

CAPTAIN KIDD'S TREASURE.

At eighteen, being a homeless orphan, and unable to secure to myself a collegiate education, in a fit of desperation, like many a foolish youth, I resolved to go to sea. Now, in my old age, I can afford to confess that my highest ambition was to imitate the exploits of Captain Kidd. I had desired to become a good and useful man, failing which I flew to the opposite extreme. Accordingly I hastened to Bangor, the nearest seaport, and shipped on board a small fishing smack.

The *Siro*, Captain John Gray, belonged at Deer Isle, in Penobscot Bay. After a cruise of some weeks we went to Deer Isle and remained several days. Little Deer Isle was formerly a portion of the larger island, evidently cut off by the action of the waves, but accessible to even footmen at low water. The small island was quite a curiosity, and I passed a whole day in visiting it. Many portions were covered with masses of broken rocks, but between them was tillable land and several small farms. To a country boy, like myself, there was much that was wild, weird and fascinating, and I greatly enjoyed my explorations.

Towards evening, on my return, I passed near the house of Peter Hardy, of whom I had been told and warned that he was crazy. He saw me coming and met me, shaking hands as though an old acquaintance, although he had never even heard of me before, as I supposed. He asked numerous questions about who I was, and finally said:

"I think you are the young man I have been looking for. I have a daughter, sixteen years old, and guess you would make her a good husband, but I must ask you one question more, and if you can answer that right you may have Lucy; but if not, then you are not the young man I am looking for. Now, what do you say, is it a bargain?"

"Certainly," I replied, for I remembered that in all the stories I had read about the freebooters of the high sea the luxury of booty was heightened by the romance of beauty.

"Well," he continued; "now don't be in a hurry to answer; take time to think, for I want you to answer right. When do you cut your hog-yokes?"

This was a poser. I did not care so much about a girl I had never seen as I did not to be beaten by a man who seemed like a half fool. So I thought of all the times possible that one should cut hog-yokes. Then I rejected from the list all but two—namely, rainy days and Sundays. Between these I could not make choice. Nervously thrusting my hand in my pocket I felt a copper penny. Then a happy thought occurred. The date of the cent should settle it. If the date was odd I would answer "Rainy days"; if even, "Sundays." I drew it out. It was odd, and I answered accordingly. He looked distressed, but before he spoke I corrected myself and said that I meant Sundays.

"My poor boy," he began, "I am very sorry for you. You have missed a chance of being Governor of Maine. Lucy must marry a Governor; and if you could only have answered me right you might have married her right off,

and come here to live till you are elected. (That was forty-five years ago; wouldn't he have had a good time keeping me till I was elected? The fact is, I have hardly ever been Governor of any State in all my life.)

He turned to leave me, and I resumed my walk. Soon after, hearing him call, I turned, and he beckoned me to come back. Curiosity prompted me to do so. His wife had joined him, and appeared to be arguing some point with great earnestness. When within hearing I caught these words from her:

"I say he is the very young man; I guess I ought to know. I had the dream, not you, and I say he is the one."

"Never mind the hog-yokes," said Peter Hardy, as I joined them; "I will answer that question for you. The time to cut a hog-yoke is when you are going through the woods and see a forked bush that will make one. Cut it and carry it home, and some time it might save half a day hunting for one. But here's my wife; she wants to talk to you a little, and then you can come into the house with her."

He sauntered away in a listless sort of manner, and then Mrs. Hardy said to me, with great earnestness:

"A spirit has appeared to me in a dream three times and showed you to me. He told me you would come here just before haying, and we should see you just as we have this afternoon. He told me just exactly where Captain Kidd buried his money on this island, and said that after you had helped us through haying, then some Sunday night you and I would go to the place, I would keep reading all the time the sixty-first Psalm. The ghosts will come and threaten you, but they can't hurt you as long as I keep reading. You keep on digging and you will soon come to a great iron pot with an iron cover, all filled with gold, and you shall have half of it."

She paused, looking me earnestly in the face, as if to see what impression had been made upon me. But I was puzzled even worse than over the hog-yoke question. I had signed shipping papers for four months and had served but two months. Captain Gray was not the man to let me off, and it seemed one of the conditions that I must help through haying. I explained my environments, when she said:

"Can you swim a mile?"

"Yes, two of them."

"All right; we can manage it."

"Can I always live with you after we find the gold?"

"Certainly."

"Have you a daughter named Lucy?"

"Yes."

"Is she handsome?"

"Come to the house and see for yourself."

I followed her in. She gave me no introduction, only said:

"That is Lucy," pointing towards what I still think the most perfect image of female loveliness at "sweet sixteen" that has ever crossed my vision.

I had started out with a view of becoming a pirate, in order that I might have plenty of money. Then with the