THE LANCASTER DAILY INTELLIGENCER, FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 1888.

ICE BOUND.

By W. CLARK RUSSELL,

Author of "The Wreck of the Grosvenor, "Jack's Courtship," "My Watch Be-low," "The Lady Maud " Etc.

(CONTINCED.)

CHAPTER XXI. WE EXPLODE THE MINES.

I don't design to weary you with a close account of our proceedings. How we opened the main deck hatch, rigged up tackles, clapping purchases on the falls, as the capstan was hard frozen and immovable; how we holsted the powder barrels on deck, and then by tackles on the foreyard lowered them over the side; how we filled a number of bags which we found in the forecastle with pow-der; how we measured the cracks in the ice, and sawed a couple of spare studdingsail booms into lengths to serve as beams whereby to poise the barrels and bags—would make but sailor's talk, half of which would be unintelligible and the rest wearisome.

The Frenchman worked hard, and we snatched only half an hour for our dinner. The split that had happened in the ice during the night showed by daylight as a gulf be-twist eight and ten feet wide at the seaward end, thinning to a width of three feet, never less, to where it ended, ahead of the ship, in a hundred cracks in the ice that showed as if a thunderbolt had fallen just there. I looked into this rent, but it was as black as a well past a certain depth and there was no gleam of water. When we went over the side to roll our first barrel of powder to the spot where we meant to lower it, the Frenchman marched up to the figure of Trentanove, and, with no more reverence than a boy would show in throwing a stone at a jackass, tumbled him into the chasm. He then stepped up to the body of the Portuguese boatswain, dragged him to the same fissure and rolled him into it.

"There!" cried he; "now they are properly buried." And with this he went coolly on with his

work.

I said nothing, but was secretly heartily disgusted with this brutal disposal of his miserable shipmates' remains. However, it was his doing, not mine; and I confess the removal of those silent witnesses was a very great relief to me, albeit when I considered how Tassard had been awakened, and how both the mate and the boatswain might have been brought to by treatment, I felt as though after a manner the Frenchman had com-

mitted a murder by burying them so. We got our supper and sat smoking and iscussing our situation and chances. Tassard was tired, and this and our contempla tion of the probabilities of the morrow sobered his mind, and he talked with a certain gravity. He drank sparely and forbore the hideous recollections or inventions he was used to bestow on me, and indeed could find nothing to talk about but the explosion and what it was to do for us. I was very glad he did not again refer to his project to bury the treasure and carry the school ner to the Tortugas. The subject fired his blood, and It was such nonsense that the mere naming of it was nauseous to me. Eight and forty years had passed since his ship fell in with the ice, and not tenfold the treasure in the hold might have purchased for him the sight of so much as a single bone of the youngest of those associates whom he idly dreamed of seeking and shipping and sailing in command of. Yet imbecile as was his scheme, having regard to the half century that had elapsed I clearly witnessed the menace to me that it implied. His views were to be read as plainly as if he had delivered them. First and foremost, he meant that I should help him to sail the schooner to an island and bury the plate and money-which done he would take the first opportunity to murder me. His chance of meeting with a ship that would lend him assistance to navigate the schooner would be as good if he were alone in her as if I were on board too. There would be nothing, then, in this consideration to hinder him fro n cutting my throat after we had buried the treasure and were got north. Two motives would imperatively urge him to make away with me: first, that I should not be able to serve as a witness to his being a pirate; and, next, that he alone should possess the secret of the treasure. He little knew what was passing in my mind as he surveyed me through the curls of smoke spouting up from his death's head pipe. I talked easily and confidentially; but w in his gaze the eyes of my murderer, and was so sure of his intentions that had I shot him in self defense as he sat there, I am certain my conscience would have acquitted me of his blood.

Before the ear could well receive the shock of the blast the whole of the barrels exploded, along with some twelve or fourteen parcels. Tassard, who stood beside me, fell on his face, and I believed he had been killed. It was so hellish a thunder that I suppose the blowing up of a first rate could not make a more frightful roar of noise. A kind of twi-light was caused by the rise of the volumes of white smoke out of the ice. The schoener shock with such a convulsion that I was per-sunded abe had been split. Vast showers of splinters of ice fell as if from the sky, and rained like arrows through the smoke; but if there were any great blocks uphove they did not touch the ship. Meanwhile the other parcels were exploding in their places, some-times two and three at a time, sending a sort of sickening spanm and three through the fabric of the vessel, and you heard the most extraordinary grinding noises rising out of the ice all about, as though the mighty rupt-ure of the powder crackled through leagues of the island. I durst not look forth till all the powder had burst lest I should be struck by some flying plece of ice; but unless the schoener was injured below she was as sound as before, and in exactly the same posture, as if afloat in harbor, only that of course ber

schooner was injured below she was as sound as before, and in exactly the same posture, as if afloat in harbor, only that of course her stern lay low with the slope of her bed. I called to Tasmrd, and he lifted his head. "Are you hurt?" said L "No, no," he answered. ""Tis a Spanlard's trick to fing down to a broadside. Body of St. Joseph, what a furious explosion!" and so saying he crawled into the companion and squatted beside me. "What has it done for us!"

for us?" "I don't know yet," said I, "but I believe the schooner is uninjured. That was a power-ful shock!" I cried, as a half dozen of bags blew up together in the crevices deep down. The thunder and tumult of the rending ice, accompanied by the heavy explosions of the gunpowder, so dulled the hearing that it was difficult to speak. That the mines had acdifficult to speak. That the mines had ac-complished our end was not yet to be known; but there could not be the least doubt that they had not only occasioned tremendous ruptures low down in the ice, but that the velcanic influence was extending far beyond its first effects by making one split produce another, one weak part give way and create other weak nears and so on all remut about

other weaknesses, and so on, all round about us and under our keel, as was clearly to be gathered by the shivering and spasms of the schooner, and by the growls, roars, blasts and huddle of terrifying sounds which arosu from the frozen floor. TO BE CONTINUED.

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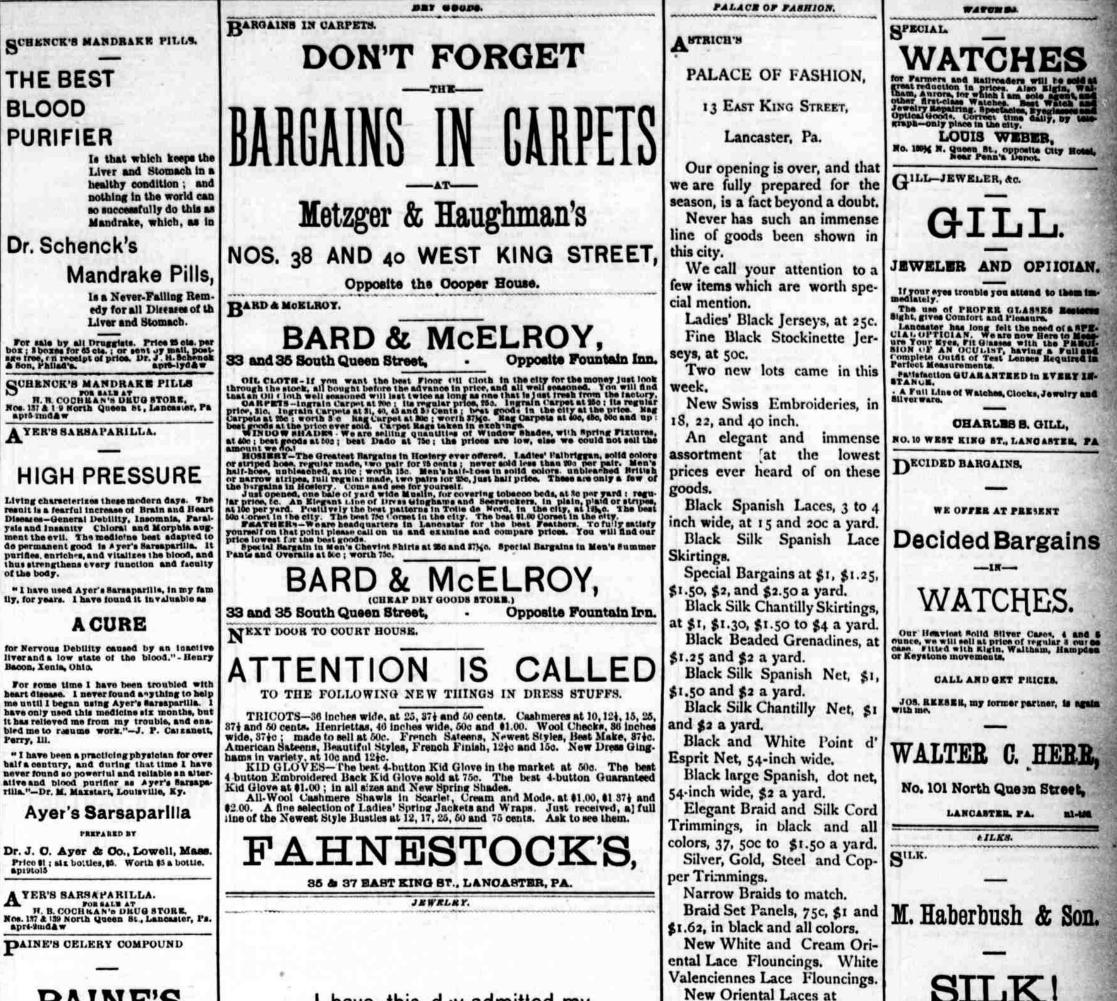
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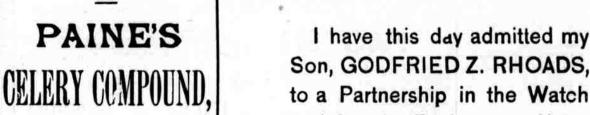
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I passed two most uneasy hours in my cot before closing my eyes. I could think of nothing but how to secure myself against the Frenchman's treachery, You would suppose that my mind must have been engrossed with considerations of the several possibilities of the morrow, but that was not so. My re-flections ran wholly to the bald headed, evil eyed pirate whom in an evil hour I had thawed into being, and who was like to discharge the debt of his own life by taking

mine. The truth is, I had been too hard at work all day-too full of the business of planning, cutting, testing and contrivingto find leisure to dwell upon what he had said at breakfast; and now that I lay alone in darkness, it was the only subject I could set-

tle my thoughts to. However, next morning I found myself less gloomy, thanks to several hours of solid sleep. I thought: What is the good of anticipating? Suppose the schooner is crushed by the ice, or becomes jammed in conse quence of the explosion / Until we are under way-nay, until the treasure is buried-I ve nothing to fear, for the rogue cannot do without me. And, reassuring myself in this fashion, I went to the cook room and lighted the fire; my companion presently arrived, and we sat down to our morning meal

We breakfasted in silence, and then I rose. saying: "Let us now see what the gunpowder

s going to do for us." The wind, as before, was in the southwest, blowing without much weight, but the sky was overcast with great masses of white clouds, with a tint of rainbows in their shoulders and skirts, amid which the sky showed a clear liquid blue. Those clouds seemed to promise wind, and perhaps snow, anon: but there was nothing to hinder our We got upon the ice and went operations. work to fix matches to the barrels and bags, and to sling them by the beams we had contrived, ready for lowering when the matches were fired, and this occupied us the best part of two hours. When all was ready I fired the first match, and we lowered the barrel smartly to the scope of line we had settled upon: so with the others. You may reckon we worked with all imaginable wari ness, for the stuff we handled was mighty deadly; and if a barrel should fall and burst, with the match alight, we might be blown in an instant into rags, it being impossible to tell how deep the rents went. The bags being lighter, there was less to

fear; and presently all the barrels and bags, with the matches burning, were poised in the places and hanging at the depth we had fixed upon, and we then returned to the schooner -the Frenchman breaking into a run, and tumbling over the rail, in his alarm, with the derterity of a monkey.

Each match was supposed to burn an hour, so that when the several explosions happened they might all occur as nearly as possible at once, and we had therefore a long time to The margin may look unreasonable in the face of our dispatch; but you will not think it unnecessary if you consider that our machinery might not have worked very smooth, and that meanwhile all that was lowered was in the way of exploding. So interminable a period as now followed I do believe never entered before into the experiences of a man. The cold was intense, and we had to move about; but also were we repeatedly coming to a halt to look at our watches and cast our eyes over the ice. It was like standing under a gallows with the noose around the neck, waiting for the cart to move off. My own suspense became torture; but I commanded my face. The Frenchman, on the other hand, could not control the torments of his expectation and

"Holy Virgin!" he would cry, "suppose we are blown up two! suppose we are ingulfed in the ice! suppose it should be vomited up in vast blocks, which in falling upon us must crush us to pulp and smash the decks in !"

It was three or four minutes past the hour, and I was looking breathlessly at my watch when the first of the explosions tonk place.

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