

A HIDDEN TREASURE.

One dismal rainy evening in the fall of 1857 a wayfarer entered a country inn in Indiana and secured lodgings for the night. He was a sailor, he said, and was on his way to a town twenty miles distant, where he had relatives. He was a stout built, rugged looking fellow, but next morning he was found dead in his bed. The above facts were clearly established, but a certain other fact could only be surmised. Word was sent to the dead man's relatives, the coroner took charge of the remains, and all personal effects were turned over with the remains. The deceased had a few dollars in money and a few trinkets, but the relatives at once claimed that he had been robbed of valuable papers. The proprietor of the inn was a veritable Yankee, including a hawk nose and the legendary twang, and his wife was his counterpart. He was known to be sharper than steel in a horse trade, and he never put out a dollar that he did not get a big interest; but no one believed he had rifled the dead man's baggage. When the relatives were asked about the nature of the alleged valuable papers they refused to answer, and this evasion threw doubts on their allegation. In a few weeks the affair blew over, and in about three months the landlord and wife began to feel lonesome for the hills of old New Hampshire. This was an excuse for offering all their property for sale, and six months after the death of the stranger in the hotel the place passed into other hands. The next scene opened in New Orleans. I was then employed by Blank & Blank, wreckers, as general manager of the business. We had three vessels, steam pumps, divers, and all other necessary apparatus. I was called into the private office one day, and there found Jonas Stebbins the hook nosed Yankee who had sold out his hotel in Indiana. He had something to say, but he hesitated to say it. It was half an hour before we could bring him to the point, and then only after the three of us had placed our hands on a small Bible, which Stebbins had thoughtfully provided for, and sworn never to reveal his secret. Then he brought forth two letters and a map, and we saw that another buried treasure crank had struck the city. Such incidents were not uncommon. In the five years I had been manager we had encountered a full dozen of these cranks, and on two occasions the firm had lost heavily by entering into partnerships which failed to pan out. As soon as Mr. Stebbins unfolded himself he got the cold shoulder, but he would not take it that way. Look here, he said, as he tilted his chair back, do you take me for a fool? Well, partly. Do you think I want a partnership in it? Don't you? Not by a jugful! I want to hire a schooner and crew and divers by the week for so many weeks. All are to be under my orders, and I am to have all that's found. Partnership! No, sir—ee! What's your lowest figure? He had shown us a roughly drawn map of the Bahama Islands, one executed with pen and ink by some sailor. He wanted a schooner to proceed to one of the islands. All the apparatus he wanted was grapnels and divers. He might want us three weeks, but probably not over two. It was finally agreed that he should hire by the day. He beat us down \$5 on the figure name, and an iron clad agreement was drawn up and signed, and he counted out \$1,000 in gold. A sum sufficient to pay us for three weeks was deposited with a banker, and we at once began preparations for the trip. It had been stipulated that Mrs. Stebbins was to go along, and we fitted up a stateroom for her. This was the first time any treasure hunter had put down his own money for an expedition, and we could not doubt that Mr. Stebbins had what seemed to him a straight deal. It was our business to throw cold water on his plans, even though we were firmly convinced that he would return empty handed. The firm decided that I should go out in charge of operations, and a couple of days after the contract was signed we were off for the Gulf. I expected the Stebbinses

to be nervous and frustrated, but there was not a sign of it. They were as cool as if going on a visit to a relative. As we were going down the river, I said to him: Now that we are under way, I suppose you had as soon tell me about your treasure? Wall, no, he drawled; you might leave the schooner somewhere and try to cut in ahead of me or we may be wrecked before we get there. I think you are honest and straight, but I can't give you the exact location. No, indeed we can't, added Mrs. Stebbins. You see, it has taken every dollar we could rake and scrape, and if we don't get that treasure we'll be busted. But you seem to be sure of getting it. Ob, yes! they replied in chorus. Is the amount large? They looked at each other a moment, and then Mrs. Stebbins replied: Jonas I think we can safely tell him some few things, for he seems to wish us well. Yes, I guess so. Well, then, we expect to get about \$150,000, more or less in gold and silver. Yes that's about the figger, added Stebbins and as we are both getting along in years it will come in handy. If you had that much money Mr. Marvin, would you buy a farm or move to the city? They seemed so firmly convinced of the existence of the treasure that I felt it my duty to warn them of possible disappointment. Yes, we might possibly fail, but 'tain't at all likely he replied. We ain't the sort of people to put up our last dollar on an uncertainty. No Jonas, we ain't added the wife. Was this treasure deposited years ago? I asked. Yes, a good many years ago. On land? They looked from me to each other and smiled in a knowing way. Because, I continued, there can't be a rod of any of the Bahamas, nor a bay nor cove on the shores, but what has been explored over and over. Exactly, replied Stebbins, as he arose to spit over the rail. If any body has found the treasure then we shan't get it. Of course we shan't, replied the wife, and that closed the conversation. Neither one of them had been to sea before, and while we were running down the Florida coast both were terribly seasick. They were around again as we came up with the cape, however, and when the captain asked Stebbins which one of the Bahamas he should steer for the man consulted his sketch afresh, compared it with the captain's chart of those waters, and finally replied, as he put his finger down, This is Turk's Island. Yes. That's where they get a head of salt. Yes. Well here's an island to the northeast of it, fifteen or twenty miles away. Yes, that's called the Little Caycos. Well, now, you might bring up there. During the remainder of the voyage, or until we sighted the island, the collins of Stebbins and his wife were remarkable. The only game they knew how to play was fox and geese, and they played from morning till night and far into the evening. We threaded our way among the various islands to get to the east, and sails were in sight every hour in the day, but this queer couple could hardly be induced to raise their eyes from the game. Stebbins was always on hand when the captain pricked off the day's on the chart, and it was evident that he was keeping a sharp lookout to see that we were headed in the right direction. In due time we raised Turk's island, coming down from the north, and then we kept off a couple of points until Little Caycos was sighted. It is an island lying much lower than Turk's, almost surrounded with dangerous shoals and reefs, and at the time of which I write the only settlers were traders, wreckers and fishermen. There are Harbors on the east and west shores, but by order of Stebbins we ran around the South side and dropped anchor about a mile from the beach. It was just at sundown when we came to anchor, and that evening the captain gave them the use of the cabin for a couple of hours to look

over their papers. The Island, with all the indentations, as well as the shoals reefs and depth of water, was pictured on our chart, and they compared their pen and ink sketch with this, and consulted another paper which none of us had before seen until they had come to a decision. I was looking down upon them through the open skylight from the corner of my eye, and I saw Stebbins strike the table with his fist, and heard him whisper: We've got it sure as shooting! Hush! she admonished. Of course we've got it. We hain't nobody's fools, Jonas Stebbins. Do you suppose I'd have consented to put all our money into this venture if there was a chance to lose it? By gum! but we'll be rich! Of course we will. Richest folks in the hull county! Yes, but don't get excited. They sat on deck for an hour or two, Stebbins smoking and his wife knitting, and as they were about to retire for the night I felt bound to observe: Well, Mr. Stebbins, here we are in good shape, and now, as I was sent to manage your business, you'd better explain matters pretty clearly. I may want to make some preparations for to-morrow. How long will it take you to get a diver ready to go down? he asked. Not over half an hour. Well, that's all the preparations needed. What is the diver to go down after? Sunthin that went run away before morning, answered Mrs. Stebbins, and with that both went below. It was only natural that all should be curious about the expedition, but every attempt to find out anything had thus far cleverly frustrated: The captain and I talked it over for the twentieth time, and we came to the same old conclusion—that the Stebbinses had come on a wild goose chase after some old wreck. In our pique at his refusal to furnish particulars and we almost hoped he wouldn't find it. Stebbins was on deck a day or two next morning, and his wife half an hour later, and after breakfast, when the captain asked for orders, the Yankee waited to fill his pipe before answering: I guess we'll jog westward about five miles. The schooner was got under way, and she had accomplished the distance named she was about she was about a mile off shore, in fifty feet of water, and midway between her and the beach was a reef covered with not more than ten or twelve feet of water at low tide. As the anchor went down the schooner's head pointed directly toward the land, and Stebbins and his wife appeared to make out some land marks, the sight of which brought smiles to their faces. It was a beautiful morning, with only a slight breeze blowing, and as the anchor went down Stebbins came to me and said: We shall have to go into the reef in a small boat, I suppose. Can a diver work from her? I assured that it could be done, and we got down the boat, put the pump in and dress, and were shortly ready to pull off. Stebbins and his wife were both to go, making a party of six of us. We pulled almost straight for the reef, ported a little after crossing it, and then, as we anchored in three fathoms of water I looked about and discovered that we were in what might be called a basin, although it was open to the east. Yes, this is the spot, said Stebbins as he stood up and looked around. I'd almost know it at midnight, added his wife. What am I to look for? asked the diver as he donned his dress. Some boxes about the size of them that axes come in, replied the Yankee. There orter be ten of 'em down there. They are iron bound and purty hefy, but you hook on and we'll do the hauling. The diver winked at me to express his incredulity, and then his helpers screwed on his helmet and got him over the side on the rope ladder. The water was wonderfully clear, and we could follow him to the very bottom and see him move about. He headed north and crossed the basin; thence east to its mouth; and then around to the north, and after being down twenty-five minutes he came up with a shell, and said, as soon as clear of his head-piece:

Nothing but shells down there, sir. The bottom is hard sand, and I could have seen a dime down there. Didn't see no boxes? gasped Stebbins. No, sir. Now, Jonas, don't get excited, cautioned his wife. Them boxes is lying along side o' that wall (reef) to the west. The waves coming in from the east would shut 'em over there. That's so, replied Stebbins, and when the diver had rested he was directed to search in that direction, and the anchor was lifted that we might hover over him as near as possible. He had not been down three minutes when he signaled us to haul away on the line attached to the toogs, and up came one of the boxes the Yankee and his wife were searching for. In five minutes we had another, and inside of an hour we had ten. We were an excited lot—all but Stebbins and his better half. They seemed to take it as a matter of course, and after the diver had sent up the tenth box and came up to rest the Yankee said: There might have been an eleventh box. My bill calls for ten but there might have been an extra. And say, when you are down there look around or any loose coin or other stuff. Nothing further was found, however, and that afternoon we started for New Orleans. When aboard the schooner Stebbins informed us that there was \$15,000 in Spanish coin in each box, and that every box was in good order, I could not help it but express my amazement over the find, and he calmly replied: Well, you see, me'n the woman a great hands to dream, and we dream'd it all out. There wasn't much chance for a slip when we had both dreamed. But the pen and ink chart was no doubt taken from the pocket of the sailor who died in the country tavern.—New York Sun.

FALSE OR FAITHFUL.

James Harding and his wife Mary lived in a pretty village, an hour's ride by railroad from New York, in which city the husband was a merchant. Tolerably prosperous and tired of city life, they had bought a residence in this delightful rural retreat. Mr. and Mrs. Harding were young and devotedly attached to each other. Their married life had been untroubled by the usual wars of dissension and they were uncommonly free from earthly tribulations. Before their marriage Mary had been a work girl in the establishment in which her husband was a partner and he had married her solely for her worth of character, for she was poor and had she said, no relatives. One afternoon James Harding took a late train for home, business having detained him beyond his usual hour. He entered a carriage and sat down on a seat already partly occupied by a handsome, well-dressed man of perhaps thirty. He had crisp, black hair and mustache, quick, keen eyes and a delicate squiline profile, but the firm expression of his square, resolute jaws was at variance with the expression of the upper part of his face. His hands were very white but large; and although he wore no rings, and carried his gloves instead of wearing them, his finger-nails were well shaped and exquisitely clean. He had the bearing of a rather flashy gentleman. They did not exchange a word until the train, gathering speed as it rushed on, had covered a good deal of ground on its route. Then only a few casual remarks passed. Harding reached home, kissed his wife, had dinner and sat down to read the evening paper. It was not until he had done a little that he noticed anything unusual about his wife. Then he saw that she showed signs of nervousness. As she went from the room for a moment she dropped upon the floor a slip of paper. Harding picked it up and read as follows: Dear Mary—I shall be in the summer-house at 10 o'clock to-night. If you love me do not fail to be there. Don't let your husband suspect or we shall be ruined. E. H. E. James Harding had never been jealous of his wife, simply because he had never suspected her of any indiscretion; but now his brain seemed on fire. He meditated upon the situation as coolly as he was able, but could not determine what to do. Upon one thing, however he was determined. He would track the pair to their trysting-place. He threw the note back on the floor, and pretended to read his paper. His wife soon returned, picked up the note and hastily thrust it into her dress pocket. Ten o'clock came. Mary slipped out but hardly had she reached the summer-house before her husband had scouted himself near enough to see and hear all. He saw a man start up with rustic seat as his wife approached—the very man in who had come down in the train—dear Edgar, said she after the words of greeting

were over, precious as this meeting is to me run a fearful risk. Should my husband discover you here what should become of us? Harding could say no more. He grasped the first weapon that presented itself—a heavy garden spade—and, beside himself with fury, rushed upon the man. A terrible blow fell him to the ground, where he lay motionless. A scream from Mary brought several persons to the scene. The husband scarcely comprehending what he had done, went to his room. The body of his victim was carried into the house and a doctor was sent for. He came and examined the ghastly wound, while Mary, pale and trembling, waited, but dared not ask for his decision. Has he friends here asked the doctor. No, he has no friend but me, she answered drooping her white face over his pillow. Unlucky fellow! If he had friends I would advise them to be sent for, but as he has none— The doctor paused, looking compassionately down upon the deathly white face on the pillow. Then he began to bandage and dress the cruel wound. But you haven't told me your decision doctor, exclaimed Mary, presently. How soon must he die? I haven't said he would die, declared the doctor, cutting ruthlessly away the locks that were matted about the wound, and laying his strips of plaster upon the bared skull. He will not die. Not die! she exclaimed hopefully. He has a superb constitution, explained the doctor; a glorious vitality. Look at his magnificent chest. He may live a month—a year—possibly he may out-live you and me. I have known such cases. Thank God! cried Mary, fervently. Then she bent lovingly over the body and said: Don't you know me, Edgar? He will never know you again, said doctor, solemnly. He will get well, as I said, and possibly, outlive us all; but his brain has received an injury from which he will never recover. His mind is dead. Do you see that vacant smile on his face? He is a helpless, hopeless idiot—an idiot for life. When James Harding entered his bed-room his brain was dazed in the tragedy in which he had borne so important a part. He threw himself upon the bed, but not to sleep. The weight of his crime did not so much oppress him as the thought that his wife had been untrue to him. Throughout his married life no breath of suspicion had been entertained by him; and the tearing down of his idol—was a sudden and fearful blow. He thought not of his own safety, nor of the consequences of his murderous act. He only knew, as he almost writhed in mental anguish, that he had seen his wife in another's arms. It was past midnight and the injured man had been made as comfortable as possible, when Mary sought her husband. Softly pushing open the door she advanced unseen towards his bed. Her husband recoiled as she touched him. Oh, James, she said, what have you done? I have killed your lover he cried, fiercely, starting up. My lover? Yes, your lover. Did you not plot to see him and to deceive your husband? Who was he? He was my truster. Your brother. You told me you had no relatives. I know I did; but I had a brother whom I loved, for we grew up together. But he became a pickpocket and a gambler, and I was afraid to let you know of him. I told him that he must never come to see me, but he disobeyed me, and you have worse than killed him. I will not believe you. Your story is too transparent, and will not screen your infamy. You have deceived me long, but I will not be duped again—I will leave you to your dead lover! Saying this, he rushed from the house, leaving Mary with his cruel words ringing in her ears. But gathering from his words, an inkling of his purpose, she resolved to follow him. She did so. He took the now deserted village street towards the village which ran through the out-skirts. His pace was so rapid Mary could scarcely keep him in sight. He is going to drown himself, she thought; but how to save him? A distant murmur deepened into the roar of a railroad train, and the locomotive loomed up a half mile away. The way to the stream lay across the line; and as the almost insane nearest it, the chance for more speedy self destruction presented itself to him. He laid himself deliberately across the line over which the engine of death in another minute would roll. Mary uttered a piercing cry, but it was drowned by the thunder of the train. She flew to the line, and dragged her husband partially off; but he resisted her and was thrown into the air by the locomotive. He was picked up a mass of humanity, with barely a spark of life left in him. There is little left to tell. James Harding slowly returned to life under

the nursing of his faithful wife, for such she had ever been. The briber as the physician predicted, never regained his mental vigor, although he remained a harmless member of the Harding household, which is again the home of peace and love after its night of tragedies. CONCERNING MARRIAGE. The protest of the Hebrews of Columbia, S. C., against the marriage of young people without their parent's consent strikes at a grave social wrong. It seems that a Baptist clergyman recently united a thirteen year-old Hebrew girl to a Christian with out her parent's approval. The Hebrews resent and denounce this. Nothing does more to vitiate the sacredness of marriage than to contract it in a heedless manner. There is no one act within the power of man or woman which so deeply affects personal happiness and the peace of society. And unless we surround marriage with its proper safeguards and dignity, dealing with it as a holy ordinance or a sacrament, it is a burden and apt to degenerate into crime. We are taught that whenever a young man sees a ribbon rustling in the wind, or a young lady summons a smile to some lad's peach down cheeks, it means marriage. This foolish philology we learn from popular novelists and often from popular clergymen. What volumes of nonsense are talked and written about true love and the holy affection; stern father holding their daughters for money; managing mothers selling their children for gold; pure affections ignored for gain! Parents have a voice in what concerns their children—health, education, comfort, amusements, opportunities, future; they live, strive, slave, work, die for their children; but in marriage—the most important—we are taught that the affections are holy and parental interference is tyranny. For a young girl to run away with some clerk, or the young man to carry a maiden from the home where she is the centre of a kingdom of love, devotion, reverence, to struggle with poverty, is to become the social hero of the hour. And the world applauds, saying with Emerson that all the world loves a lover. When woman was secluded, held in the restraint which prevails in Eastern countries; when even in civilized England she was only something better than the hound, something dearer than the horse; when her womanhood was an indifferent social incident, and her honor could be torn from her and worn without reproach as a plume we can understand the rebellion against domestic government which marks the old comedies. But it should be remembered that these old comedies picture old days. Persons whom our sainted grandfathers would have as a successful gallant would now be thrown into a horse pond, and the darling of Congreve's drawing rooms would be kicked out of a modern club. Woman is now under no restraint—hardly the restraint of public opinion. She sees the world as it is. Her parents are not jailers, but friends, wise, experienced friends, and in nothing so sure to be wise as in what concerns her marriage. The South Carolina Hebrews are right. Hasty, ill-considered marriages especially in spite of the father's or mother's will, are always selfish, generally criminal, and never come to a good end. No happiness that the most perfect marriage under such circumstances could bring would ever do away with the memory of the wounds the parent's heart was made to suffer—the wound of ingratitude. There may have been happy runaway marriages, and it is not well to be imprudently in dealing with mere acts of folly. But experience justifies our accepting it as a rule that when a man proposes to elope with a girl he is a scoundrel and the consent can only be deemed the consent of a fool.—New York Herald. THE MINISTER WAS TOO LATE. Young man, said the minister, take my advice and get married. Sir? Take my advice and get married. I am interested in you. Thank you sir; but you ought to have spoken sooner. Elizabeth and I have made arrangements with the Justice of the Peace.—Merchant Traveler. A noted horse-thief and desperate character was brought before a judge, and after he was found guilty by a jury the prisoner arose and in this way addressed the court: Judge if you sentence me I'll blow a hole through you. Mr. Sheriff, said the court, in response, "his man is a bad egg. You had better turn him loose."—New York Telegram.