

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

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CHAPTER VII—Continued.

But alas! they did not begin till some six feet above my head, and the way was sheer. How was I to reach the lowest rung? The rock was too sheer for me to cut steps in, as I had done farther back. I looked about me. Again the luck was with me. In one of the caves I had noticed some broken pieces of fallen rock. They were terribly heavy, but despair lent me strength, and after an hour or two's work, I had managed to roll several of them to the foot of the ladder, and with an effort of which I would not have believed myself capable—had been able to build them one on top of another against the wall. So, I found myself able to grasp the lowest rung with my hands. Then, fastening the lantern round my neck with my necktie, I prepared to mount.

The climb was not difficult, once I had managed to get my feet on the first rung of the ladder, but there was always the chance that one of the rungs might have rusted loose with time, in which case, of course, it would have given way in my grasp, and I should have been precipitated backward to certain death below.

However, the man who had mortised them had done an honest piece of work, and they proved as firm as on the day they were placed there. Up and up I went, till I must have been forty feet above the floor, and then, as I neared the foot, instead of coming to a trap door, as I had conjectured, I found that the ladder came to an end at the edge of a narrow ledge, running along the ceiling much as a clerestory runs near the roof of some old churches. On to this I managed to climb. It was barely a yard wide, and the impending roof did not permit of one's standing erect. It was a dizzy situation, and it seemed safest to crawl along on all fours, holding the lantern in front of me. Presently it brought me up sharp in a narrow recess. I had come to an end.

Yes! But imagine my joy! It had come to an end at the low archway rudely cut in the rock. Deep set in the archway was a stout wooden door. My first thought was that I was trapped again, but, to my infinite surprise and gratitude, it proved to be slightly ajar, and a vigorous push sent it grinding back on its hinges. What next? I wondered. At all events, I was no longer lost in the bowels of the earth; step by step, I was coming nearer to the frontiers of humanity.

But I was certainly not prepared for what next met my eyes, as I pushed through the low doorway with my lantern, and looked around. Yes! Indeed, man had certainly been here, man, too, very purposeful and businesslike. I was in a sort of low narrow gallery, some forty feet long, to



I Was in a Sort of Low, Narrow Gallery, Some Forty Feet Long.

which the arching rock made a cryptic ceiling. At my first glance, I saw that there was another door at the far end similar to the one I had entered by; and on the left side of the gallery, built of rough stones from the low ceiling to the floor, was a series of compartments, each with locked wooden door. They were strong and grim looking, and might have been taken for prison cells, or family vaults, or possibly wine bins. The massive locks were red with rust, and there was plainly no possibility of opening them.

On the other side of the gallery there was a litter of old chains, and some boards, probably left over from the doors. Yes, and there were two old flintlock guns, and several cutlasses, all eaten away with rust, also a rough seaman's chest open and falling to pieces. At the sight of that, a wild thought flashed through my brain. What if—Good God! What if this was John Teach's treasury—behind

those grim doors. I threw myself with all my force against one and then the other. For the moment I forgot that my paramount business was to escape. But I might as well have hurled myself against the solid rock. And, at that moment, I noticed that the place was darker than it had been. My lantern was going out. In a moment or two I should be in the pitch dark, and I had discovered that the door at the end of the gallery was as solid as the others.

I was to be trapped, after all; and I pictured myself slowly dying there of hunger—the pangs of which I was already beginning to feel—and some one, years hence, finding me there, a moldering skeleton—some one who would break open those doors, uncover those gleaming hoards, and moralize on the irony of my end; condemned to die there of starvation, with the treasure I had so long sought on the other side of those unyielding doors. Old Tom's words suddenly flashed over me, and I could feel my hair literally beginning to rise. "There never was a buried treasure yet that didn't claim its victim." Great God!—and I was to be the ghost, and keep guard in this terrible tomb till the next dead man came along to relieve me of my sentry duty!

Frantically I turned up the wick of my lantern at the thought—but it was no use; it was plainly going out. I examined my match box; I had still a dozen or so matches left. And then my eye fell on that shattered chest. There were those boards, too. At all events I could build a fire and make torches of alders of wood, so long as the wood lasted.

And then I had an idea. Why not make the fire against the door at the end of the gallery, and so burn my way through. Bravo! My spirits rose at the thought, and I set to at once—splitting some small kindling with my knife. In a few minutes I had quite a sprightly little fire going at the bottom of the door; but I saw that I should have to be extravagant with my wood if the fire was to be effective. However, it was neck or nothing; so I piled on beams and boards till my fire roared like a furnace, and presently I had the joy of seeing it begin to take hold of the door—which, after a short time, began to crackle and splutter in a very cheering fashion.

Whatever lay beyond, it was evident that I should soon be able to break my way through the obstacle, and, indeed, so it proved; for, presently, I used one of the boards as a battering ram, and, to my inexpressible joy, it went crashing through, with a shower of sparks, and it was but the work of a few more minutes before the whole door fell flaming down, and I was able to leap through the doorway into the darkness on the other side.

As I stood there, peering ahead, and holding aloft a burning stick—which proved, however, a poor substitute for my lantern—a wonderful sound smote my ears. I could not believe it, and my knees shook beneath me. It was the sound of the sea.

Yes, it was no illusion. It was the sound that the sea makes singing and echoing through hollow caves—the sound I heard that night as I stood at the moonlit door of Calypso's cavern, and saw that vision which my heart nearly broke to remember. Calypso! Oh Calypso! where was she at this moment? Pray God that she was indeed safe, as her father had said. But I had to will her from my mind, to keep from going mad.

And my poor torch had gone out, having, however, given me light enough to see that the door which I had just burnt through led out onto a narrow platform on the side of a rock that went slanting down into a chasm of blackness, through which, as in a great shell, boomed that murmuring of the sea. It had a perilous ugly look, and it was plain that it would be foolhardy to attempt it at the moment without a light; and my fire was dying down. Besides, I was beginning to feel light-headed and worn out, partly from lack of food, no doubt.

As there was no food to be had, I recalled the old French proverb, "He eats who sleeps"—or something to that effect—and I determined to husband my strength once more with a brief rest. However, as I turned to throw some more wood on my fire—preparing to indulge myself with a little campfire cheerfulness as I dozed off—my eyes fell once more on that grim line of locked doors; and my curiosity, and an idea, made me wakeful again. I had burned down one door—why not another? Why not, indeed?

So I raked over my fire to the family vault nearest to me, and presently had it roaring and licking against the stout door. It was, apparently, not so solid as the gallery door had been. At all events, it kindled more easily, and it was not long before I had the satisfaction of battering that down too.

As I did so, I caught sight of something in the interior that made me laugh aloud and behave generally like a madman. Of course, I didn't believe my eyes—but they persisted in declaring, nevertheless, that there in front of me was a great iron-bound

oaken chest, to begin with. It might not, of course, contain anything but bones—but it might! The thing was too absurd. I must have fallen asleep—must be already dreaming! But no! I was laboring with all my strength to open it with one of those rusty cutlasses. It was a tough job, but my strength was as the strength of ten, for the old treasure-hunting lust was upon me, and I had forgotten everything else in the world for the time. At last, with a great wooden groan, as though its heart were breaking at having to give up its secret at last, it crashed open. I fell on my knees as though I had been struck by lightning, for it was literally brimming over with silver and gold pieces—doubloons and pieces of eight; English and French coins, too—guineas and louis d'or—"all"—as Tobias' manuscript had said—"all good money."

For a while I knelt over it, dazed and blinded, lost; then I slowly plunged my hands into it; and let the pieces pour and pour through them, literally bathing them in gold and silver, as I had read of misers doing.

Then suddenly I broke out into an Irish jig—never having had any notion of doing such a thing before.

In fact I behaved as I have read of men doing, whom a sudden fortune has bereft of reason. For the time, at all events, I was a gibbering madman. Certainly, there was to be no sleep for me that night! But, in the full tide of my frenzy, I suddenly noticed something that brought me up sharp. Out beyond the doorway it was growing light. It was only a dim tremulous suffusion of it, indeed, but it was real daylight—oozing in from somewhere or other—the blessed, blessed, daylight! God be praised!

CHAPTER VIII.

In Which I Understand the Feelings of a Ghost.

So, I surmised, I had been underground a whole day and two nights, and this was the morning of the second day after Calypso's disappearance. What had been happening to her all this time! My flesh crept at the thought; and, with that daylight stealing in like a living presence, and the sound and breath of the sea, my anguish returned a hundredfold.

As I stood on the little rocky platform outside the door through which I had burned my way, and looked down into the glimmering chasm beneath, and heard the fresh voice of the sea huskily rumbling and reverberating about hidden grottoes and channels, all that Calypso was to me came back with the keenness of a sword through my heart. Ah! there was my treasure—as I had known when my eyes first beheld her—compared with which that gold and silver in there, whose gleam had made me momentarily distraught, was but so much dust and ashes. Ardently as I had sought it, what was it compared to one glance of her eyes? What if in the same hour, I had lost my true treasure, and found the false? At the thought, that glittering heap became abhorrent to me, and, without looking back, I sought for some way by which I could descend.

As my eyes grew accustomed to the dim light, I saw that there were some shallow steps cut diagonally in the rock, and down these I had soon made my way, to find myself in a roomy corridor, so much like that in which I had seen Calypso standing in the moonlight, that, for a moment, I dreamed it was the same, and started to run down it, thinking, indeed, that my troubles were over—that in another moment I would emerge through that enchanted door and face the sea.

But alas! Instead of a broad shining doorway, and open arms of freedom widespread for me to leap into, I came at last to a mere long narrow slit—through which I could gaze as a man gazes through a prison window at the sky.

The entrance had once been wide and free, but a mass of rock had fallen from above and blocked it up, leaving only a long crack through which the tides passed to and fro.

I was still in my trap; it seemed more terrible than ever, now that I could see freedom so close, her very voice calling to me, singing the morning song of the sea. But in the caverns behind me, I heard another mocking song, and I felt a cold breath on my cheek, for death stood by my side again.

"The treasure!" he whispered, "I need you to guard that. The treasure you have risked all to win—the treasure for which you have lost—your treasure! You cannot escape. Go back and count your gold. 'It is all good money!' Ha! ha! 'It is all good money!'"

The illusion seemed so real to me that I cried aloud "I will not die! I will not die!"—cried it so loud, that anyone in a passing boat might have heard me, and shuddered, wondering what poor ghost it was wailing among the rocks.

But the fright had done me good, and I nerved myself for another effort. If only I could wriggle past that contraction in the middle, I should be safe. And if I stuck fast midway! But

the more I measured the width with my eye, the less the narrowing seemed to be. To be so slightly perceptible, it could hardly be enough to make much difference. Caution whispered that it might be enough to make the difference between life and death. But already my choice of those two august alternatives was so limited as hardly to be called a choice. On the one hand, I could worm my way back through the caves and tunnels through which I had passed, and try my luck again at the other end.

"With half a dozen matches!" sneered a voice that sounded like Tobias—"Precisely!" . . . and the horror of it was more than I dared face again anyway. So there was nothing for it but this aperture, hardly wider than one of those deep stone slits that stood for windows in a Norman castle. It was my last chance, and I meant to take it like a man.

I stood for a moment nerving myself and taking deep breaths, as though I expected to take but few more. Then, my left arm extended, I entered sideways, and began to edge myself along. It was easy enough for a yard or two,



"All Good Money."

after which it was plain that it was beginning to narrow. Very slightly indeed, but still a little. However, I could still go on, and—I could still go back, I went on—more slowly it is true, yet still I progressed. But the rock was perceptibly closer to me. I had to struggle harder. It was beginning to hug me—very gently—but it was beginning.

I paused to take breath. I could not turn my head to look back, but I judged that I had come over a third of the way. I was coming up to the waist that I had feared, but I could still go on—very slowly, scarce more than an inch at every effort; yet every inch counted, and I had lots of time. My feet and head were free—which was the main thing. Another good push or two, and I should be at the waist—should know my fate.

I gave the good push or two, and suddenly the arms of the rock were around me. Tight and close, this time, they hugged me. They held me fast, like a rude lover, and would not let me go. My knees and feet were fast, and the walls on each side pressed my cheeks. My head too was fast. I could not move an inch forward—and it was too late to go back!

Panic swept over me. I felt that my hair must be turning white. Presently I ceased to struggle. But the rocks held me in their giant embrace. There was no need for me to do anything. I could go on resting there—it was very comfortable—ill!

And then I felt something touching my feet, running away and then touching them again. O God! It was the incoming tide! It would—And then I prepared myself to die. I suppose I was light-headed, with the strain and the lack of food, for, after the first panic, I found myself dreamily, almost luxuriously, making pictures of how brave men had died in the past—brave women too. I fancied myself in one and another situation. But the picture that persisted was that of the Conclergerie during the French revolution.

Then the picture vanished, as I felt the swish of the tide round my ankles. It would soon be up to my knees—

It was up to my knees—it was creeping past them—and it was making that hollow sound in the caves behind me that had seemed so kind to me that very morning, the song it had made to Calypso . . . that far-off night under the moon. . . .

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Rooster Ate 486 Kernels.
A storekeeper at Montgomery City has sprung a new one in the guessing game. He took a big rooster and, after letting him fast for a day, put him in his show window with a large pan of corn, the kernels of which had been counted.

He offered a prize to the persons guessing nearest the number of grains the rooster would eat in 20 minutes. The rooster had a ravenous appetite and for five minutes it looked as if there would not be a single kernel left.

But by the time the 20 minutes had elapsed he had curled up in a corner. He had succeeded in putting away 486 grains. A woman who had guessed 488 got the prize.—K.

STRATAGEM

By MILDRED WHITE.

Jack Trowbridge looked over the hedge and frowned. It was old Mrs. Brodie's fault he knew—this aloofness upon the part of his new and charming neighbor. She had been gracious when he had gone over soon after her arrival, to return a kitten which had strayed into his garden. And so exactly did this young neighbor visualize the "lady of his dreams," that Jack had fallen in love at first sight. If he had been at all skeptical concerning this fact, time had proven him to be right.

The girl's piquant face constantly haunted him. His first morning glance was cast toward the casement window, and his last waking thought at night, was of her winsome self. The return of the kitten was followed by a generous bouquet from his garden.

"A bachelor's garden," he told her, informally.

The girl was pleased. Perhaps, she suggested, Mr. Trowbridge would be kind enough to instruct her in planting of a like garden; she wanted to live among a riot of flowers. "There was only herself and Martha—a sort of companion housekeeper," she added, and Jack went home full of blissful anticipation.

It would be a joy to teach this lovely one the mysteries of gardening, a delightful excuse also to linger at her side and learn more of the character which attracted him. All the happiness of "dreams come true" was promised.

Beautiful girls he had known, and worthy, but not one, who was not swiftly forgotten. The new neighbor with her wistful eyes alone refused to be erased from memory—while each and every thought of her brought a hopeful thrill.

The two had become friendly companions, laughing and chatting across the hedge which divided the old house from Jack's new bungalow, when Mrs. Brodie called upon the girl and dropped her condemning remark.

"Of course," she said, "Jack Trowbridge can't help but have a big head, when every girl who comes to this town makes a direct 'set' for him."

The new neighbor flushed indignantly at the implication. She, at least, determined to be beyond that suspicion. Hence the later coldness, which caused Jack's discomfiture.

No studied advance, no courteous attention upon his part altered the aloofness of the girl's manner. His calls at her house were promptly discouraged—politely it is true, but discouraged, unmistakably. The happy friendliness was gone. The beautiful dreams of a lifetime threatened to be but dreams, after all.

Jack savagely trampled the flowers in his garden as he strode to and fro. As a final excuse for a visit, he artfully captured the kitten as it came through the hedge, and carried it back to its owner.

The owner thanked him briefly, without even the hope of a smile. She was not looking over-joyful herself. Jack reflected, Her eyes seemed piteously startled as he forced her gaze.

"That fool Brodie woman!" he muttered, as he retraced his steps.

The next day when Jack returned from business in his car, he alighted with difficulty at the gateway.

From thence, his little neighbor, watching through her porch vines, saw him totter unsteadily with the help of a crutch up his own garden path. His leg hung limp and one shoeless foot was heavily swathed in bandages. Jack's cold-hearted neighbor looked for the evening light in the bungalow window, but none was forthcoming. Jack's housekeeper—so Mrs. Brodie told her—had gone home for a short vacation, Jack having made arrangements to stay in the city during her absence.

It was evident that he had met with an accident, and had been obliged to come back unexpectedly to his empty home. Hours passed.

"Why?" reflected the troubled head peering through opposite curtains, "did not Jack use his telephone to call for assistance? Assuredly he had entered the house, and assuredly he must be there in darkness. Not a glimpse of light showed and the blinds were up. Neglected, the car still waited in the roadway. Could it be possible that he had fainted from pain?"

The now thoroughly anxious neighbor called Martha, and sent her across the garden to make inquiry.

"Mr. Trowbridge is lying on a couch," the woman brought back information. "He says he is suffering, but that there is nothing I can do."

"What nonsense!" the girl cried impatiently, "for him to lie there alone. I will have to go over myself."

Jack opened his appealing eyes as she turned on his sitting room light and stood reflected in the doorway.

The girl's charming face softened, at sight of his bolstered bandaged limb.

"You are hurt," she murmured. "Oh! Jack, is there anything that I can do?"

The dejected lover sat up joyously. "Just about everything," he said and held out his arms. "The suffering is really here," he added pleadingly, and touched his heart.

After moments of happy bewilderment, the girl lifted her head from his shoulder.

"Your poor foot—" she began, when Jack interrupted her with a kiss. "Oh! the foot's all right," he explained calmly. "Just used a little stratagem, that's all."

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Physicians and Druggists are advising their friends to keep their systems purified and their organs in perfect working order as a protection against the return of influenza. They know that a clogged up system and a lazy liver favor colds, influenza and serious complications. To cut short a cold overnight and to prevent serious complications take one Calotab at bedtime with a swallow of water—that's all. No salts, no nausea, no griping, no sickening after effects. Next morning your cold has vanished, your liver is active, your system is purified and refreshed and you are feeling fine with a hearty appetite for breakfast. Eat what you please—no danger. Calotabs are sold only in original sealed packages, price thirty-five cents. Every druggist is authorized to refund your money if you are not perfectly delighted with Calotabs.—(Adv.)

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"Why will none of you girls marry?"
"There's a quarrel as to who gets the piano."

Don't Forget Cuticura Talcum
When adding to your toilet requisites. An exquisitely scented face, skin, baby and dusting powder and perfume, rendering other perfumes superfluous. You may rely on it because one of the Cuticura Trio (Soap, Ointment and Talcum). 25c each everywhere.—Adv.

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"It is a far cry."
"What is?"
"From a real cocktail to near-beer."

DEWS OF EVE

No More Gentle Than "Cascarets" for the Liver, Bowels

It is just as needless as it is dangerous to take violent or nasty cathartics. Nature provides no shock absorbers for your liver and bowels against calomel, harsh pills, sickening oil and salts. Cascarets give quick relief without injury from Constipation, Biliousness, Indigestion, Gases and Sick Headache. Cascarets work while you sleep, removing the toxins, poisons and sour, indigestible waste without griping or inconvenience. Cascarets regulate by strengthening the bowel muscles. They cost so little too.—Adv.

Profound.
"Is Flubhub a profound lawyer?"
"Very. He'd lug Magna Charta into a dog case."

A SUMMER COLD
A cold in the summer time, as everybody knows, is the hardest kind of a cold to get rid of. The best and quickest way is to go to bed and stay there if you can, with a bottle of "Boschee's Syrup" handy to insure a good night's rest, free from coughing, with easy expectoration in the morning.

But if you can't stay in bed you must keep out of draughts, avoid sudden changes, eat sparingly of simple food and take occasional doses of Boschee's Syrup, which you can buy at any store where medicine is sold, a safe and efficient remedy, made in America for more than fifty years. Keep it handy.—Adv.

Stocked Up!
"I hope next winter will be mild."
"Why?" "We have little room in our cellar for coal."

GOODBY, WOMEN'S TROUBLES

The tortures and discomforts of weak, lame and aching back, swollen feet and limbs, weakness, dizziness, nausea, as a rule have their origin in kidney trouble, not "female complaints." These general symptoms of kidney and bladder disease are well known—so is the remedy.

Next time you feel a twinge of pain in the back or are troubled with headache, indigestion, insomnia, irritation in the bladder or pain in the loins and lower abdomen, you will find quick and sure relief in GOLD MEDAL Haariem Oil Capsules. This old and tried remedy for kidney trouble and allied derangements has stood the test for hundreds of years. It does the work. Pains and troubles vanish and new life and health will come as you continue their use. When completely restored to your usual vigor, continue taking a capsule or two each day.

GOLD MEDAL Haariem Oil Capsules are imported from the laboratories at Haariem, Holland. Do not accept a substitute. In sealed boxes, three sizes.—Adv.

A gallon of water (United States standard) weighs eight and one-half pounds and contains 231 cubic inches. One bottle of Dr. Peary's "Dead Shot" will save you money, time, anxiety and health. One dose sufficient, without Castor Oil in addition. Adv.

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