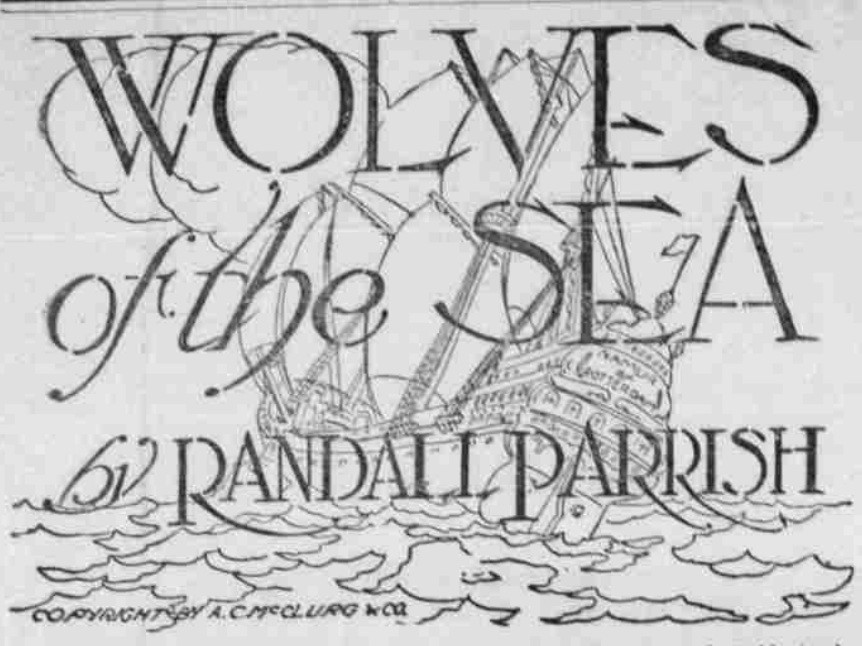




CHAPTER XXX-Continued.

I heard her cry out, and barely caught the lantern as it fell from her hand. At first I doubted the evidence of my own eyes, snatching the bit of flaming candle from its tin socket and holding it where the full glare of light fell across the grewsome object. Ay, it was a woman, with lower limbs doubled back from lack of space, but otherwise lying as though she slept, so perfect in preservation her cheeks appeared flushed with health, her lips half smiling. It was a face of real beauty—an English face, although her eyes and hair were dark and her mantilla and long earrings were unquestionably Spanish. A string of pearls encircled her throat, and there were numerous rings upon her fingers. The very contrast added immeasurably to the horror.

"She is alive! Surely she is alive!" The words were sobbed into my ear from Dorothy's lips.

"Alive! No, that is impossible!" I touched the figure with my hand. "The flesh is like stone," I said, "thus held lifelike by some magic of the Indies. What can it all mean? Who could the woman be? Is it love or hate?"

"Not love, Geoffrey. Love would never do this thing. It is hate, the gloating of revenge; there can be no other answer—this is the end of a tragedy."

There was nothing, not a scrap of paper, not even the semblance of a wound exposed. The smile on those parted lips had become one of mockery; I could bear the sight no longer, and rose to my feet, clasping Dorothy close to me, as she still gazed down in fascination at the ghastly sight.

"We will never know. The man who could tell is dead."

"Captain Paradilla?"

"Who else could it be? This was his schooner, and here he alone could hide such a secret. There is nothing more we can learn, and the horror unnerves me. Hold the light, dear, while I replace the lid of the chest."

It required my utmost effort to accomplish this. I was glad to have the thing hidden, to escape the stare of those fixed eyes, the death smile of those red lips. It was no longer a reality but a dream of delirium; I dare not think or speculate—my only desire being to get away, to get Dorothy away. In absolute terror I drew her with me to the open door—then stopped, paralyzed; the half revealed figure of a man appeared on the cabin stairs.

"Stop! Who are you?"

"Watkins, sir. I came below to call you. There's somethin' bloomin' odd takin' place out there in the fog, Captain Carlyle. We want yer on deck, sir, right away."

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Boat Attack.

He waited for us just without the companion, but my eyes caught nothing unusual as I emerged into the daylight. I could barely see amidships, and on either side hung the impenetrable bank of cloud, leaving sea and sky invisible.

"What is it, Watkins? Where are the men?"

"Forward, sir, a-bangin' over the starboard rail. That's somethin' cursed strange a-happenin' in that fog. Ole was the first to hear the clatter over on our slippin' in a rowlock. Then, sir, while we was a-listenin' we both caught sound over a Spanish oath, spoke as plain as if the buck was aboard."

"A lost boat, likely—shipwrecked sailors adrift in the fog; perhaps our other quarterboat. No one hailed them?"

"No, sir; I told the men ter keep still till I called you."

The crew were all gathered at the rail, staring out into the mist, whispering to each other. I pressed my way in among them. We may have been clinging there a minute of two, breathlessly listening. Then a voice spoke directly in front of me out from the dense fog.

"Try the port oar, Pedro; we must have missed the d—n ship."

I straightened up as though struck, my eyes seeking those of Watkins, who stared back at me, his mouth wide open in astonishment.

"You heard that?" I whispered. "Do you know who spoke?"

"Do I? Dead or alive, sir, it was Manuel Estevan."

"Ay, no other, and alive enough, no doubt. Lads, come close to me and listen—they must not hear us out there. By some devil's trick the Namur has followed our course, or else yonder are a part of his crew cast away. They clearly know of us—perhaps had a glimpse through some rift in the cloud—and are seeking to board with a boat party. 'Tis not likely those devils know who we are; probably take us for merchant ship."

becalmed in the fog and liable to become an easy prey, if they can only slip on us unseen. How are you, bulles? Ready to battle your old mates?"

"Those were no mates o' ours, sir," said Watkins indignantly. "They are half-breed mongrels, and no sailors; Estevan is a hell-hound, an' so far as my voice goes, I'd rather die on this deck than ever agin be a bloody pirate. It that the right words, lads?"

The others grumbled assent, but their muttered words had in them a ring of sincerity, and their faces exhibited no cowardice. One only asked a question.

"I'm fer fightin', sir," he said grimly, "but what'll we use? Them lads ain't comin' aboard bare-handed, but damn if I've seed a weapon on this hooker."

"Dar's three knives, an' a meat cleaver in der galley, sah," chimed in Sam.

"We'll do well enough; some of you have your sheath knives yet, and the rest can use belaying pins and capstan bars. The point is to not let them get aboard, and, if there is only one boat, we will be pretty evenhanded. Pick up what you can, and man this rail—quietly now, hearties, and keep your eyes open."

It proved a longer wait than I expected. Unable to withstand the inaction any longer I turned and took a few steps aft, thinking to gauge our progress by the wake astern. I was about the cabin on the port side when Dorothy called my name—a sudden accent of terror in her voice.

The alarm was sounded none too soon. Either fortune, or skill, had served those demons well. They had succeeded in circling the stern of the Santa Marie, unseen and unheard by anyone aboard. Even as she shrieked the alarm, a hand was at her throat, and she was struggling desperately in the merciless grip of a half-naked Indian.

"Yet at that they were too late, the advantage of surprise had failed them. A half dozen had reached the deck, leaping from the rail, the others below clambering after their leaders, when with a rush we met them. It was a fierce, mad fight, fist and club pitted against knife and cut-throat, but the defenders struck like demons incarnate. I doubt if the struggle lasted two minutes. I heard the blows, the oaths, the cries of pain, the dull thud of wood against bone, the sharp clang of steel in contact, the shuffling of feet on the deck, the splash of bodies hurled overboard. Each man fought for himself, in his own way. I thought only of her, and leaped straight for her assailant with bare hands, smashing recklessly through the hasty guard of his cutlass and gripped the copper devil by hair and throat. I knew she fell to the deck beneath our feet, but I had my work cut out for me. He was a hell-hound, slippery as an eel in his half nakedness, strong as an ox, and fighting like a fiend. Yet I had him foul, my grip unbreakable, as I forced his neck back against the rail, until it cracked, the swarthy body sliding inert to the deck. Whirling to assist the others I found no need. Except for bodies here and there the deck was clear; men were struggling in the chains; two below in the boat were endeavoring to cast off, and Schmitt, with Estevan helpless in his arms, staggered to the side and flung the shrieking Spanish cur overboard out into dark water. I heard the splash as he fell, the single cry his lips gave, but he never again appeared above the surface. Above the bedlam Watkins roared out an order.

"That's it, bulles! that's it! Now let her drop! We'll send them to hell where they belong. Good shot; she landed!"

It was the hank of a spare anchor, balanced for an instant on the rail, then sent crashing down through the frail bottom of the boat beneath. The wreck drifted away into the fog, the two miserable occupants clinging desperately to the gunwales. I lifted Dorothy to her feet, and she clung to me unsteadily, her face yet white.

"Watkins, have you figured up results?"

"Two of our men are cut rather badly, and one hasn't come to yet from a smart rap on the head."

"None got away?"

"Not less they swim, that's six dead ones aboard. Four took ter the water, mostly because they hed to. The only livin' one o' the bunch is that nigger 'longside the wheel, an' nuthin' but a thick skull saved him."

"Then there were eleven in the party. What do you suppose has become of the others aboard the Namur?"

"I dunno, sir; they might be a waitin' out there in fog. Perhaps the nigger cut told you."

I crossed over to where the fellow sat on a grating, his head in his hands, the girl still clinging to my sleeve, as though fearful of being left alone.

man was a repulsive brute, his face stained with blood, dripping from a cut across his low forehead. He looked up sullenly at our approach, but made no effort to rise.

"Look yere, you black villain," roared Watkins, driving the lesson home with his foot, "don't be a playin' possum yer. Stand up an' answer Mister Carlyle, or yer'll git a worse clip than I give yer afore. What is the bloody bark?"

"Pounding her heart out on the rocks yonder," he said civilly, "unless she's slid off an' gone down. To the west, maybe a mile or so."

"What about the crew?"

"They got away in the boats, an' likely mostly are ashore. We were in the last boat launched, and headed out so far ter get 'round a ledge o' rocks we got lost in the fog. Then the mist sorter opened an' give us a glimpse o' yer topsails. We didn't expect no fight, once we got aboard."

"Expected to find something easy, of course? Perhaps it would have been if—what is it you see out there, Simms?"

The seaman, who was standing with hollowed hands shading his eyes, staring forth into the swirling drapery of fog, turned at my call and pointed excitedly.

"There's a bark aground yonder, sir; and it looks like the Namur!"

Even as I crossed the deck to his side the wreaths of obscuring mist seemed to divide, as though swept apart by some mighty hand, and there in the full glow of the sun, a picture in a frame, lay the wrecked vessel. Others saw it as I did, and gave vent to recognition.

"Damned if it ain't the old hooker!"

"She got what was coming to her all right mates."

"And she's lousy with treasure!"

"Come here, Sam! That's the last of the Namur."

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Last of the Namur.

The vessel was plainly a total wreck, rapidly pounding to death on a sharp ledge of rock. Both masts were down, and, lifted as the bow was, it was easy to perceive the deck was in splinters where falling spars and topmasts had crushed their way through. The bows had caught, seemingly jammed in between rocks, the stern sunk deep, with cabin port holes barely above reach of the waves. Not a living thing appeared on board, and as the fog slowly drifted away, my eyes could discern no sign of any boat, no evidence of the crew, along the wide sweep of water. A voice aroused me.

"What was it you said, Jack, 'bout treasure on the old hooker? Why not get it afore it's too late?"

"It's thar, all right, Ole," and I knew the speaker to be Haines. "Ain't it, Mr. Carlyle?"

"Yes, lads, there must be money on board, unless those fellows took it with them in the boats. I know of fifty thousand pounds stolen in Virginia, and no doubt there is more than that. The bark is liable to slide off that rock any minute and go down like a stone. What do you say, bulles? Here is a risky job, but a pocket full of gold pieces, if we can get aboard and safely off again. Who'll go across with me?"

There was a babel of voices, the men crowding about me, all else forgotten as greed gripped their imaginations.

"Stand back, lads! I cannot use all of you. Four will be enough. You'll not lose anything of what we bring back; it'll be share and share alike, so fall to, hearties."

I paused an instant to speak to Dorothy, seated on the flag locker, explaining to her swiftly my object in exploring the wreck and pledging myself not to be reckless in attempting to board. I read fear in her eyes, yet she said nothing to dissuade me.

I slipped down a rope and dropped into the boat, taking my place with a steering oar at the stern, and we shot away through the green water. The Namur proved to be a more complete wreck than our distant view had revealed, and lying in a more precarious position. It was no pleasant job getting aboard, but ordering Haines to accompany me, and the others to lie by, I made use of a dangle backstay, and thus hauled myself up to a reasonably secure footing. The fellow joined me breathless, and together we perched on the rail to gain view of the deck.

It was a distressing, hopeless sight, the vessel rising before us like the roof of a house, the deck planks stove in, a horrible jumble of running rigging, booms and spars, blocking the way forward. There were three bodies tangled in the wreckage within our sight, crushed out of all human resemblance, and the face of a negro, caught beneath the ruins of the galley, seemed to grin back at me in death. Every timber groaned as the waves struck and rocked the sodden mass, and I had no doubt but that the vessel had already broken in two.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Bigger and Heavier Hen Fruit.

It is thought by naturalists that the eggs of domestic hens of the present day are larger and heavier by nearly a third than those of the hens of the ancients. Eggs differ a good deal in weight, the average weight being about two ounces. A good egg is made up of ten parts shell, 60 parts white and 30 parts yolk. The white of an egg contains 88 per cent water. The shell contains about 2 per cent animal matter and 1 per cent of the phosphates of lime and magnesia, the rest consisting of carbonate of lime. Half the various specimens of snakes lay eggs. Instead of shell the covering of the egg is a tough, white, leathery substance. The largest egg of any bird to

REARRANGE PERCHES IN CHICKEN HOUSES

See That Roosts Meet Requirements of Various Fowls.

Birds of Heavy, Large Breeds Should Not Be Compelled to Jump Too Far—Dangerous to Permit Hens to Crowd at Night.

When making readjustments in the poultry houses it is always well to look over the perches and see if they meet the requirements of the birds. If fowls are of the heavy, large breeds the perches should not be as high, for many ill effects are the result of jumping from high perches. The lighter-weight fowls are usually better flyers and can assist themselves in getting up and down much better than can the heavy ones. The two kinds should never be kept in the same house at night if for no other reason than the above, says a writer in an exchange. The height of the perches also brings trouble if every one is not on the same level. In endeavoring to secure the safest place in the house all fowls will try to reach the highest perch and the lower ones are practically useless except to the ones that could not fight their way higher.

Always aim to have the perches at the same height and have room enough on them to avoid crowding. There are dangers in crowding the hens at night, to say nothing of this discomfort. No hen likes to be uncomfortable, nor does any animal, in fact, and if we make domestic fowls of the hens we must give them the privileges and liberties, as nearly as we can, resembling that of their natural state.

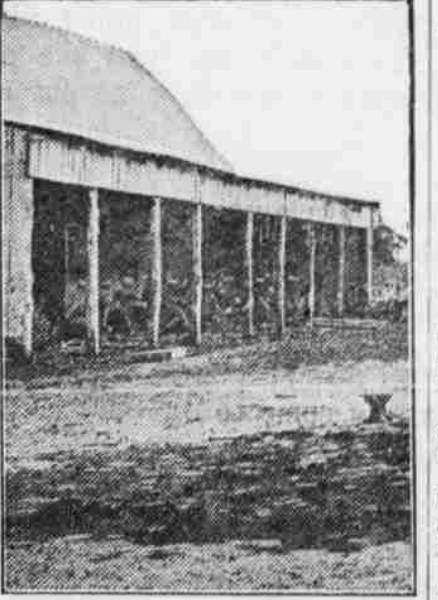
High jumping from the roosts is likely to injure the legs of the hens, and if the birds have not attained their growth they will be more liable to deformities. It is the natural instinct of the fowls to want to roost high, away, as they suppose, from their enemies, as they do in the wild state; and while rats should not be permitted to infest the houses there is less danger from them when the fowls are high up. Then, too, the little streams of air (that should not be allowed to flow in on the hens) will do less damage if the roosts are not too low. While very high roosts are disapproved of it is, nevertheless, advantageous to have them high enough so that the birds may feel safe and at the same time have them on the level for the whole flock that inhabits the one house.

GOOD SHED FOR IMPLEMENTS

Drainage Should Be Sufficient to Keep Different Machines From Standing in Wet Place.

A serviceable implement shed should be thoroughly drained so that the implements do not stand in a wet place. It must protect articles from sun, wind and moisture. It must not be too expensive. It should be situated in a convenient spot and so arranged as to be easily used.

The material from which the shed is made will depend upon the cost and the locality. Very good sheds are



An Inexpensive Shed for Various Farm Implements.

made of wood-frame construction, covered with sheet iron. Other good ones can be made of wood-frame construction and closed in with barn siding, drop siding, or with ship-lap. Shingles, corrugated iron or patent roofing make good roofs for machine sheds.

EYES OF ANIMALS RELIEVED

Ten Per Cent Boric Acid and Ninety Per Cent Pure Water is Most Excellent Remedy.

Sore and watery eyes of animals may be relieved by a solution of 10 per cent boric acid and 90 per cent pure water. Apply it on absorbent cotton and use a fresh piece every time the eyes are treated.

USE OF QUICKLIME FAVORED

Superior to Put in Graves of Animals Dying From Different Contagious Diseases.

Quicklime is good to put in the graves of animals that die from contagious diseases. In using it the carcass should be surrounded and covered with twice its weight of the quicklime.

How Competition Helps You

The competition that exists among the hundreds of meat distributors, large and small, means

- Rivalry in Prices
- Rivalry in Service
- Rivalry in Economy
- Rivalry in Quality

Swift & Company sells meat at the lowest possible price, consistent with quality and service. Our profit of only a fraction of a cent a pound on all products is evidence of keen competition.

Swift & Company must provide the best service to your dealer or he will buy from our competitors. This means a supply of fine fresh meat always on hand for you at your dealer's.

Swift & Company must keep down manufacturing and selling costs, and use all by-products to avoid waste, or else lose money meeting the prices of competitors who do.

Swift & Company must make its products of the highest quality, or see you turn to others. This means better meat for you and a greater variety of appetizing, wholesome food.

We are as glad for this competition as you should be. It helps to keep us on our mettle.

Swift & Company, U.S.A.



It Works! Try It

Tells how to loosen a sore, tender corn so it lifts out without pain.

No humbug! Any corn, whether hard, soft or between the toes, will loosen right up and lift out without a particle of pain or soreness. This drug is called Freezone and is a compound of ether discovered by a Cincinnati man.

Ask at any drug store for a small bottle of freezone, which will cost but a trifle, but is sufficient to rid one's feet of every corn or callous.

Put a few drops directly upon any tender, aching corn or callous. Instantly the soreness disappears and shortly the corn or callous will loosen and can be lifted off with the fingers.

This drug freezone doesn't eat out the corns or callouses but shrivels them without even irritating the surrounding skin.

Just think! No pain at all; no soreness or smarting when applying it or afterwards. If your druggist don't have freezone have him order it for you—Adv.

Remarkable Tattooing.

Perhaps the most extraordinary tattooing idea ever carried out was that of a French coachman, who, at the time of the celebrated Dreyfus trial, had his body covered with no fewer than 120 illustrations of the case, including portraits of the leading personages. The work occupied nearly two years.

Naturally Road Is Crooked.

For the benefit of automobilists who have wondered why the road from Exeter to Hampton, N. H., is so crooked, it is explained that when the first settlements were being made in New Hampshire, a bear made a night raid on that part of the Hampton settlement known as Wigwam row, and men in pursuit the next morning followed its tracks in the light snow to its watering place at Squamscott

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All druggists, Soap, Ointment & 20¢ Jar. Sample each free of "Cuticura, Dept. B, Boston."

Garfield Tea was your Grandmother's Remedy for every stomach and tinal ail. This good old-fashioned home remedy for constipation, achy bills and other derangements system so prevalent these days even greater favor as a family cure than in your grandmother's day—Adv.

One of the Family.

We had a beautiful outdoor wedding for our sister on a September day. Elaborate floral arches, altar, been arranged. Our guests were assembled. From out the house the procession, the minister, the bride and bridegroom with attendants, when to the marriage all, our family dog joined in the procession, walking along slowly, rest, and he laid down by the during the ceremony.

Don't Forget Cuticura Toilet

When adding to your toilet regimen an exquisitely scented face, skin and dusting powder and perfume, don't forget Cuticura Toilet. You may rely on it because one Cuticura Trio (Soap, Ointment & Talcum). 25c each everywhere.



New Houston

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