

# The Pirate of Alastair

RUPERT SARGENT HOLLAND

Author of "The Count at Harvard," etc.

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## CHAPTER XIX.—(Continued.)

Rodney thought, "The poor French workmen, the widows and orphans, who had saved and slaved, gave him everything they had, because he knew how to make money multiply as no one else did. He drew them pictures of the great factories and stores and hotels he would build for them with their money, and told them how by adding their little mites together they might produce something gigantic. How about them left without a sou?"

"It was their own lookout," I tried to argue.

"Well," said Rodney, "the right and wrong of this sort of thing lie deep, but it may be that a man has no right to use his own imagination to see for other people; that he can build air-castles only for himself."

"Perhaps," I agreed; "but, as you say, if he had succeeded, he would have been a hero."

"That's all the difference. However, he didn't, and so he's an outcast." Rodney laughed. "And to think that I've been doing my best to defend the worst scapgrace the market has known in years."

I sat back on my couch and clasped my hands about my knees.

"What must we do now?" I asked a length.

"Give him up; deliver his precious self and his treasure chest to the blood-hounds."

I shook my head. "No, I can't do that. We've been too close together. They may take him, but I can't have a hand in it."

Rodney sat staring out of the window.

"Well," said he, "I don't believe I can either, though as a broker I see my duty plain enough. I can't do it, I simply cannot do it."

We sat silent for some time, each intent on his own thoughts.

"Ought we to tell him that we know?" Rodney said finally.

"I was wondering. Perhaps we should, but I don't believe we can. When you face him and look into those clear black eyes and hear that voice I doubt if there'll be anything to do but keep your mouth shut."

"Yet we must do something," objected Rodney, "for I must be off for New York in two hours from now, to try and straighten out my losses."

"Suppose we go down and look at him," I suggested. "Possibly we can think of something then."

We went down-stairs and looked in the dining-room, the hallway, and the kitchen. In the kitchen we found Charles drowsing. We could find no trace of Duponceau. I walked Charles and questioned him.

"When did you last see Monsieur Duponceau?"

Charles rose and pulled a paper from his pocket.

"Only a couple of minutes ago, Mr. Felix," he said, "he gave me this note for you and told me not to disturb you, but to give it to you when you asked for him."

I opened the paper and read it to Rodney.

"My ship has come at last. I am going on board. I can get there alone; no one could help me. If you knew all, perchance you would not wish to help me. I have done sufficient harm without taking you and the others farther. Ask mademoiselle to pray for me. Good-by."

I looked up at Rodney in blank amazement; and as we stood so, a shot came from the beach. We turned and made for the stairs.

## CHAPTER XX.

From the balcony we sighted a schooner lying between the beach and the Shifting Shoal. A long-boat was in the water, and men were hurriedly manning it. Below us on the beach stood Duponceau, a pistol in either hand, fronting a half-dozen of his enemies, who were between him and the cottage. I would have leaped to his help, but a glance told me that the matter was too far gone for that.

Duponceau fired quickly, steadily, then wheeled and ran for the dunes. Bullets chased him, plunged into the sand behind him, whizzed past him, but by some miracle failed to hit him. He reached the nearest sand-wall, and was hidden from us. A moment later and we saw him appear, his pistols reloaded, and watched him stand again at bay and shoot. Then again he fled for the next dune up the beach, and the pursuers, temporarily stayed, were after him again.

It was to be a running fight, stand and deliver, then hide, until the long-boat should ground upon the beach and the fugitive spring into it. I looked to the boat and prayed that it might come quickly, but the distance was long, and the sea ruffled and choppy.

Again Duponceau appeared, and again the enemy were held at bay, and dropped and ducked and dodged as his bullets flew among them.

A moment's stand, and he was hidden in the next dune, loading, making ready for another dash. It was breathless, speechless work. Rodney and I gripped our glasses, shut our teeth, watched and hoped and prayed. Again the enemy were on, after him, gaining fast, and again he shot out from the dunes, and a lone fig-

ure, fronted and scattered them with his fire. A man went down with a bullet in his leg, and Duponceau had gained another breastwork.

Now the boat from the schooner was coming closer in. I caught an agonized glance from Duponceau in its direction, then his eyes returned to his foes, and he was shooting, ducking, and squirming into the sand-wall. It was a pitiful chase, like that of a hare by hounds, but it was also heroic, for the man made a noble quarry, and the hounds were more than fearful of his fire.

"He's down!" cried Rodney. True, Duponceau had fallen, but on the second he was up and on again, and now he had found the last dune, and he must stand there or dash across the unprotected beach.

"Come on!" We fled down the stairs, through the open door, and hard up the shore. Now we could see another element of danger. Some of the enemy had stolen through the pines, and were firing at Duponceau down the length of his dune.

"Look!" I muttered. We stopped, breathless, panting, wide-eyed. Duponceau burst out from the dune, whirled about, fired back at the hidden foe, wheeled and shot at the men who were following him up the beach, and, turning, headed straight for the ship.

"Run!" I murmured, and Rodney echoed me: "Run, Duponceau, run, and may Heaven help!"

I have seen men run, but never as Duponceau ran that day. He seemed to skim, almost to fly, across that open space, and behind him came his enemies, no longer firing, no longer cursing, matching their speed against his frantic flight.

The Frenchman neared the rocks, was on them, was up and clambering over the ship's side. Then came a sharp report, and I could see Duponceau quiver and hang useless—worse than useless, for he was only half over the vessel's rail.

"He's done!" I breathed.

But as he hung there Barbara suddenly appeared beside him and pulled him inboard, supported him across the deck, and got him as far as the cabin door before he collapsed on the boards.

Barbara disappeared, and then reappeared with something in her arms.

"The chest!" I muttered. "He couldn't forego that!"

I saw Barbara lift and steady Duponceau on his feet, saw him clutch the box with one hand, while he held a revolver in the other. He staggered across the deck.

"Come on!" I breathed, and we were off for the ship.

The long-boat was half way in when a new shout threatened to sound Duponceau's death-knell. Men came out on the cliff and stood high above him, ready to fire down upon him. There was a ring about him now—enemies on the rocks, on the cliff, and men already scrambling through the water to lay their hands on him.

"Look!" cried Rodney. I saw Barbara whisper in Duponceau's ear, saw him straighten up to his full height and fire at the men above him. One bullet ripped into the cliff, another shattered an arm.

We stood now on the rocks, a stone's throw off. Duponceau looked seaward and gave a cry. With terrible effort, he leaped to the farther rail, raised himself to plunge—the box still in his arms—into the sea, and sink or swim to help. He balanced, crouched, and then—a clear report and he fell, a leg broken, down into the waves. His stand was over, the fight done; his enemies had taken him.

A couple of men lifted him from the water and carried him to shore; another man followed with the chest. Rodney and I drew near and looked at him; he was conscious, and only his set teeth showed the agony he suffered.

"It's over," he said. "The boat was late." Then his eyes lighted on me, and he tried to smile. "Good-by," he muttered. "Take my good-by to her."

Carefully the men lifted him and carried him into the pines.

"He will live," said Rodney briefly, and I nodded. It was not for Duponceau to surrender easily, though I wondered if now he would not prefer it so.

## CHAPTER XXI.

The long-boat returned to the schooner, and in a quarter-hour the latter had vanished as silently as she had come. Rodney and I went on board the ship, and found Barbara sitting against the broken mast, her eyes deep with unshed tears of pity. We sat there and talked of Duponceau's flight and capture. "If it hadn't been for the chest, he would have escaped," said Barbara. "His face lighted when he had it in his arms again."

It was some little time after this when Rodney stood up.

"I'm going to the club. I have to pack and catch the next train to New York. May I take you home, Barbara?"

The girl's eyes looked over at the beach regretfully, then roamed over the ship, standing there all desolate, lapsing again into that silence from which it had just been awakened. I saw a certain wistfulness steal into her eyes.

"No, Rodney; I don't think I'll go home just yet. I'm not in the humor to

meet aunt and the people at the club. I'd like to sit here and think a while."

"Well," said Rodney, "good-by." He shook hands with her. "Good-by, Felix. If you ever find this place too lonely for you, come and see me in New York. Things do happen there sometimes, though not such things as here in Alastair."

We shook hands, and I caught a glimpse of some passing regret beneath the smile on the surface of his eyes.

As I had watched Duponceau, I watched Rodney disappear into the pines. The cheerful man in tweeds, like the mysterious man of the sea, had said farewell to the beach, but each had left a trace of himself there which I should never forget.

I turned back to Barbara.

"It's all over," she said. "They've all come and gone, and it might have been a dream."

"Here's the ship," I answered, "riding at anchor, just as she did before."

"That makes it seem more like a dream," she said; "that after all that has happened, the ship is just the same as on the first day I found her, and the beach—she turned to face it—is just as sunny and as desolate."

"Yet the pirate came," I answered, "a real pirate, a lineal descendant of Captain Kidd, and he brought treasure and hid it and dug it up again, and fought like the thorough-going gentleman adventurer he was. Monsieur Pierre Duponceau was no ordinary man."

"Tell me what you know about him," she commanded, and settled down, leaning against the mast.

"He was an uncommon man," I began, "but whether an uncommon man becomes a hero or a scapegrace depends upon the luck of time. Duponceau had ideas that were far about the heads of most men, ideas that some one at a later day might use to great ends, or which he himself might have used had he been given time. He planned, gathered his cargoes, launched his ships in search of the Golden Fleece, and was on his way to winning it when a quartering gale drove his craft upon the rocks. Had the wind veered, he was planning to make the poor of France well-to-do; instead he made them much poorer than they were; and yet those same plans pushed on may succeed when it's too late for the poor investors or for him. That's about the way it stands."

Barbara was silent, her eyes watching the distant glitter of the sea.

"There's so much luck in things, isn't there?" she said finally. "I like him, anyway; I like him for what he tried to do." Then, after a pause: "You were always sure something would happen here, weren't you? So was I. Something had to happen. Do you suppose he came of his own free will, or because we had wished so hard for an adventure?"

"Wishing hard can accomplish almost anything, I've been told."

"What are you going to do now that everything is over?" she asked presently. I shook my head disconsolately.

"I have barely yet faced the possibility of no more tea on the beach, no more sunsets from the cliff, no more adventures on the ship. It's not a very pleasant prospect, is it?"

"But the beach and the cliff and the ship will still be here," she answered. I followed her gaze seaward.

"A week ago I discovered a curious thing. For years I had lived here and found all the beauty I wanted in watching the changing colors of the waves, and the golden glow through the woods, and the dawn pinks of the sand, and yet all of a sudden I found they had absolutely vanished, that I couldn't possibly find them any more."

I waited, and finally I caught her low-whispered, "Why?"

"Something had happened. I couldn't see them alone; I could see them only when some one else was there to see them, too."

She gave a little sign. "I know; I can understand just what you mean."

"The pines show no more azules, and the ship gives up no more adventures, unless there is some one else here to see and live them with me."

"And," she said slowly, thoughtfully, "if there were some one else, would all these wonders still come?"

"Surely, for we would be living them all the time we were together."

"Post!" she said. "Dreamer!"

I waited, fearful and hopeful in one.

"And yet I dream, too," she said at last; "and I think that you have shown me more wonderful things than any one else could."

"Then do you still think," I asked, "that some other man will come who can show you more?"

She would not answer my question. "The man we imagined came out of the sea and is gone. I feel as if I'd lived years in a fortnight. Dear old ship, how I hate to leave her!"

"Why must you? Why not sail on and on in her forever? Why not set sail in her for the Fortunate Isles? Barbara, will you?"

She turned and looked into my eyes, and I read her answer.

So, with Barbara sitting against the mast, our ship set sail.

[THE END.]

### Hasty Correction.

Hojax—I hear you are engaged old man. Allow me to congratulate you.

Tomdix—You didn't hear it quite right, my boy. I'm married.

Hojax—Oh, I beg pardon. You have my sympathy.

### Justice.

"My wife and I always settle our little disputes by arbitration."

"And who is the arbitrator?"

"My wife, of course."—New York Times.

The hardest trial of the heart is, whether it can bear a rival's failure without triumph.—Aikin.

## SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

Brazil is the coffee growing country of the world.

The bamboo tree does not bloom until its thirtieth year.

A full grown cat has thirty teeth, while a dog has forty-two.

A nursery for the children of patrons is connected with a Glasgow theater.

Twenty thousand dollars worth of rose-leaves were imported during the decade ending 1908.

Germany, Great Britain and the United States produce four-fifths of the world's supply of pig iron.

Canada produces nearly one-half the world's supply of maple sugar, about 18,000,000 pounds annually.

French theaters receiving government subsidies are obliged to give a free performance every year.

Guatemala now ranks next to Brazil in importance as the source of the supply of coffee. Ecuador is rapidly expanding its cocoon production.

About sixty miles from Melbourne, Australia, there have been discovered on government lands deposits of some 20,000,000 tons of good black coal.

A movement has been set on foot at Calcutta to erect a statue to Lord Kitchener, in commemoration of his tenure of office as commander-in-chief in India.

These two battleships authorized by the last congress, which will be laid down next fall, will carry heavier batteries than any other warships afloat or ordered by any nation.

There are valuable race horses in England which have teeth filled with gold. It is too risky to have such horses suffer, and go off their feet when racing time approaches.

An old Scotswoman was advised by her minister to take snuff to keep herself awake during the sermon. She answered briskly: "Why dinna ye put the snuff in the sermon, mon?"

According to official figures, the number of merchant marine steamers of Japan at the end of last year was 1,618. Of these 101 were steamers of more than three thousand tons.

The Oberammergau passion plays will be given next year, from May 11 to September 25. The burgomaster issued a notice the other day reminding the men that they must now let their hair grow long.

In 1905 the average daily prison population of Russia was 85,000. Last February it had increased to 181,137. The great majority of the inmates are political offenders, confined without trial or hope of being heard.

Professor Korn of Munich has established stations of distance photography at Berlin, Munich, Paris, London, Copenhagen and Stockholm. He believes it will soon be possible to take pictures at a distance not only of individuals but of groups and scenes.

There are hard times ahead for Chicago's public school "frats" and sororities. The president of the board of education, despite the fact that he has a son and a daughter who have belonged to them, declares that he has no use for them, and the new superintendent of schools, Mrs. Ella Vlieg Young, is strong in her opposition.

A woman who recently applied to the Lambeth guardians for relief said that for the last three months she and her five children had lived rent free by "squating" in the rooms of empty houses. In Lambeth there are many such houses which have reverted to the duchy of Cornwall and people are permitted to occupy the places until the premises are demolished.

State Senator Ernest R. Ackerman, of New Jersey, who is now enjoying his annual trip abroad, is one of the best known and most enthusiastic collectors of postage stamps in this country. So large is his collection that he has set apart one room in his home in Plainfield as a stamp room, in which are some of the rarest of stamps, so dear to the heart of the philatelist.

It is curious that the British naval authorities should have abandoned oil fuel at a time when in foreign fleets it has been decided to substitute oil for coal. The British empire has very limited resources of oil fuel, and at present the navy's supplies have to be imported. These supplies might be cut off in time of war, and it is probable for this reason that oil fuel is being given up.

A farmer standing outside his farmhouse saw a pair of his pigeons fly away. Shortly afterward he heard a shot and the pigeons did not return in the course of the afternoon, as he had expected. In the evening, however, the cock pigeon returned in order to feed the young, and having seen to this, he again flew away. The following forenoon the same pigeon returned, and it was then ascertained that the hen bird had one wing badly hurt by shot, but owing to its mate's care and perseverance, it ultimately managed to return to its nest.—The Field.

Put to Other Use.

Crawford—So your wife doesn't make mince pies any more?

Crabshaw—No. She uses all the odds and ends around the house as trimmings for her hat.—Puck.

Naturally.

"I was mimicking Professor Bore yesterday and he caught me."

"What did he say?"

"Told me to stop making a fool of myself."—The Wasp.

Her Only Chance.

"You must not interrupt me when I am speaking, Ethel."

"Why, that's the only time I can interrupt you, mamma."—Yonkers Statesman.

Has Had Training.

Mrs. Church—You say she was a war correspondent once?

Mrs. Gotham—Yes, she was secretary of a woman's club.—Yonkers Statesman.

Congress refused United States Commissioner of Education Brown's request for \$3,000 to study a certain phase of child life, but granted \$15,000 for a scientific study of clams.

Won Her Over.

"His wife used to be strongly opposed to his playing poker and now she likes to have him play."

"Yes, he plays better than he used to."—Houston Post.

They Were Too Hasty.

Those Africans who named Mr. Roosevelt Kwana Tumbo really ought to see Mr. Taft, who is a great deal braver and has a tumbo twice as large.—Uncle Remus' Magazine.

His Experience Useful.

The prodigal son, repentant, or, at any rate, weary, of the diet of husks forced upon his kind by a vigilant police system, had experienced a change of heart and joined the church. The good sisters were discussing his desirability.

"But," expostulated Mr. Straightface, with a fine and virtuous display of righteousness, "he was a common gambler—what they call a bunko steerer."

"Isn't it lovely?" exclaimed Mrs. Up-to-date. "What a help he will be in getting up our church funds!"—Philadelphia Record.

Veterans Even Fato Death.

As most of us know, P. T. Barnum died but a few months after his competitor in the "show" business, Adam Forepaugh.

When Barnum arrived at the pearly gates he was welcomed by Forepaugh, who exclaimed exultingly, "Well, Pete, I got ahead of you this time!"

P. T. did not answer, but smiled as he pointed to a large bill posted near the main entrance. It read:

"Wait for Barnum—Coming Soon."—Success Magazine.

Under Certain Circumstances.

"Is it true, doctor," asked the summer girl, "that eating cucumbers will remove freckles?"

"Of course," replied Dr. Kidder, "in certain circumstances."

"Really? What circumstances?"

"Well, provided the freckles are on the cucumbers."—Answers.

What Ailed Daysey Mayme.

Daysey Mayme Appleton was reading a newspaper last night when suddenly she gave a scream and fell to the floor in a dead faint. Now, according to the looks and tradition Daysey Mayme fainted because she read the announcement of an old sweetheart's marriage or death (and it would turn out afterward, according to the books and tradition, that he was a cousin of her old sweetheart by the same name). But real life is so unlike the books and tradition. Upon being revived Daysey Mayme related that she saw hosiery advertised for 27 cents that she had paid 35 cents for the day before.—Aitchison Globe.

Unanswerable.

"Pardon me, Dr. Nextly, but it is simply preposterous for you to want to marry my daughter. You are more than twice as old as she is."

"I know that, Mr. Sykes, but when she has been a preacher's wife ten or fifteen years she will look fully as old as I do."—Chicago Tribune.

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is as safe as it is effective. Guaranteed to contain no opiates. It is very palatable too—children like it.

All Druggists, 25 Cents

A farmer standing outside his farmhouse saw a pair of his pigeons fly away. Shortly afterward he heard a shot and the pigeons did not return in the course of the afternoon, as he had expected. In the evening, however, the cock pigeon returned in order to feed the young, and having seen to this, he again flew away. The following forenoon the same pigeon returned, and it was then ascertained that the hen bird had one wing badly hurt by shot, but owing to its mate's care and perseverance, it ultimately managed to return to its nest.—The Field.

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Made by the J. C. Ayer Co., Lowell, Mass.

Next Best Thing.

"How does your husband manage in the winter when the automobile season is over?"

"Fine. He takes up bowling and tries to kill the pinboys."—Puck.

All the Conventions.

Mr. Stoplate had showed Miss Terstep all his imitations of famous actors, and she had made a bluff at applauding. Then he asked, "Do you think I ought to go on the stage?"

"Oh, you don't have to go on a stage, if you're thinking of going," she answered. "We are inside the city limits, and an owl car goes every half hour."

Shortly after that, he went.—Cleveland Leader.

A Space Filler.

The elevator in the department store was about to start on its upward trip, when a fleshy customer came waddling toward it.

"Room for three more," said the elevator starter. "Step inside, madam. That will be all."

"Clip! Clip! Clip!" went his castanets.

King Edward, when Prince of Wales, never voted on any political question; but he always voted for the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, which was a social, and not a political, matter.

Before I began using Cascarets I had a bad complexion, pimples on my face, and my food was not digested as it should have been. Now I am entirely well, and the pimples have all disappeared from my face. I can truthfully say that Cascarets are just as advertised; I have taken only two boxes of them.

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