NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Charles Reade on the Desert Islands.

Mr. Reade's faculty, a little like Shakespeare's, is to take some plot ready made, and work it over so intimately that you recognize no more than the bare groundwork, and scarcely that there is any. And so it was she swept across the wards of "White Lies" was a French story, his "Griffith Gaunt" a story from the Law Reports. He is the wildest writer since Sterne, superior to Edmond Sawyer in his own specialty, could out-gun Hood if he tried, and when he chooses to cross the path of Defoe in a desert island romance, we feel that Defoe has got his first antagonist of any importance. Out on the dense disadvantage of being in the modern man, he is by nature excessively lusty and self-conscious. He cannot mention the fact of two and two making four without turning a somersault which bedecks that axiom with a theatrical and improbable air. Defoe could battle the wind in a score of repose and confidence which carried off his wildest inventions.

In the arrangement of his Crusoe plot, Mr. Reade has occasion to provide Helen Rolleston with two lovers, one of whom is a villain, and by his infinite chagrin, carries away his mistress by wrecking (for the insurance) the Australian ship on which she had accidentally taken up, one, a previous recondite of his had ruined the rival lover, and caused the latter's transportation for a forgery committed by lover No. 1 when he needed cash for his college debts. Lover No. 2, indeed, by his affection to steal upon Helen's ship in disguise, shares the wreck, and escapes with her alone to the desert island. To clear off the villain and incumbrances Mr. Reade makes the voyage to the island perilous and deadly, to the point of exterminating every sailor but one, who lands dying. The lover's ingenuity (the old terrific ingenuity of Mr. Charles Reade) first takes fire on this voyage, and he displays it in a seawater to save their lives. It was a novel application of familiar means:

These were a common glass bottle, and Miss Rolleston's life-preserving jacket, that served her for a cork. He made a small gapinet under his knees, and considered it attentively; then unrelaced the brass eyelet holes, and the jacket was inflated, and so left a tube, some nine inches in length, hanging from the lower skirt of the garment.

He now applied his breath to the tube, and the jacket swelling rapidly proved that the whole recepticle was air-tight.

He then allowed the air to escape. Next, he took the bottle and filled it with water, from the sea; then he inserted, with some difficulty and great care, the neck of the bottle into the orifice of the tube; this done, he detached the wire of the brass nozzle, and slipped the tube firmly round the neck of the bottle.

"Now, light a fire," he cried, "no matter what it costs."

The fire thereupon was chopped up.

An article of this kind, of course, finds it nothing to set up and arrange the English ideal of a home, "furnished with tropical improvements, from the Charing Cross Hotel.—In the island, which naturally proves to be a combination of the Zoological Garden with the Jardin des Plantes. One of its unnoticed beauties is:

A sloping hotbed of exotic flowers, and those sage ancients that assert that the plant is from the tropics. The ground was carpeted a yard deep with their hardy parent, and others, more aspiring, climbed the warm sides of the diverging cliff, and arched over it with a wall, fairer than any palace they rose. In this blessed spot, warmed, yet not scorched, by the tropical sun, and fed with trickling waters, was seen what marvels "moon flowers" can do. Here are vegetable cream-cups as giants, and our flowers were trees. One lovely glantess of the jasmine tribe, but with flowers shaped like a marigold, and scented like a tube-rose, had a stem as thick as a poplar, and carried its thousand flowers on a spreading panicle, eighty feet of broken rock, and slanted on every side, between the flowers and the sun, and threw air with perfume. Another tree about half as high was covered with a single flower-pot, and seemed like honeysuckle, but was in reality a bloscomed in a corner, unknoded among loftier beauties. And at the very mouth of the inverse hope lamana hazel screen, and firing out its vast leaves, that seemed transfixed gold against the sun, and it alone a moderate cactus in all her pink and crimson glory, and through the mass of color strutted the dog's face of the tulip, grotesque, laughing, and catching sunbeams.

Hazel looked upon this the cliff and covered with delight, and that deep sense of flowers that be longs to your true woman.

They develop their island.

"Now," said Hazel, the occasional name of the lady, taken from the color of his mistress's eyes, "I have three propositions to lay before you. 1st. That I hereby give up walking, and take to ex-ding; time is so precious. 2d. That we both work by sights as well as by day. 3d. That we each tell the other our principal wants, so that the ex-gap be not over-sea in the lookout, as we go, instead of two."

"I consent," said Helen. "Pray, what are your wants?"

"Iron, oil, salt, tar, a hollows, a pickaxe, planks, thread, nets, light matting for roofs, sticks, chicken-pots, jars, jars, jars, animal food, a variety of vegetable food, and so on. Tell me what you have, and I'lll tell you."

"You will be puzzled to do that without ink or pens."

"Not in the least. I shall engrave it in *adze* form, make the words with pebbles on the turf and above high-water mark. Now tell me your wants."

"Well, I want—impossibilities."

"Numerous they are."

"What is the use?"

"It is the method we have agreed upon."

"Oh, very well then. I want—a sponge."

"Good. What next?"

"A hair-brush!"

"Good."

"And you think so. I want—Oh, Mr. Hazel, what is the use?—well, I should like a mirror—to look at—"

"Hair or wood?"

"I don't care which. And it is a shame to ask you for either.

"Go on!"

"I want a looking-glass."

"Good enough. What for?"

"Or, never mind—I want one; and some more towels, and some soap, and a few hair-pins, and some elastic bands, and some pen, ink and paper, to write with. My feelings burn in this island for nobody ever to see."

When she began Hazel looked bright, but the list was like a wasp, its sting lay in its tail. However, he gave her a pocket-book, "I'll try and get you all these things; solve rive me time. Do you know I am writing a dictionary on a novel method."

"That means on the sand."

"No; the work is suspended for the present. But two of the definitions I'm at, Dreyvoyvirs,—things to be subdued; Invrosfintirs,—things to be trampled on.

"Well, subdue mine. Trample on—a sponge for—me."

"That is just what I was going to do," said he; he opened a chaty-knife and jumped coolly in to the river.

Helen screamed faintly, but after all the water was only up to his knees.

He soon caught a large sponge off a piece of slimy rock, and held it to her.

He, of course, after reaping the island of its valuables, carried it to a secluded cleap in introduced, which, by one of Mr. Reade's graceful caprices, represents the hole in the form of a bean-winkle.

A short course of turtle-eggs and cocoanuts fills up Helen, who had been consumptive, into the following figure:

He watched her with an admiring eye; and will be slight, for it was the very poetry of motion. Hazel in his hours of health had almost given up walking; he set from point to point without fatigue or shortness of breath. Helen, equally pressed for time, did not run; but she went almost as fast. By rising with the dawn, by three meals a day of animal food, by constant work, and heavenly air, she was in a condition

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women rarely attain to. She was *trained*. Ten miles was no more to her than two yards. And when she was in a hurry, she got over the ground by a grand but feminine motion not easy to describe. It was a series of smooth undulations, not vulgar strides, but swift ruches, in which she leans second to propel the whole body, and the feet scarcely to touch the ground; in which the vigor and freedom of a savage, with the grace of a lady. And so it was she swept across the wards and up the slope.

But even turtle-eggs and the acquisition of such a gait do not reconcile Helen to her lodgings. She prefers to go home. Her instructions are positive:

"Call rea and hard to our rescue. Let them draw a poor girl to here in unheard-of, unfashionable, silver-, here, in the middle of this awful ocean."

Hazel sighed deeply. "No ships seem to pass within sight of us," he muttered.

"What does that matter to you? You are not a common man; you are an inventor. Rouse all the powers of your mind. There must be some way. Think for me. Think! Think! or my blood will be on your head."

Hazel turned pale and put his head in his hands, and tried to think.

She leaned towards him with great flashing eyes of purest hazel.

The problem dropped from his lips a syllable at a time. "To diffuse—intelligence—a hundred leagues from a fixed point—an island?"

Mr. Reade, after constructing an island full of difficulties, has cancelled them one by one, with "a rest of an expert sitting down to a column of enumeration. He is not going to be baffled now—the problem constructed by himself is thus airily solved:

Hazel had risen an hour before dawn for reasons well known to himself. He put on his sweet clothes, and a leathern belt, his little bags round his neck, and took his bundle of rushes in his hand. He also provided himself with some pieces of raw fish and fresh oyster; and, thus equipped, was up towards the Sugar-loaf, and got to the neighborhood of the lagoons before daybreak.

"There was a heavy steam on the water, and nothing else to be seen; but the birds were up in the heat, and walked into the water, not without an internal shudder. It looked so cold.

"But instead of that, it was very warm, uncomfortably warm. He walked up to his midriff, and then put his hands to his belt, so as to prevent it sinking too deep. This done, he stood motionless, and extended a little bed of rushes. The sun rose, and the steam immediately cleared away, and Hazel, looking through a hole or two he had made expressly in the bed of rushes, saw several ducks floating about, and one in particular, all purple, without a speck but his amber eye. He contrived to detach a piece of fish, that soon floated to the surface near him. But no duck moved towards it. He tried another, and another; then a mallard he had not observed swam up from behind him, and was soon busy pecking at it within a yard of him. His heart beat; he glided slowly and cautiously forward till the bird was close to the bank.

Hazel stretched out his hand with the utmost care, crouched out of the bird's feet, and struck him sharply under the water, and brought him up within the circle of the rushes. He quacked and struggled. Hazel twisted his under direct, and so quenched the sound; then he glided slowly to the bank, for he *dared* that the rushes would seemed to drift ashore. This he did not to create mayhem, and to spoil the next attempt. As he glided, he gave his duck a very nervous and then, and soon got on *very firm*. By the time he had taught the duck not to quack, or he would get scourged and left behind. He now took the long gut-cord and tied it tight round the bird's leg, and so fastened the bag to him. Even while he was effecting this, a posse of ducks rose at the west end of the marsh, and circled round the wood, first against the sun. As they passed, Hazel threw his captive up in the air, and sent him to the rest of the flock, which, perhaps, by the fright the captive had received, that Hazel's bird instantly joined these travellers, rose with them into the high currents, and away, and the rest flew scattered upon the wings of the wind. Then Hazel returned to the pool, and twice more he was so fortunate as to secure a bird, and hamper him into space.

So had it, (observes the author, with convic-tion,) remained the wit of a man (the wit of Mr. Reade), and to define his resources (Mr. Reade's resources). The problem was solved; the carrier pigeons were on the wing, difficulty was overcome, and the intelligence—that an English lady had been wrecked on an unknown island, in longitude 103 deg. 30 min., and latitude 32 deg. 25 min. south—was on its back; and calling good men and ships to her rescue for the loves of God.

Meanwhile the lady, father, General Rolleston, having heard of his daughter's shipwreck, is circulating reports of the Pacific to find her, in a vessel fitted out by the father of Lover No. 1. The search is long baffled, until presently there springs up out of the deep our old friend Fullalove, the stage-Yankee of "Very Hard Cash." Fullalove has heard of one of the messenger-ducks:

The skipper came up the side of the Springbok. He was loosely dressed in some light drab colored stuff and a huge straw hat; a man with a long Puritanical head, a nose inclined to be sublime, a face browned by weather and heat, thin, resolute lips, and a square chin. But for a certain twinkle in his deep gray eyes, he would have revealed more intellect than Cromwell's ironsides were encumbered with. He stood a moment on the crown of that hard-prying, hard-hitting fraternity, and, with a quick, but not hurried, eye, he ran his brush away a fly, and removing an enormous cigar from his mouth, said, "Well, I guess I'm the Springbok. Spry little boat she is; how many knots you get out of her now? Not that I am curious."

"About twelve knots."

"And when the steam's off Cic bile, how many can you do?" Not that I am curious."

"Eight or nine. What is your business?"

"Hum! You have been over some water lately; for there's a bit of weed on your keel, and it's Pacific Islands. Did you board me to hear me ask questions?"

"Not I; I am not one of your prying sort. Where are you bound for now?"

"I am bound for Easter Island."

"Have you heard anything of the gal?"

"No."

"And when do you expect to go back to England?"

"As soon as I can."

"Never while the ship can swim," cried Mr. Hazel angrily, to hide his despondency from this stranger. "And now is it my turn, I think. What reinforce is this? by whom commanded, and whither bound?"

"The Julia Dodd; Joshua Fullalove, bound for Juan Fernandez with the raw material of civilization—book, of the varmint skipper, and pointing-press; as that's the instrument of civilization, I reckon, I guess."

"Well, sir, and why in Heaven's name did you change your course?"

"Well, I reckon I changed it—to tell you a lie."

"To tell me a lie?"

"Ay." The darkest charge in that over came out of a man's mouth. Fast, there's an unknown island near where we are bound. Island! I don't believe that. On that island there's an English old wretch."

Exclamations burst forth on every side at this. "And she's barnacles—cute, sir, for flying ducks all over creation with a writing tied to their legs, telling the lady and setting down the longitude. There, if that isn't a butter, I hope I may never live to tell another."

Of course, then, there is nothing to do but for the General to meet his daughter, which he immediately effects in the Pacific Ocean. But she is not contented to go straight off to England and consequently takes the Julia Dodd in scene. She proceeds to introduce it, in the form of her "guardian angel," whom the father recognizes as the convicted forger:

"There," said General Rolleston, "I thought parents shame of it." Hazel reddened, and so quenched the sound; then he glided slowly to the bank, for *he dared* that the rushes would seemed to drift ashore. This he did not to create mayhem, and to spoil the next attempt. As he glided, he gave his duck a very nervous and then, and soon got on *very firm*. By the time he had taught the duck not to quack, or he would get scourged and left behind. He now took the long gut-cord and tied it tight round the bird's leg, and so fastened the bag to him. Even while he was effecting this, a posse of ducks rose at the west end of the marsh, and circled round the wood, first against the sun. As they passed, Hazel threw his captive up in the air, and sent him to the rest of the flock, which, perhaps, by the fright the captive had received, that Hazel's bird instantly joined these travellers, rose with them into the high currents, and away, and the rest flew scattered upon the wings of the wind. Then Hazel returned to the pool, and twice more he was so fortunate as to secure a bird, and hamper him into space.

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