the showier for frequent washings.

On the other hand white does show the least spot very soon, and to the housewife who has to pay for her laundry work by the piece there is certainly a disadvantage in this. Often a white blouse may be kept for several days simply by removing a single spot or streak as it comes. This can be done with a little warm water and soap applied with a cloth.

STRAIGHT-LINE LONG SKIRTS

Styles Praised for Fall by National Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers.

Straight fronts. Straight backs. Broader hips for misses. Straight, classic lines for women. These are fall and winter styles decreed for women by the recent National Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' association at Cleveland, O. Skirts will be long—step length—with room enough to set comfortably. Bright colors, with supple reds and browns, compete for favor. And then comes: High rolling collars. Buttons and more buttons, not merely for ornament but for real use, since most suits will fasten clear to the chin. Pockets, tucks, stitching, and cording. Coats longer and more voluminous, with enormous armholes. Big collars of fur or shirred material.

STYLES IN NEW YORK

A blouse of bright printed silk is joined to a skirt of accordion-plaited tricotette in plain color. Straight-line, unbelted suits averaging 40 inches in length were worn by many fashionable women at the Belmont races. The talk of Irish lace as returning more and more to favor for the better grade of blouse is persistent. Extremely long fringes are used on several French imports, bringing models that would otherwise end at the hips to knee length.

Silk pongee summer suits, some lined with vivid shades of crepe de chine, favor oriental lines, including the mandarin coat. White tricotette is spoken of as one of the most popular materials for high priced sports overblouses.

Practical and Smart.

If one must wear furs in midsummer—and it has been proved how practical they are aside from their undisputed smartness—it is by far the best plan to have a distinctly different set of summer peltry and send all the winter furs to cold storage for the hot spell. Furs are like plants; they have to rest once in a while between seasons of blooming out in beauty, and the fur neckpiece or coat that was worn month in and month out with no period of recuperation would soon become shabby and lifeless looking.

Veils Add Daintiness.

The woman who is trim from top to toe never forgets that a veil is the last touch in daintiness for any outdoor costume. This year she is wearing one of the big-meshed veils that seem to be the fad; but just because veil meshes are so big fashion has whimsically introduced tiny meshed patterns that are scattered over the veil in an effect of contrast.

Checks Are the Thing.

Checks are in for a good deal of attention. They appear in many of the new ribbons, and some of the newest sweaters are knitted in checked designs. Often, too, a sweater is made with a checked border, and with a checked band at the lower edge of the full sleeves.