

The Sea Scourge

CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

A little while passed, and the pirate crew were becoming uneasy. The ship was ever and anon popping away at her bow guns, but none of her shot reached their mark. Laroon stood by the old gunner's side, and ere long he asked him how a bow shot would work.

"I'll try," was Ben's simple answer. And as he spoke he arose and set about leveling his gun. "I'll give 'em a run-in' shot this time," he continued, after he had calculated the distance and elevated the piece. He then watched for his opportunity, for he had pointed the gun a little astern to allow for head range. With a keen, steady gaze, he marked the movement of the brig, and when the line of his sight along the gun struck a point about six inches abaft the ship's foremast, he fired. There was a quick report, a shock, and a trembling of the brig's spars, and then all hands sprang to the rail to see what was the result. The old gunner waited anxiously for the report, and his eye brightened as he saw the ship's men rushing up the foreshrouds.

"You've hit the foremast just below the futtocks," cried Storms, who had been gazing through a glass.

"Then we'll try once more in the same place," returned Ben, and thus speaking, he proceeded to reload his gun.

He loaded his gun with the utmost care, putting in an exact quantity of powder, and selecting a shot that would drive home snugly. When all was ready he took his aim with a calm precision, and the expression upon his face told that he meant mischief to someone. And surely he did, for hardly had the smoke cleared away ere the sloop-of-war's foremast was seen to go over the side, taking with it the main-topgallant-mast and jibboom.

"That'll do," said Laroon, as calmly as though he had been making some new disposition of the sails.

But the men were not so cool. They shouted with all their might, and when they felt that they had expressed their full feeling they relapsed into their usual quiet and orderly state.

Ben Martin carefully cleaned his gun, outside and in, and then replaced the tarpaulin, while Storms shut up his glass and placed it in its brackets upon the binnacle.

"We'll go to Manila," said the captain. Accordingly the course was changed two points further north, and the yards trimmed. Two hours later the sloop-of-war could be discerned, still hampered by part of the wreck of spars that had so summarily fallen upon her.

CHAPTER III.

Just at evening on the second day of the encounter with the sloop-of-war, the Scourge dropped her anchor in a little cove upon the western coast of Luzon Island.

There was a small village of one-story huts upon the shore, and close by the water, under a sort of bluff, stood quite a respectable house. The people here knew the character of the brig well, for here it was that she took in many of her stores when she wanted them; and here, also, she had a hospital, where many of the inhabitants found places as nurses; for those who were laid up here with wounds and disease generally possessed golden pockets, and could afford to pay for good nursing.

As soon as the sails were all furled, and the deck cleared up, Laroon had his boat manned, and went on shore. It was nearly dark when he reached the little pier which was built out from the beach, and he took his way at once toward the house on the bluff, which was the hospital in question. When he reached the veranda he found the old surgeon—the same who had formerly sailed with him—ready to receive him. The two proceeded to one of the best drawing rooms, where a heavy hanging lamp was already burning, and there they rested themselves. Laroon first asked after the welfare of the sick ones, and he was informed, in general terms, that they were getting along well.

"But how many can you let me have to take away with me?" asked the pirate chieftain.

"Not over five, at the outside," returned the surgeon.

"But I must have more. I have seventy-five men on board now, besides Paul and myself, and I mean to take a short cruise if I can muster the men. There's more gold on shore than there is at sea. Down around the shores of Japan there live a lot of nabobs who own gold by the ton, and I want to feel of 'em. Do you understand?"

"Yes," returned the surgeon, with a sparkling eye, for the thought of such plunder had yet a charm for him. "But can't you make your present force do?"

"I suppose I shall have to. And you have had no applications from anyone?"

"Ah, yes; I liked to have forgotten. Yes, I had one application, and I guess the fellow is here now. I told him the brig would be in shortly, I thought, and if he would wait he might get a chance."

"Does he know what flag we sail under?"

"Yes."

"How did he find out?"

"From someone who had been with us. He met him in prison, I think he said. I'll send for him at once."

As the surgeon thus spoke he rang a bell which stood upon the table near him, and in a moment a boy made his appearance.

"Jack," spoke the old sawbones, "you remember that one-eyed fellow who has been here? Well, you'll find him at old Madaline's. Go down there and tell him to come up."

In the course of half an hour the boy returned, and with him the individual in question, who came limping into the room with a gait that promised anything but

quickness of movement. The pirate chieftain could not repress a smile as he gazed upon the newcomer, though some more timid might have been frightened rather than amused.

The man was, in every respect, peculiar. He was past the meridian of life—perhaps five-and-fifty—and very slightly bent in form, but not enough to give his back any hump.

In frame he was of medium height when he stood at rest, but somewhat taller when standing upon his right leg alone, that being some two inches longer than the other leg; and this of course gave him a very awkward movement. But his face was more peculiar still; he had lost one eye—the left one—and the skin about the orbless socket was much disfigured, giving him one of the most sinister looks imaginable. His hair was short and crispy, and of a dirty red color, while the face was almost as dark as a Malay's. But he had one redeeming quality; he was stout and powerful in his physical mold, revealing a breast and shoulders and arms of almost Herculean proportions. Next to the repulsive looking place where an eye had been lost, which was shrunken and shriveled up, the most peculiar and striking feature of the face was the eye that was left. One would expect to find a light-colored eye with such a head, but it was not so. That single eye was not only of the darkest hazel, but it burned and sparkled with power and brilliancy. But what was it that yet remained of feature which gave him such a strangeness of look? Laroon seemed determined to hunt up that odd feature, and after awhile he found it; the man had no eyebrows.

But Marl Laroon was not the only one who gazed fixedly into another's face, for the stranger gazed full as sharply into his, and seemed as much interested in the work.

"Well, sir," commenced the pirate captain, seeming to speak with an effort, "so you want to ship on board my vessel?"

"Yes, sir," answered the other, gruffly.

"And do you know the business you will be required to do?"

"Obey orders, I suppose."

"Exactly. Upon my word, I like that answer. But what do you suppose those orders will amount to?"

"Gold! gold! Perhaps blood! But gold ahead of all else!"

Marl Laroon started as these words fell upon his ear, for they were most strangely spoken. And then the man looked at him so with that one dark eye when he spoke. The old buccaneer had never shrank so before beneath a human gaze.

"You speak rather more harshly than there is any need of," he said, in a tone which would seem to indicate that he did not wholly like the speech he had heard.

"Oh, I can speak as kindly as you wish," quickly returned the strange man, with a smile—and there was something kind in the smile, too. "And," he added, "I can be as gentle as a lamb."

"What is your name?"

"Buffo Burnington."

"A curious name," said Laroon, eying him sharply.

"Ay," he calmly replied, "some people think I am a curious man."

Laroon regarded the new man for some moments in silence, but his gaze was not steady, for there was something in that lone eye, and in that whole face, that troubled him.

"Perhaps you have seen me before?" remarked the captain, with seeming carelessness, but yet with a look and tone which proved him to be anxious on the very subject thus broached.

"I think I have, sir, in New York."

"Do you remember the circumstances?"

"Yes," returned Burnington, looking Laroon steadily in the face, "it was at a time when your meals were served in your own room."

"By the jail—"

"Stop!" shouted the pirate, starting to his feet. "That is enough. If you will join my crew and sign my articles you shall go with us, and fare and share with the rest."

As Buffo Burnington left the room Laroon touched the bell. The same boy answered it.

"Jack," said the captain, "go and watch that man. Follow him carefully and don't lose sight of him. If he attempts to leave the village hurry back with all speed."

The boy merely bowed and then set out on his mission. After he was gone Laroon rested his elbow on the table and buried his brow in his hands. Thus he remained for some minutes, totally regardless of the presence of another.

"Do you want those five men to go on board to-night?" asked the surgeon at length.

Laroon seemed to have heard some one speak, for he raised his head and then started up from his chair, but without answering he commenced to pace the room.

"McLara," he said at length, stopping in front of the surgeon, "how long has that man been here?"

"About a week. Why, captain, do you think you have seen him before?"

"I don't know. But he's a strange looking man, isn't he?"

"He is surely, and one, I should think, not easily to be forgotten when once seen."

Just as he spoke the door opened and Buffo Burnington entered and reported himself ready to go on board. Again Laroon gazed into that quaint, ugly-looking face, but he gained nothing by his search, and shortly afterwards he bade the newcomer be seated, and then signified his desire to see the men who

were well enough to rejoin the brig. McLara arose and led the way out from the room, and when they were both gone and the door was closed behind them Burnington started to his feet and stumped across the room. His hands were clasped and his eye emitted sparks of fire. He did not walk much, for his lameness caused his steps to make an unusual noise, and he remained for some time standing still in the center of the room. He muttered to himself, while his hands worked nervously together, as though he were rending in twain some firm fabric.

"You think you have seen me before, Marl Laroon, I have the advantage of you. Misfortune has laid her relentless hand upon my body, and she has left me so much the worse for her visit that even you cannot peer beneath the veil she has drawn over me. We'll have a merry cruise together."

After this the man sat down, and though his eye still sparkled, yet there was an earnest, eager look upon his features. He sat with his broad hands folded in his lap, and his gaze bent upon the floor, and thus he remained until Laroon returned.

"Now, my hero, we'll move our stumps toward the shore," said the captain. "Where is your luggage?"

"At the door," returned Burnington, raising his feet.

Laroon led the way out, and upon the piazza he found quite a respectable sized bag. This the new man threw lightly over his shoulder, and then the two started down towards the pier. Laroon keeping his companion a few paces in advance. Whether he did this through fear, or only from the whim of habit, it were hard to tell.

The boat was found in readiness, and ere long the lame sailor was upon the deck of the craft he had promised to make his home. A hammock was served out to him by the sailmaker, and the second lieutenant gave him a number upon the berth deck. But a few of the men were up to see him, and he escaped without being bothered.

Buffo Burnington was thus quartered for such a cruise as his commander might see fit to project, and he certainly looked like one who would hesitate at nothing between the sail-top and the cannon's mouth.

CHAPTER IV.

On the following morning there was much excitement and curiosity on board the brig. The new man had come on deck, and no one of the crew had ever seen him before.

"He's a queer 'un, isn't he?" remarked one man to another, the two having, with the rest of the crew, been watching Buffo Burnington for some time.

"Aren't he, though?" responded the second man emphatically.

And so the men conversed about the deck, and in the meantime the object of their curiosity was slowly stumping up and down the larboard gangway. At length the boatswain piped, and when the men were gathered around the captain came forward.

"My men," spoke Laroon, "you have a new shipmate. Let me introduce him to your friendship and acquaintance. Buffo Burnington—and I hope the acquaintance may prove a benefit to us all."

As the captain moved aft after having thus spoken, the men gathered around their new shipmate, and extended their hands. The whole cast of his countenance was changed in an instant; a warm smile lighted up his dark features, and for the while one might almost have forgotten the wild distortion of his features.

About an hour later Burnington stood by the binnacle as Paul Laroon came up from the cabin. The youth started with surprise as he saw the strange-looking figure, and then cast an inquisitive glance at the captain. Marl understood the silent question, and moving forward, he said:

"This is a new man, Paul—Buffo Burnington."

The man turned quickly towards the youth, and his eye snapped until tiny sparks seemed to start from it.

"This is our surgeon, Burnington," resumed the captain.

"And your son, I should take it, if I might judge from his looks," returned Buffo, looking first upon one and then upon the other, but particularly noting the countenance of the youth.

"Yes, yes," responded Laroon, with a pleasure which he did not attempt to hide, for this was the first time at ever such a remark had been made. "Then you think he looks like me?" he added, half carelessly.

"There is certainly a resemblance," replied Burlington, "enough, at least, to indicate that you are of one family."

"So we are—so we are," uttered Marl, gazing into Paul's features with a dark smile; and as he did so, Buffo was regarding him with another smile—and such a smile that more than one man noticed it and wondered what it meant.

Paul turned away and went to the taffrail, and from the expression of his countenance one could have readily seen that he was far from being pleased with the remarks which had just been made.

It was just about noon when the anchor was secured at the cathead, and as soon as all sail was made, and the yards properly trimmed, the boatswain piped, and then the off-watch went to dinner. The distance to Silver Bay was not far from 550 miles. The wind here was variable, for bold, broad shores broke the trades.

"That fellow handles himself well," remarked Langley, the first officer, as he stood by the side of the captain upon the weather quarter. He nodded toward Burnington as he spoke, which individual was then sitting alone upon the railway of the long gun.

"I think he'll make a good hand for us," returned Laroon, looking upon the maimed seaman.

(To be continued.)

When a woman hasn't anything else to do she rips up something useful and makes something ornamental.

GOOD Short Stories

Mr. Takahira, the Japanese minister at Washington, is on friendly terms with the Russian ambassador, Count Cassini, and is careful never to say anything that will offend him. But he likes harmless pleasantries once in a while. Some one informed him that President Roosevelt had decided to discontinue the training in Jiu-jitsu, and asked him if he could guess why.

"Can't imagine the reason," replied the envoy; "perhaps Cassini objects to the lessons as a breach of neutrality."

Here is a story that illustrates the estimate the German citizen places on sauerkraut as a food staple. A German was speaking last fall about the high price of cabbage. "I tell you, dese kabbages is awful high, dis year," he said; "me und me wife puts up six, seven, eight barrels of sauerkraut every year—but we can't dis year. Dem kabbages dey cost too much." "You put up some sauerkraut, didn't you, Chris?" he was asked. "Oh, yes—two or three barrels—just to haf in de house in case of sickness."

Professor George Herbert Palmer, of Harvard College, says that the masculine habit of rigid, logical reasoning is contracted very early, and in illustration he tells the following story: "A little boy and girl of my acquaintance were tucked up snug in bed when their mother heard them talking. 'I wonder what we're here for?' asked the little boy. The little girl remembered the lessons that had been taught her, and replied, sweetly, 'We are here to help others.' The little boy sniffed. 'Then, what are the others here for?' he asked."

Major McClellan tells of an Irishman whose nephew came over from Ireland to work for him. The uncle, taking advantage of his ignorance of America, paid him very small wages. The nephew was wiser than he looked, though, and, at the end of the year, informed his uncle that he had obtained more lucrative employment, and intended to leave. "You are making a great mistake," protested the uncle, "in leaving a steady job for a little money. You should remember that a rolling stone gathers no moss." "Moss?" queried the lad; "and where is there a market for moss?"

J. Pierpont Morgan is gifted with a great deal more of humor than is generally known. Not long ago, while in London, he was introduced to a lady who made some pretensions to peerage. "Pardon me," said this lady, laughingly, "to which Morgans do you belong?" "Oh, we are an independent branch," replied Mr. Morgan, slyly; "but we date back to the Norman kings." "Ah, then you have a coat of arms?" Mr. Morgan dug down into his pocket and brought forth a shining American twenty-dollar gold piece. "This," he said, "is our coat of arms; a few other families have adopted the same emblem. But," he continued, confidentially, "we are gathering them in as fast as possible."

MONEY IN FACT AND FICTION.

Our Modern American Fortunes Pale the Romanes.

These are strange times in the accumulation of fortunes—stranger than any fiction could ever have made them. Think of it for a moment! Andrew Carnegie, a canny little Scotch boy, came to this unknown land a few decades ago barefooted, and last year offered to settle the Venezuelan imbroglio between Germany, England, France, Italy and the South American Republic by loaning Venezuela the entire sum of these international debts. And yet a fortune so huge as to permit of such offers is as nothing to the power of another man. Mr. Rockefeller, personally a quiet American citizen from Cleveland, a simple liver with few habits of luxury, could easily buy half a dozen of the independent kingdoms of Europe; could without feeling it to any great extent in his pocketbook take up the debts of all the republics of Central and South America.

Again, in 1844, Alexander Dumas published a book called "The Count of Monte Cristo," the basis of which is the fabulous wealth of an individual. The count finds a cave full of almost priceless jewels. He buys men's lives; he spends money everywhere; he comes to Paris with a notice from his Italian bankers giving him unlimited credit on a Paris bank. There is no limit on what he can draw from M. Danglers. It is entirely unprecedented. Nothing like it was ever known before. He draws 5,000,000 of francs and ruins the banker, and still no complaint from his Roman house. He rights wrongs; he saves more lives; he punishes the guilty by the use of unlimited wealth. And then by and by he leaves Maximilian on the Island of Monte Cristo with his bride and sails away. As Maximilian sees his big ship disappear on the horizon, he finds Monte Cristo's will leaving him

his whole fortune. This fortune, Dumas suggests in two or three places, was 100,000,000 francs—\$20,000,000. It is the greatest private fortune the Frenchman could conceive of in 1844—it is considerably less than the income of John D. Rockefeller in 1903.

So you might run on, if it did not tire the brain to conceive more. But most remarkable of all, this one individual made his unprecedented wealth with his own brains.—Harper's Weekly.

SALARIES OF TEACHERS.

President Harper Argues for Higher Pay for Them.

President Harper of the University of Chicago argues trenchantly in the World To-day for higher pay for teachers in elementary and secondary schools. He says:

"The demands of the work can be met only by those whom nature has endowed with a high order of talent. The teacher to whom is intrusted the fostering care of our children should surely be one whose ability we respect. How is it possible to satisfy the conscience if a policy other than this prevails? Is there anything more precious than the child, whether viewed from the point of view of the family or the State? Is not his training a thing of pre-eminent importance? And yet we are willing to pay to his teacher a salary far less than is paid in many cases to the keeper of our horses or to the keeper of our cattle.

"Who cannot see the utter absurdity of this? The teacher, everything being considered, should be, and in many cases is, the equal of the man or woman who enters into any other professional life. Shall we stultify ourselves by continuing to pay the teacher at a rate which places on him or her the brand of intellectual weakness for having accepted a position which promises its occupant so little profit or advantage? The time has come when preparation for teaching in the grades requires a preparation and a proficiency equal to that demanded by any other profession. These requirements have gradually been increased until to-day in many quarters only those possessed of a vigorous physical constitution, strong and untiring purpose, and in addition a considerable sum of money, are able to secure the preparation called for. Is it justice to those who have pursued this laborious course of preparation that in the end they should find themselves limited to a salary so small as to seem pitiful in view of the hardship undergone and the expense which has been incurred?"

The Oldest Car in America.

The car that stands in the roundhouse at Plainville, Mass., is the oldest railroad coach in the United States and as such makes a pathetic appeal to all people who remember the earliest days of railroading. It recalls the days when it was admired by all the countryside as it rolled over the rails between Boston and Providence at a pace which to-day would be regarded as almost funereal. To-day it stands neglected and forlorn, covered with the dust of many years, and enmeshed by countless cobwebs—a rusty, useless old thing in a remote corner of the roundhouse.

To the younger generation it seems almost incredible that this primitive vehicle could possibly have been the predecessor of the magnificent Pullman of to-day. Its outlines suggest a stage coach rather than a railroad car, and the jolting of the crude structure was but little broken by the delicate-looking springs beneath it.

The roof of this venerable conveyance was used to accommodate passengers on days when travel was "heavy" or the weather fine. Time has made many ravages on this old coach, and to keep it from further injury it has been necessary to nail boards across the sides and over the wheels that mar the quaint effect.

Needed No Entertainment.

Mrs. Granger looked at her suburban neighbor, and decided that a person with such a becoming hat must be in a state of vanity to need chattering of spirit.

"Isn't it a real trial to have Mr. Joyce so devoted to the new club?" she said, in a soft tone fraught with tender sympathy. "Mr. Granger, of course, likes the club, and we go sometimes, but he'd just as soon sit quietly at home with me, evening after evening." "It's lovely for you," said Mrs. Joyce, and the face under the becoming hat was sweet and guileless; "but then, you know the two men have always been different ever since they were boys together. Mr. Joyce always wants a good deal of pleasure and entertainment, whereas Mr. Granger has never cared for anything of the sort."

A Change.

"He used to pride himself on the fact that he always says what he thinks."

"Yes, but that was before he met Biffer. Now he always thinks what he says."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Proof Positive.

Mrs. Neighbor—Your husband seems to be a man of excellent judgment.

Mrs. Newed—Of course he is. He married me, didn't he?