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.

By Richard Le Gallienne

DEAD MEN'S SHOES.

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 turning 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. The document disappears. Saunders, however, has a copy of it. The hero determines to go in search of the pirate treasure and charters the Maggie Darling, a trim two-masted schooner. The pock-marked man is taken on board as a passenger, bound for Spanish Wells. Old Tom catches a "sucking fish," of great virtue as a mascot in connection with the seeking of buried pirate treasure.

CHAPTER V.

—3—

In Which We Begin to Understand Our Unwelcome Passenger.

As I yawned and looked out of my cabin soon after dawn, about 4:30 next morning, there was no wind at all, and no hope of wind.

As I stood out of the cabin hatch, however, there was enough breeze to flutter a piece of paper that had been caught in the mainsail halyard; it fluttered there lonely in the morning. Nothing else was astir but it and I, and I took it up in my hand idly. As I did so George reared his head for'ard.

"'Morning, George," I said; "I guess we've got to run on gasoline today."

"There ain't no gasoline, sir. It's run out in the night."

"The tanks were filled when we started, weren't they?" I asked.

"Yes, sir."

"We can't have used them up so soon . . ."

"No, sir—but someone has turned the cocks . . ."

I stood dazed for a moment, wondering how this could have happened—then a thought slowly dawned upon me.

"Who has charge of them?" I said.

George looked a little stupid, then defiant.

"I see," I said; and, suddenly, without remembering Charlie Webster's advice not to lose your temper with a negro—I realized that this was no accident, but a deliberate trick, something indeed in the nature of a miniature mutiny. That fluttering paper I had picked from the halyard lay near my breakfast table. I had only half read it. Now its import came to me with full force. I had no firearms with me. Having a quick temper, I have made it a habit all my life never to carry a gun—because they go off so easily. But one most essential part of a gentleman's education had been mine, so I applied it instantly on George, with the result that a well-directed blow under the peak of the jaw sent him sprawling, and for awhile speechless, in the cockpit.

"No gasoline?" I said.

And then my passenger—I must give him credit for the courage—put up his head for'ard, and called out:

"I protest against that; it's a cowardly outrage. You wouldn't dare to do it to a white man."

"Oh, I see," I rejoined. "So you are the author of this precious paper here, are you? Come over here and talk it over, if you've the courage."

"I've got the courage," he answered, in a shaking voice.

"All right," I said; "you're safe for the present—and, George, who is so fond of sleep, will take quite a nap for a while, I think."

"You English brute!" he said.

"You English brute!" he had said; and the words had impelled me to invite him aft; for I cannot deny a certain admiration for him that had mysteriously grown up in me.

"Come here!" I said, "for your life is safe for the time being. I would like to discuss this paper with you."

He came and we read it together, fluttering as I had seen it flutter in his fingers as he read it for'ard to the engineer and to the deckhand. It began:

"Think how many we are! Think what we could do! It isn't either that we haven't intelligence—if only we were to use it. We don't lack leaders—we don't lack courage—we don't lack martyrs; all are ready—"

I stopped reading.

"Why don't you start then?" I asked.

"We're waiting for Jamaica," he answered; "she's almost ready."

"It sounds a pretty good idea to me," I remarked, "from your point of view. 'From your point of view,' remember, I said; but you mustn't think that yours is mine—not for one moment—O dear no! On the contrary, my point of view is that of the governor of Nassau, or his representative, quite nearby, at Harbour Island, isn't it?"

My pock-marked friend grew a trifle green as I said this.

"We have sails still, remember," I resumed. "George and the lost gasoline are not everything. Five hours, with anything of a wind, would bring us to Harbour Island, and—with this paper in my hand it would be—what do you think yourself? The gallows?"

My friend grew grave at that, and seemed to be thinking hard inside, making resolutions the full force of which I didn't understand till later, but the immediate result of which was a graciousness of manner which did not entirely deceive me.

"Oh," he said, "I don't think you quite mean that. You're impulsive—as when you hit that poor boy down there—"

"Well," I observed, "I'm willing to treat you better than you deserve. So, I'll say nothing about this, if you like" (pointing to the manuscript), "and if the wind holds, put you ashore tomorrow at Spanish Wells. I like you in spite of myself. Is it a bargain?"

On this we parted, and, as I thought, with a certain friendliness on both sides.

There was no sailing wind, so there was nothing to do but stay where we were all day. I spent most of the time in my cabin, reading a novel, and, soon after nine, I fell asleep in a frame of mind unaccountably trustful.

I suppose that I had been asleep about three hours when I was disturbed by a tremendous roar. It was Sailor (who always slept near me) out on the cockpit with a man under his paws—his jaws at the man's throat. I called him off, and saw that it was my pock-marked friend, with his right hand extended in the cockpit and a revolver a few inches away from it. So far as I knew it was the only firearm on the ship. "Let's get hold of that first, Sailor," I said, and I slipped it into my hip pocket.

"Wake up, Tom," I called, and, "wake up, captain!" Meanwhile, I took out the revolver from my hip pocket, and

It Was Sailor—His Jaws at a Man's Throat.

held it over the man I seemed to grow more and more sorry for.

"We've not only got a mutiny aboard," I told the captain, "but we've got treason to the British government. Do you want to stand for that? Or shall I put you ashore with the rest?"

Unruffled as usual, he had nothing to say beyond:

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Take this cord, then," I ordered him and Tom, "and bind the hands and feet of this pock-marked gentleman here; also of George, engineer; and also of Theodore, the deckhand. Bind them well. And throw them into the dingy, with a bottle of water apiece, and a loaf of bread. By noon, we'll have some wind, and can make our way to Harbour Island, and there I'll have a little talk with the commandant."

And as I ordered, all was done. Tom and I rowed the dingy ashore, with our three captives bound like three silly fowls, and presently threw them ashore with precious little ceremony. Then we got back to the Maggie Darling, with imprecations in our ears, and particularly the promises of the pock-marked rebel, who announced the certainty of our meeting again.

Of course we laughed at such threats, but I confess that, as I went down to my cabin and picked up the "manifesto," which had been forgotten in all the turmoil, I could not escape a certain thrill as I read the signature—for it was: "Henry P. Tobias, Jr."

That night we made Harbour island, and met that welcome that can only be met at the lonely ends of the earth.

The commandant and the clergyman took me under their wings on the spot, and, though there was a good hotel, the commandant didn't consider it good enough for me.

I liked the attitude they took toward my adventure. Their comments on "Henry P. Tobias, Jr." and the paper I had with me, were specially enlightening.

"The black men themselves," they both agreed, "are all right, except, of course, here and there. It's fellows like this precious Tobias, real white trash—the negroes' name for them is apt enough—that are the danger for the friendship of both races. And it's the vein of a sort of a literary idealism in a fellow like Tobias that makes him the more dangerous. He's not all to the bad—"

"I couldn't help thinking that too," I interrupted.

"Oh, no," they said, "but he's a bit mad, too. That's his trouble. He's got a personal, as well as an abstract, grudge against the British government."

"Treasure?" I laughed.

"How did you know?" they asked.

"Never mind; I somehow got the idea."

"Take a word of advice. Have a few guns with you, for you're liable to need them."

"I agree," I remarked. "I'll take the guns all right, but I'm afraid I'll need some more crew. I mean I'll want an engineer, and another deckhand."

And, just as I said this, there came up some one post-haste from the village; some one, too, that wanted the clergyman, as well as me, for my captain was ill, and at the point of death.

"What on earth can be the trouble?" I said, but, the three of us, including the commandant went.

We found the captain lying in his berth, writhing with cramps.

"What on earth have you been doing with yourself, Cap?" I asked.

"I did nothing, sir, but eat my dinner, and drink that claret you were kind enough to give me."

"The half-bottle of claret?"

"Yes, sir, the very same."

"Well, there was nothing to hurt you in that," I said. "Did you take it half and half with water, as I told you?"

"I did indeed, sir."

"It's very funny," I said. And then as he began to writhe and stiffen, I called out to Tom: "Get some rum, Tom, and make it boiling hot, quick—quick! We must get him into a sweat."

Very soon we did. Then I said to Tom:

"What do you make out of this smell that's coming from him, Tom?"

"Kerosene, sar," said Tom.

"I thought the very same," I said.

Tom beckoned me to go with him to the galley, and showed me several quart bottles of water standing on a shelf.

"Two of these were kerosene," he said "and I suppose Cap made a mistake;" for one looked as clear as the other.

Then I took one of them back to the captain.

"Was it a bottle like this you mixed with the claret?" I asked.

"Sure it was, sir," he answered, writhing hard with the cramps.

"But man!" I said. "Couldn't you tell the difference between that and water?"

"I thought it tasted funny, boss, but I wasn't used to claret."

And then we had to laugh again, and I thought old Tom would die.

"A nigger's stomach and his head," said the commandant, "are about the same. I really don't know which is the stronger."

The captain didn't die, though he came pretty near to it. In fact, he took so long getting on his feet, that we couldn't wait for him; so we had practically to look out for a new crew, with the exception of Tom, and Sailor. The commandant proved a good friend to us in this, choosing three somewhat characterless men, with good "characters."

As we said goodby, with a spanking southwest breeze blowing, I could see that he was a little anxious about me.

"Take care of yourself," he said, "for you must remember none of us can take care of you. There's no settlement where you're going—no telegraph or wireless; you could be murdered, and none of us hear of it for a month, or forever. And the fellows you're after are a dangerous lot, take my word for it. Keep a good watch on your guns, and we'll be on the lookout for the first news of you, and anything we can do we'll be there, you bet."

CHAPTER VI.

In Which the Sucking Fish Has a Chance to Show Its Virtue.

The breeze was so strong that we didn't use our engine that day. Besides, I wanted to take a little time thinking over my plans. I spent most of the time studying the charts and pondering John P. Tobias' narrative, which threw very little light on the situation. There was little definite to go by but his mark of the compass engraven on a certain rock in a wilderness of rocks; and such rocks as they were at that.

I looked well to my guns. The commandant had made me accept the loan of a particularly expert revolver that was, I could see, as the apple of his eye. He must have cared for me a great deal to have lent it me, and it was right as the things we love.

Then I called Tom to me: "How about that sucking fish, Tom?" I asked.

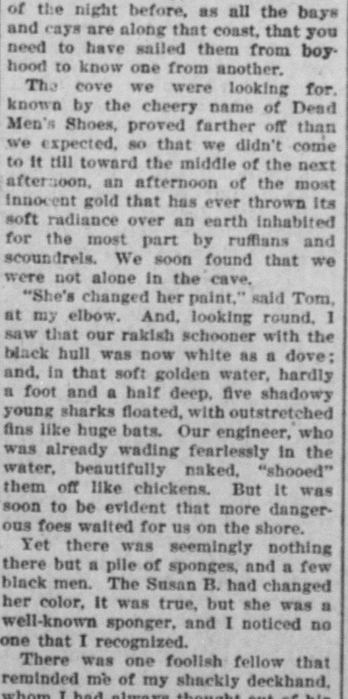
"It's just cured, sar," he said. "I was going to offer it to you this lunch time. It's dried out fine; couldn't be better. I'll bring it to you this minute." And he went and was back again in a moment. "You must wear it right over your heart," he said, "and you'll see there's not a bullet can get near it. It's never been known for a bullet to go through a sucking fish. It's God's truth."

"But, Tom," I said, "how about you?"

"I've worn one here, sar, for twenty years, and you can see for yourself"—and he bared the brown chest beneath which beat the heart that like nothing else in the world has made me believe in God."

We awoke to a dawn that was a rose planted in the sky by the mysterious hand that seems to love to give the fairest thing the loneliest setting.

But there was no wind, so that day we ran on gasoline. We had some fifty miles to go to where the narra-



"Give Me Dat!" He Said.

tive pointed, a smaller cay, the cay known in old days as "Dead Men's Shoes"—but since known by another name which, for various reasons, I do not deem it polite to divulge—near the end of the long cay down which we were running.

About twilight we dropped anchor in another quiet bay, so much like that of the night before, as all the bays and cays are along that coast, that you need to have sailed them from boyhood to know one from another.

The cove we were looking for, known by the cheery name of Dead Men's Shoes, proved farther off than we expected, so that we didn't come to it till toward the middle of the next afternoon, an afternoon of the most innocent gold that has ever thrown its soft radiance over an earth inhabited for the most part by ruffians and scoundrels. We soon found that we were not alone in the cave.

"She's changed her paint," said Tom, at my elbow. And, looking round, I saw that our rakish schooner with the black hull was now white as a dove; and, in that soft golden water, hardly a foot and a half deep, five shadowy young sharks floated, with outstretched fins like huge bats. Our engineer, who was already wading fearlessly in the water, beautifully naked, "shooed" them off like chickens. But it was soon to be evident that more dangerous foes waited for us on the shore.

Yet there was seemingly nothing there but a pile of sponges, and a few black men. The Susan B. had changed her color, it was true, but she was a well-known sponger, and I noticed no one that I recognized.

There was one foolish fellow that reminded me of my shackly deckhand, whom I had always thought out of his mind, standing there on his head on the rocks, and waving his legs to attract attention.

"Why! There's Silly Theodore," called out the captain.

"I'm going ashore," I said.

"I'm going with you too," said the captain. "But look after your guns. There's going to be something doing—quiet as it looks."

So we rowed ashore, and there was Theodore capering in front of a pile of sponges, but no other face that I knew. But there were seven or eight negroes whose looks I took no great liking to.

"Like some fancy sponges to send home?" said one of these, coming up to me. "Cost you five times as much in Nassau."

"Certainly I'd like a few sponges," I said.

And then Theodore came up to me, looking as though he had lost his mind over the rather fancy silk tie I happened to be wearing.

"Give me dat!" he said, touching it, like a crazy man.

Events prove that the sucking fish is quite necessary, as mascots are in great demand

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Daily Thought.

Reason is upright stature in the soul.—Young.

M'INNIS ONE OF BASEBALL'S WONDER MEN NOT BUILT ACCORDING TO STANDARD

Nifty First Baseman of Boston Red Sox.

John (Stuffy) McInnis, first baseman of the world's champion Boston Red Sox, has been for many years now past one of the striking wonders of the game. If one were looking for a first baseman among a crowd of uniformed men on the bench McInnis is about the very last man he would suspect of class for the position. Physically he is a living refutation, in appearance, of everything a good first sacker is supposed to be in these times of highly developed specialties. To begin with he is a chunky looking fellow who belies his five feet ten inches. He is somewhat deliberate of action off the field. His arms are short and he does not appear possessed of the reach or "stretch" which has come to be associated with the first base type. He is a right-handed thrower in a day when southpaws are in demand for the position.

Class of First Basemen.

Yet McInnis comes very near to being the class of first basemen of the American League, a circuit which boasts of a number of rare professionals of exceptional merit, Wally Pipp and George Sisler among them, the last two mentioned of the southpaw variety of course.

To begin with McInnis is one of the niftiest and surest infielders of the game, for if he lacks any way in physical handicaps he more than makes up for the deficiency in agility. And if he foozles a wild throw now and then that a bigger man—a Chase or a Pipp—might get he more than makes up the difference in the deadly punch he carries at bat. For McInnis is a .300 hitter in every accepted sense of the word.

In the last nine campaigns, since he first gained recognition as a regular player in fast company, McInnis has failed but twice to bat better than .300. His successful campaign last season with the world's champions witnessed his lightest hitting performance. He batted only .272 in Boston. Once before, only, he failed to qualify in the charmed circle. That was in 1916. He clubbed for .295 that year as a member of the Athletics. But it was only a remnant of the old machine with which Connie Mack had won four championships and three world championships. McInnis at the time was the sole survivor of the illustrious "hundred thousand dollar infield."

Best Hitting Year.

In 1912, the year Jake Stahl's Red Sox nosed out the Athletics, McInnis had his best hitting year, a .327, and that year, too, he stole the most bases, 27. The next year, when the Quakers beat the Giants for the second time in the world's series, McInnis hit .326. In 1911 he clubbed .321. He hit .314 in each of the seasons of 1914 and 1915, and .303 in 1917, his last year with the Athletics. It can be seen, then, that Stuffy is a consistent as well as a brilliant hitter.

McInnis was one of many brilliant phenoms unearthed and schooled by Connie Mack for the purpose of reconstruction after his great team of 1905—which was beaten by McGraw's Giants in the world's series—had gone to seed. The list included such other illustrious personages as "Home Run" Baker, Jack Barry and Eddie Collins, all of them still in the game and going strong as ever, apparently.

HOW SISLER LEARNED TO PLAY INITIAL BAG

"Pitching came natural to me; batting, too; but I was positive that first base would not be so easy. I didn't ask many questions; simply watched the other fellows in the league. I thought if I could catch them with one hand like Stuffy McInnis I'd be satisfied. I saw how Walter Pipp shifted his feet and stretched for yards, and I saw how Chic Gandil went in the dirt for the low throws.

McInnis, Pipp and Gandil taught me how to play first base. I studied them and used them for my teachers.

BIG ED SWEENEY RELEASED

Pirate Catcher Who Was Thought to Be Most Capable Backstop Is Let Go by Pirates.

Big Ed Sweeney, former New York Yankee catcher, who was purchased by the Pirates last winter, and who

Ed Sweeney.

has been with the club ever since it spring trained in Birmingham, was handed his unconditional release.

"Merely reducing our expenses, and we figured Sweeney could be spared," was the excuse given by the management when questioned as to why Sweeney was let out.

SPORTING WORLD

Louisville finally gave Southpaw Ad Thomas his unconditional release.

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Bill Brennan has consented to stay on as an umpire in the Southern league.

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Caruso Fred Beck, lately back from France, has signed to play with the Peoria club.

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Freshwater is the name of an umpire who has been calling them in the Three I league.

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Art Ewoldt, former Des Moines third baseman, has arrived from overseas, and the management plans to use him in the outfield.

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Lefty Bill James, as a pitcher for Galveston, shows signs of coming back to something like his old form.

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C. E. Stevens, former Coast, Western, Northwestern and Texas backstop, has been signed by Evansville.

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Pete Adams, the Fort Smith first baseman, is playing great ball for Oklahoma City and seems to be a real find.

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The western league is not the batters' paradise this season it used to be. There are frequent games with low scores.

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The Oakland club has taken on Pitcher Harry Weaver from the Chicago Cubs on the recommendation of Rowdy Elliott.

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Danny Murphy, who is handling the Hartford team this year, says that the Eastern league is going to play faster ball than ever before.

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Jimmy Cooney, returning to Providence, is making a great hit, and Cooney himself shows no disappointment that he failed to stick with the Red Sox or catch on with the Detroit Tigers.

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Los Angeles is elated over the acquisition of Ray Bates, for he was a star when with Vernon before he went to the Philadelphia Athletics, and it is figured he has not gone back any.