Blind Luck on Saint Paul

By A. E. DINGLE

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HERE are many better known spots on this globe than Mahe, Seychelles Islands, but very few that can offer such a variety of adventures and adventurers as one will meet with at that little port in the Indian Ocean. The Pacific developed its Bully

Hayes, the Australian bush sheltered the notorious Captain Starlight, and Tasmania in the seventies was the theater for the exploits of Coventry Strike-a-Light, but it is doubtful if either of those worthies at their best, or worst, had anything on the bright particular star of the Indian Ocean, Red Saunders.

To have known Saunders was a liberal education, and when a turn of Dame Fortune's wheel pitched me out on the beach at Mahe and into his company, the fickle old lady unwittingly did me a service not to be too highly esteemed.

There is only one place in the little town that a sailor is likely to bring up in-Francois' "Mahogany Bar;" and like everybody else I had hung around that rum ranch until money was as scarce as frog's feathers. I was trying to figure out my next move when Red Saunders hove in

The barkeep, I suppose on the same principle that leads a sawbones to give a poor devil a dose of dope preparatory to abbreviating his longitude by a leg, set a bottle of liquid tintacks up for me, with the kind intimation to "have one on the house and clear to blazes out of here," and my outlook seemed about as bright as the soul of a Chinaman, when a red-topped giant, six feet six by about four feet beam, rolled in through the door and strode up to the bar.

"Barkeep, where in Tophet are all the huggermuggers today?" he growled in a voice like Mauna-Loa in eruption.

"Suds" briefly indicated my now unprofitable carcass and shrugged his shoulders, remarking that business was bad, or even I should have been on my way before now.

Solitude will breed strange comradeship anywhere, and having nothing else to nail his attention. Saunders took a good look over me and shoved the "tacks" my way again, saying as he let go the bottle:

"You don't seem dazzling with diamonds, matey, but maybe you can shoot the guff, so take another pearler's peg and Leep me company for & spell."

We took our vitriol over to a table and stretched legs, giving and receiving the news of the beach, while I was debating in my mind whether it would be worth while for me to broach to this copper-nobbed stranger the scheme that had kept me awake nights for months. Though gossip and rumor had made Saunders familiar to everybody on the beach, the man had never crossed my bows until ten minutes before, and what or who he was little Willie could not have guessed. Previous to his entry there had been nothing on my horizon, and he certainly was a sociable sort of brute; so putting all my trade in one bottom, I opened out and laid my dream out for Red to pass on. Said I:

"You look like a blue-water man, none bluer, and, if you can find the hooker, I can lead you to the place where minted moguls are lying, not too far down for a number one diver to get at; but I'm cleaned out, busted to blazes, and can't even subscribe to the tucker bill. I'm all in, but this yarn's straight stuff; if you're looking for a flutter, here's a chance. What d'ye say?"

I was keenly aware of a cold steely drive through and through from a gimlet eye before that mighty voice rumbled forth:

"Show your goods, perish your pelt! That guff is too easy to pass if you've got no rocks at bottom. I've got a little schooner out in the bay right now; she's ready for any trip from niggerstealing to pearl-poaching, and can be handled by two sailor-men; but give us the yarn and give it straight, or by the peak of perdition I'll haze you for trying to throw the bull at Red Saunders! Here, Francois, give that bottle a fair wind, and leave it here."

"Back in 1875." I began, "the clipper ship Strathmore, outward bound for Otago, New Zealand, piled up on the Crozets, and when she went up had fifty odd people aboard, all colonists, and all carrying their entire worldly capital in the ship's strong box. The amount of cash aboard, including a sum for payment of government salaries, was somewhere around twenty thousand pounds sterling, or one hundred thousand if you want it in dollars.

"The people were taken off after more than six months of misery, but the stuff is still there, and I think can be got by a diver. The spot is well laid down and I can take you there. How's it strike you, cap'n?"

Red took his second-mate's nip at a gulp and gripped me my the arm, growling like a "southerly buster":

"See here, young fellow-my-lad, I've got a streak of intelligence in me today, and it seems to me that you are sailing straight. Anyway, I like the cut of your phiz, and as I've got nothing better on hand, I'm going to take you up on that Strathmore job, and we'll get our hook this same ruddy p. m. I'll stand the stores and put my boat in it; you'll take us there and we'll go alone, share and share, fifty and fifty; and you'd better be sure you're sailing straight, for I'm an

ugly blighter when I find I'm being blistered!" That settled the hash so far as I was concerned; I had no dunnage to stow, and Red simply yanked me out of the bar and down to the beach, where his boat was lying, telling me to row out to a little black schooner in the roadstead and cast off the stops, while he went up to the town to get a barrel of beef and some small

The little vessel I boarded was certainly a beauty-regular yacht in lines and deck fittings. When well under way and heading for the east coast of Madagascar, we arranged to keep watch and watch, and each to call the other if the schooner got out of hand, but after Red showed me how the little hooker would lay her course with the wheel in a becket I had no qualms as to the necessity for more hands, and

"call the watch." We took our supper on the cabin skylight together and I broached the subject of diving, having in mind the fact that what we were going for was under water. My big mate split his dial with a huge grin at my query and roared:

decided that I would not be the first one to

"Say, sonny, what in - d'you think I am? Don't the little ship and the air-pump and fixin's tell ye anything? May as well tell you right now, I s'pose-I'm a pearl-poacher, that's what; run out of the Straits by a blasted British gunboat that copped my Kanaka crew and nearly bottled

"Yes, boy, not one of yer hold-yer-nose, rockat-yer-feet, two-minute diver boys, but a reg'lar tin-h lead-shoes, rubber-suited, stay-for-ever shark; and if that box of boodle is still where you figure on, bet your last thirst we'll get it. and get it all, by Satan!"

The afternoon of the eighteenth day out from Mahe we raised the rocky peaks of East Island. four thousand feet high, and as it was never certain that a landing could be made, we stood on till dusk and hove to for the night, getting everything ready for a full day's hard graft on the

But it was not the next day that we took up our berth, nor for two more after that. Dirty weather, commoner down in that God-forsaken penguin hatchery than suckers on Broadway, set in with a bump, and for three days our little Pearl had to fight tooth and nail to hold her position within hail of the islands.

On the fourth day the breeze blew out and left just a good working air, so we hauled up and stood in for the rocks again, this time getting close enough to let go our warp and take the lines ashore.

By the official report of the wreck, we were pretty sure that we were right on the spot, and this was established when, after sounding all round the schooner, the lead fouled something, and brought away a piece of sea-rotted rope from a depth of twelve fathoms.

On the principle that a job well started is halfway done, we soon had the diving gear laid out, and at dead low water I manned the wheel of the air-pump, after screwing up my mate's helmet, and our quest was on when Red clambered over the low rail and slipped into the cold depths.

At the end of an hour the signal came to haul up, and when Saunders bobbed over the rail and had his head-gear removed, he reported that we were almost plumb over the poop of the wreck, and by ranging ahead twenty feet could drop a line down her cabin skylight.

We shifted our position and went below to get a bite of tucker against the next spell, while my mate voiced his opinion that:

"We would have been better fixed had we toted some explosive along, for the ruddy ship is steel, and quite likely had a strong room under the cabin."

We expected, however, to strike some snags, as there are mostly always plenty of spikes to hundred-thousand-dollar bouquet. After our brief spell for grub. Saunders got over the side again and took crowbars along, intending, as he said, "To bust something or eat the bars."

Next time he came to the surface he brought up a rusty chronometer, the mahogany case of which was quite good, and said he had located the safe, which was build into the steel bulkhead of the skipper's cabin.

"What do you think of the chances of hook ing anything, Red?" I asked, when he had crawled out of his casing.

"Tell you tomorrow, son," he grunted. "Seems tougher lay than cracking open pearl-shell, but if the weather gives us a good fair tilt at it, there's a chance of busting her with the bar, I think."

As soon as it was light enough to grope, another start was made on the wreck, and we knew that it would be a case of pulling up the chest or giving up the chase at the end of that day's work.

Red took along everything we had that was likely to be useful below, and remarked as he put his head into his hat:

"What don't come adrift this spell will have to wait for dynamite or Gabriel's big bassoon, for won't come up till the bars bend double!"

What titanic efforts he must have put forth down below were well proven by the bundle of crowbars he sent up on a line, bent to horseshoe shape; and attached to the line was the handle of a safe. He did not come up for some time vet, however, and Triton only knows what he actually succeeded in doing, but when at long last he signaled and was hauled up, he had a small tin box made fast to his waist.

No sooner was he free of the head-gear and able to speak, than he blurted out:

"Good Gordon's beer, bo', she's too much for me! Every blasted trick did I work on that iron locker, but I might as well dig into the great pyramid with a cream-puff for all the impression I could make with those bars!"

If the safe had been as easy to break as the box was, we would have had those spondulicks aboard by now, for one crack with the end of a bar concertina-ed our find, which contained the ship's papers and sundry private documents, evidently the captain's.

No good could come of hanging round any longer, after we decided the job was too big for our limited means to tackle, so we lost not a moment in getting our lines and hauling off to the anchor. Then, before hoisting our canvas, we took the casks ashore for water, filling them at the same place as those poor devils must have used years before, and taking a look at the site of their camp, where they had made a dugout in

the cliffside for the lady and child of the party. We might have spent more time looking around this place had the weather looked prettier, but Saunders had his eye to windward, and suddenly he jerked me by the arm and growled:

"Say, young fellow, we don't want to duplicate the Robinson Crusoe act this trip-not for sentiment anyway; and that's just about what we'll do if we don't get our hook and edge off this spot of dirt in a number one hurry, or I'm no Mother Shipton.'

Pointing to the westward, Red asked me if I had ever seen the "Roaring Fortles" on a tear; and sure enough it looked like good-night for us if we failed to ratch off shore before the storm hit down on us.

That gale followed us for a week, and we did dodge Kerguelen but not by more than the wellworn hairbreadth, and Red and I were pretty well tuckered out for want of both sleep and grub by the time the sun shone again.

In our way north we talked over the failure of the venture and discussed the possibility of returning later with a blasting outfit, but were agreed that for the present we should have to let the job walt. Saunders, however, broached the subject of the old fron steam-frigate Megæra. wrecked on Saint Paul, and after much chinmusic had passed on the subject we decided that while we were in the business we might just as well store up again in Mahe and make the trip as a long shot, there being just an outside chance that we might land something that would partly smooth over our failure at the Crozets.

With this new objective we hustled the little Black Pearl all we knew, carrying whole-sail in a two-reef breeze, scooping up most of the Indian Ocean over the bows, and living in water day and night, decks, cabin and caboose, with devil a dry rag or stick fore and aft, until we raised the land close aboard through the haze, with Mahe barbor dead to leeward

Every hour spent ashere now was working on a dead horse, so just as soon as the grub was stowed aboard, toward sundown, sail was piled on the Black Pearl again and her nose pointed | per that Mrs. Vincent's father, W. B. seaward for one more crack out of the box.

For fourteen days the little hooker snorted through the seas, and our reckoning showed us to be within a hundred miles of our island, when down came a westerly howler, with torrents of rain for good measure, and off we scooted closereefed, dead before it, and as the night was as black as the back door of Hades, we hoped there was nothing nearer than Australia.

Our figures must have been out some miles, for around midnight the schooner fetched up with a jolt like the kick of a hundred ton gun. and then dived over the bar and broke in two, spilling us out to fight through a swirl of broken water and splintered timbers to a rocky shore.

Now here was a holy mess if ever two men were in one. Saint Paul might be all right to visit if one were sure of making a getaway, but for a permanent residence, not by a darned

The wreck we came to find did not show up for some long time, and we began to give up hope of finding any trace of her, but, having nothing else to do, we kept up a search when in the humor. About six weeks after we blew in there, when I came down from the signal-staff we had erected. Red came to meet me, looking as if he had just lost his mother-in-law. Asked if he had sighted a sail that had escaped me, he

"Nothing quite so good as that, sonny; but come along, perhaps you can put a name on it, or tell something about it. It looks like the thing we came for, and we may as well give her a rummage. If we find anything, it won't eat anything, and we may make a getaway from here after a while."

Following him round the point of rocks on which we had split up, wedged firmly in a crevice and buried in the sand, could be seen the timbers of the stern of what had been an iron ship

"There, laddie, what d'ye make of that? I've been scratching sand away for days when you've been up on the hill, and this morning I went inside the hull. There's a whole lot of stuff lying on her floor, chests, barrels, old junk of sorts. and maybe some of it will pay us for a search.'

When my mate came out between the ribs, lugging a small, heavy, wooden chest, a brass plate was still attached to the lid, and the letters, when we had polished them up a bit with goat's fat, surely read H. M. S. Megæra.

From what I remembered reading of her, all the valuables had been saved, as she had been at anchor several weeks off the island before she went up; but evidence was before us that some part had been overlooked, and a sharp rock in Red's powerful fist speedily uncovered the contents of the box.

It was specie all right, and good gold British sovereigns at that; two thousand by the actual count. Not a fortune by any means, but enough -if we ever got away with it-to pay Saunders for the loss of his schooner, and give us both another start.

We did not leave that old iron steam frigate without ferreting every crook and cranny capable of holding a dollar bill endways, but not another yellow boy was uncovered, and we lugged our find up to our camp to decide what we would do with it. We were both of opinion that we would have to leave the bulk of it behind if we were taken off, and return and get it with our own vessel, so we fixed up goat-skin belts for each to carry one hundred of the little fellows, and sewed the rest up in skins and cached the lot well above high-water mark.

Our reasons for leaving the stuff were good for us, as if we were picked up and taken into a port with a bunch of gold coin in sacks, all the persuasion in the world would not prevent some of the crew of whatever picked us up babbling out the truth, and then we would have to ante up to the authorities.

So our minds were made up and we were ready to leave when, on the seventieth day of our "Crusoing." a bark hove to off the island and sent a boat ashore to investigate our signal. The transfer of our kit did not take long, you may bet; and that evening we were aboard the French bark Vendome, bound for the Mauritius, and being feted and palavered over as if we were the original prodigal sons come home to Poppa.

The Vendome made a good passage north, we were soon counting the days now to elapse before we could make a fresh start for Saint Paul. and when she dropped her mud-hook in Port Louis, we bundled overside into the first shore boat alongside after the port doctor and harbor master had left, shouting au revoir to our erstwhile shipmates, and inviting them all to meet us in the town later.

The pleasure of returning their hospitality, however, could not be allowed to stop the business on hand. Quickly casting about for a craft to carry us back to Saint Paul, luck favored us in the shape of a Mozambique dhow which was held for debt and could be bought outright for

eighty pounds. We made the best of our way down to Saint Paul, arriving off our old camp in fifteen days. from Port Louis.

No time was wasted here after finding that our hoard had not vanished, and shipping the coin and putting aboard one or two trifles we first before his mother-in-law could had left behind, such as air-pump, diving suit, have her "eats," she said. and so on, we left the same evening and pointed our head north again, this time on the last leg

After a passage of twenty-four days from Saint Paul and something over six months from our departure on the Crozets trip, our old wagon poked her nose into Mahe harbor and the anchor was let go for what I hoped would be the last time in the Seychelles-for me anyway.

When the old dhow was sold, for junk price, we found our total haul footed up to two thou sand and thirty pounds.

So, after a splurge in the town, lasting a week and spent mostly in the rotgut foundry, I packed my grip and took passage for Durban, declining Saunders' invitation to stay with him and join him on one of his freebooting cruises to Zanzi-

Famous Estate in Ireland Is Rehabilitated by U. S. Woman.

San Francisco Man Bought Home From Lord Ardilaun for His Daughter-Place Rebuilt at a Cost of \$2,500,000.

London-Muckross Abbey, the pic turesque home of Colonel and Mrs Vincent, has become the headquarters of a particularly lively hunting season in Ireland. You perhaps will remem-Brown of San Francisco, bought this famous place from Lord Ardilaun, and gave it to his daughter as a wedding present. Of all the picturesque ruins that rich American wives have had to work on, this was probably the



Showing Architecture of Muckross Abbey.

most dilapidated, and it speaks wonders for the tremendous hold it must have taken on her not to have daunt ed her when she saw its tumble-down condition. It had not been inhabited for years, and the whole of the interior was literally in ruins. But the ancient outside walls were good, and the views were so exquisite all around that Mrs. Vincent fell in love with it and said she must have it. Fortunately, too, she hadn't to consider cost at all; the whole thing from start to finish, besides what her father paid for it, is said to have cost her \$2,500,000 to make it habitable, and now Muckross Abbey, still as picturesque as ever, is one of the most luxuriously and comfortably appointed houses in the British Isles.

There was another thing, too. which attracted her strongly in Muckross, and that was the opportunities she saw it would give her of indulging her love of all outdoor pursuits. She is passionately attached to all animals, particularly dogs and horses, and very soon after her marriage she made up her mind to restore the almost extinct breed of Irish wolfhounds. She built kennels for between 50 and 60 dogs and had the whole of Ireland scoured for good specimens of the breed.

HUBBY SOLVES OLD PROBLEM

Puts Frogs in Mother-in-Law's Bed-Now Wife Sues for Divorce From Cruel Man.

New York .- Francis Colgate Dale has found the solution of the motherin-law problem. That he has lost his wife in the process doesn't dim his enthusiasm.

At the trial of the divorce proceedfings, commenced by Mrs. Dale, her mother, Mrs. Frank N. Patterson, testifled that when she visited her daughter, the husband put big, wet, wiggly bull frogs in her bed.

On another occasion she said Dale put tin cans under her bed and attached a string to them which ran out of the window. He pulled the string through the night. Dale was an amateur violinist, the mother-in-law testified, and when dinner was announced he would play for at least a half hour and order that the meal be not served until he was ready. He also made it a rule to feed the cat

It was also testified that when the mother-in-law visited him, Dale invited an amateur orchestra to his house to practice, which often kept up until the early hours of the morning.

Mrs. Dale said that after one of her mother's visits, Dale presented for her signature a paper declaring that her mother "had an ungovernable temper and was the cause of any misunderstanding between them; that it was that she should never enter their home again." Mrs. Dale refused to sign it.

Mrs. Patterson persuaded her daughter that she should not live with a man who has such mean ways, and do not get anything like the alces the divorce suit resulted.

BOY BRAVES COLD NIGHTS

Sixty Degrees Balow, With Wet Feet and No Blanket, He Pulls Through.

Dawson.-Old time mushers, hunt ers and trappers up the Klondike river are taking their hats off to Kid Cox. the tough young bundle of muscle and sinew, who has been taking an out-

ing in that region. All through the coldest period of the late cold snap, when it was more than 60 degrees below zero, Cox was out all pight without even a blanket, a robe, a scrap of canvas or other material for protection or shelter. He did not even wear a parkay. The story is brought by S. A. Ringle, who runs Ringle's roadhouse above the north fork of the Klondike.

Leaving Dawson in December Kid Cox mushed up the Klondike river, drawing a Yukon sleigh by hand.

As the kid made his way up the Klondike he expected to find an unoccupied country for trapping, but in each was surprised to find a line of traps out and some one busily covering each locality, so he turned back. When getting toward the upper stations on the way out he finally grew tired of his sleigh, and took a little pack of food on his back. Arrayed in a black suit, with black fur cap, moccasins and mitts he defled the cold-With only currants, a little flour, teaand a frying pan be made up his daily fare, melting snow to drink.

Now and then Cox would knock over a rabbit with a little 22 rifle which he carried, and into his handful of flour would go Mr. Bunny, to vary the fare for the wayfarer in the way of a stew. On getting back to his sleigh Cox dragged it steadily through the deep snow until within four miles of Chisholm's. There he stepped into a littie water, and slightly wet his feet. Realizing his great danger should he get badly frozen, and feeling a sharp touch of cold, he dropped the sleigh and hotfooted it the four miles to camp. Staying there a day or two, he went back, got the sleigh and mushed again to camp Finally he got to Ringle's, put in four days resting and then came on another stage, feeling

fine and anxious for adventure. Cox is a short man, but muscled like a giant.

Cox, when in Dawson, was an enthusiastic bowler. Those not acquaint ed with him would not suspect his physical prowess and endurance. Most men would have frozen to death on the trip up the Klondike had they attempted to go in his tracks at the same time with the same scant provisions and clothing.

U. S. MAY GET FAMOUS BARN

Most Treasured Building in London Is Offered for Sale and American Offers Big Price for It.

London.-It is scarcely conceivable that Maldstone and Kent will allow the Tithe barn, which is one of the most treasured possessions of the county capital, to be pulled down, and it is quite unthinkable that, having been pulled down, its fragments should be exported to America.

The Tithe barn, a long range of the decorated period, and is probably older than the archbishop's palace, a



Famous Old Tithe Barn.

stately gabled building of perpendicular and Elizabethan date, standing on the north side of All Saints' church. That was begun by Archbishop Courtenay in 1395, and it was completed by his successor, Archbishop Arundel.

The barn is no longer a part of the ecclesiastical buildings and is now for sale. An American has offered 1,600 pounds for it, and proposes to transfer it to the United States, where it would be re-erected.

In the circumstances an appeal for the necessary funds to buy the freehold of this 600-year-old building ought to be responded to at once.

Modern Children Criticised.

London.—The modern child was criticized at a meeting of the Lancashire county council. "There is not the same parental control over children as formerly, lamented Sir Heary impossible to get along with her; and Hibbert. "There is an inordinate love of pleasure amongst young people which did not characterize previous generations," he continued, "while night lessons are taboo and children they formerly did."