

JOHN TOPP, PIRATE

By Weatherby Chesney and Alick Munro.

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CHAPTER VII.

As the bearers of news of the seizure of the English shipping in Vigo bay we were persons of some consideration in Bristol. The good folk of the town were all eager to hear from our lips a true account of the outbreak with Spain, and the result to us was that except for our beds and a light morning meal of cold beef and ale we were very little in debt to our host of the Blue Mermaid, the tavern in which, as it was a place frequented by seafaring men, we had made our headquarters.

The adventure had left us well in pocket, too, for though the Seven's cargo had of course not been sold it had been brought back unspoiled, and our Spanish galleon, a new ship and well stored, turned out to be most valuable prize. So our lads promised themselves a good time on shore, and, judging by the number of them that we met in the streets with broken heads and blackened eyes, they kept faithfully to that promise.

Trade with Spain was naturally out of the question for the time being, and any attempt on my part to return and carry off Inez was practically useless. To try it would be to condemn myself to the galleys or a Spanish dungeon for life, so I had reluctantly to resign myself to waiting in the hope that better times were in store for us.

Alec had some wild notion of fitting out a ship for the purpose of harrying the Spaniards and breaking up their armada before it could leave the coasts; but, as I pointed out to him, Drake and Hawkins and Sir Richard Grenville and 20 others would play at that if it were at all feasible, and we had better wait for a lead from them. So, as none of these well known captains gave any sign of moving, we, too, staid where we were and enjoyed ourselves among the hospitable people of Bristol.

One night, however, we learned a piece of news which put a sudden period to our idling. We were returning arm in arm from a pleasant supper at the house of Peter Waltham, one of the city aldermen, I chattering in my heedless fashion about the charms of our entertainer's youngest daughter, and Alec as usual listening gravely to my nonsense and putting in a word here and there.

The yellow moon ogled us through the crumpled clouds, and by the time we reached the Blue Mermaid the rain had begun to fall and the alchouse sign was swinging and creaking discordantly in the now rapidly rising wind. There was every promise of a wild night, and we were not sorry when we reached the friendly shelter of the inn. It was long past midnight, an hour at which the house was usually as still as the cable tier in a calm; but as we entered we heard voices coming from the kitchen, so we peered in to see who the visitors were.

There on the settle lolled the host, with his rosy treble chin on his chest, snoring heavily. Beside him was a tall, spare man, with tumbled black hair, and an ugly scar running right athwart his brown forehead, which gave him a truculent appearance that his weak, shiftless mouth failed to corroborate. On the edge of the table sat a short, squat, broad man, older than the other; he wore a seaman's skin cap and a huge brown coat whose wide skirts spread out far behind him on the table. These last two were talking to one another in a language that I did not understand. I made a move as though to go in, but Alec put his hand on my arm and drew me gently back.

"It's Cornish they're speaking," he whispered, "and we shan't be able to make out a word of it. Let's go to bed and be thankful there's no watch to keep till the sun's well up tomorrow morning."

So up the ladder we climbed to our chamber, and the voices of the two men followed us dimly through the empty passages. Suddenly, with utter disregard of the effect that his vocal efforts would have on a sleeping household, one of them began to sing, but our window shutter made such a din, rattling in the wind, that we could not distinguish much of the song beyond the lilt, which, however, sounded strangely familiar.

Alec went and made the shutter secure, so that the second verse came to us distinctly:

Sail away,
Back away,
Plunder! (Rap.)
Gather all the valuables you can.
Come back, for two were
Nothing lack,
Thunder! (Rap.)
Scatter all the money like a man.

The singer repeated this verse time after time, and the other man joined in an occasional chorus, while both, so far as we could judge by the sound, were beating a vigorous accompaniment with their fists on the hard oak table. The song was a common enough one among mariners, but there was no mistaking the rasping tones of that saw-like voice.

"It's Willie Trehallon!" cried Alec and rushed to the door. I followed, and, scrambling down our ladder again, we made for the kitchen.

"Art lying, nephew?" we heard the older man ask as we approached.

"No, uncle—sober truth," replied the one with the scar.

"You always was a vagabond, Job."

"Like you, uncle."
By this time we had reached the door and saw that the skin cap was now lying on the table, and an iron hook was thoughtfully scratching that same bald, shot shaped head which had excited our admiration in the old Whittly days.

"What cheer, Willie Trehallon?" sang out Alec.
The man on the table stewed around, dropped to the ground, knuckled his forehead, said "Bravely, my masters," and, without showing the least surprise at seeing us, asked us how we did.

"Well," I said, "and prosperous, both of us. But surely that can't be Nep?" and I pointed to a gaunt, black cat that had slid from Willie's lap when he jumped off the table and how stood with its back arched and its tail like a furze bush, spitting and glaring at us with a most evil look.

"Aye, but it is. Been with me ever since an remembers you both. I see he does. Go an give the gentlemen your duty, Nep."

The cat, who never disobeyed a command from his master, came and rubbed his shaggy sides against our legs in greeting.

"It's Nep, sure enough," said Alec, "though rather more age battered and scar torn than he was. And this is your nephew, Willie?"

"Yes, sirs; Job Trehallon, my nephew, an a gracious rogue."
Job grinned and saluted.

"Where have you been wandering, Willie, this long time?" I asked after



The man on the table steeled around, we had thus formally made the acquaintance of the man with the scar.

"Spanish main, master, with Captain Andrew Dove. Brought up at Bideford eight days since."

"Made a good voyage of it?"
"So, so. Missed the plate ship we went a'ter, but picked up a tidy carved an half a dozen smaller fry. Navigated much to complain on, save lack o' sound liquor, an that did run uncommon short. I tell 'ee we was put to supping that thin sour vinegar stuff them dons fancies. Nep ain't got over it yet."

"Tell the gentles what I told 'ee about Manoa, uncle," put in Job.

"Hold your meddling tongue, Job!" said Willie angrily. "They knows about it already, an didn't Captain Ireland's own father lose his life seeking for it?"

Job grinned and said perseveringly, "Tell about the pagan."

Willie Trehallon waved his hook with a gesture of dissent and said nothing. But my curiosity was aroused. "Come, Willie," I said. "What about the pagan?"

"Take no notice o' what Job says in usual, masters; he's but one peg removed from being a natural."

Job grinned.

"There!" cried Willie. "Look at him an judge for yourselves! But about the pagan. We caught an Indian—a brown colored varmint with no more clothes on him than there is on a hand-spoke—an brought him along with us."

"Well?" said I, seeing by Job's face that there was something more.

"Well, if you must know, on the voyage home he was sullen an mute as a stockfish, but once here he finds his tongue an, speaking in scraps o' English he picked up among us, says that if we'll take him back he'll lead us to that golden city I tell you of up at Whittly. Says as he was born there. That's all."

"Tell about the goulden houses, uncle," persisted Job, with a cunning leer, "an tell how the pagan blacked his fingers with a burned fagot an drew a picture chart on the wall, same as life, an tell how Captain Andrew Dove copied it down on a piece o' sheep parchment an swore to walk through them streets afore he was a year older."

"You'll never learn gumption, nephew," said Willie irritably. "Captain Dove ain't the first as has made that vow an then broken it. An if Captain Dove ain't old enough to know better than to carry his carcass into a country that's creak a block with fevers an savages an Spaniards an famishments an the devil knows what, why, then he deserves all he'll get by his foolishness, an that's a belly full o' troubles an not enough gould to make a thumb ring out on. But Captain Dove'll go back on them words when he's sober, I tell you, an no shame to him for doing it. No man's bound to do sober what he promises drunk."

And Willie jabbed at the table with his hook as though to work off the irritation which his nephew's persistence had evidently aroused in him.

"Till 'ee be sober as I be now," retorted Job, grinning still in spite of his endeavor to look earnest. "An he meant going, too, for he telled us to be back in three months if we wanted to join the venture. He said it the very day after you'd left, uncle, an bade us give you word o' it if so be as any o' us ran athwart you."

"Did you copy the chart, Job?" I asked, for this tale of gold to be had for the seeking excited me strangely.

"Him!" said Willie Trehallon, pointing scornfully with outstretched hook at his nephew. "He couldn't draw a fishline without making ten mistakes, let alone a chart. He's a graceless vagabond, Master Topp, one peg removed from a natural."

Job still grinned. "I ain't got a chart, misters, but I got that as can make one."

"How so?" I asked.

"The pagan itself," he replied, rubbing his hands in glee.

"You've got him!"

"It's snoring in the cow byre. The folk treated it ill at Bideford—tried to see if it could swallow fire as other blacks can an set it eating live rats an mated it to fight ag'in two tarrier dogs. It didn't like being used like that, an so it rinned away an tracked me like a hound to Lynmouth. It'd took a fancy to me on the voyage."

"Fools allus mate," grunted Willie Trehallon.

"An thought maybe I'd be kinder to it than the others was, an so as it promised to sarve me I let it come along, an it's the first time as Job Trehallon ever knew what it was to have a sarvint o' his own."

"An deserves to be well trounced for his impudence in daring to ape his betters," growled Willie. "Sarvint indeed! It'll be a gilded coach an six horses you'll want next!"

There was every prospect of a lengthy wrangle on the subject between the two curiously assorted relatives, so as I felt considerable curiosity to see this pagan, whose dusky hand pointed the way to untold wealth, I told Willie to hold his tongue and Job to lead us to the cow byre.

The gray dawn had begun to struggle through the chinks of the kitchen shutters, and at intervals the wind, which had risen now to half a gale, sent a splash of rain driving through the crevices on to the sanded floor of the room. When the door was opened, the morning looked cheerless enough to make even tough old Willie shudder. But, wrapping his huge coat more closely round him, and tucking the long tails under his arms to keep them from blowing about in the wind, he rolled out with his clumsy sea walk into the muddy yard, and Nep, after a yawn and a stretch and a low murr of protest at being asked to go out in such villainous weather, left the warm hearth and trotted dutifully at his master's heels.

The cow byre, in which the pagan had been stowed away, was a poor enough lodging even for a four footed thing. Years of wind and weather had torn away the thatch in places, and the boarding of the walls was about as effective as a sieve for keeping out the cold and wet. Huddled in a corner into which the rain beat less violently than elsewhere lay the pagan. He was coiled up beneath some loose straw sleeping, and as he slept he talked wildly and incessantly in his barbarous tongue. One bronze hued leg projected from the straggling coverlet of straw. Nep saw it before we did, and, picking his way daintily among the filth on the ground, went up and sniped at the limb. Then he quietly turned his claws down into it and laid back his gaunt body for a comfortable stretch.

As might have been expected, the pagan awoke, but to our surprise he neither pulled back his leg nor made any move to drive the cat away.

Job Trehallon noted my look of astonishment at this and broke out into a loud guffaw.

"Ho, ho! You wonder why he don't move. He don't feel it, bless 'ee, not he! Them pagans hasn't feelings like as we has."

"Shut your silly mouth, nephew," said Willie. "A pretty way this is to treat your sarvint! Why, the poor brute's too numbed with cold to feel the prick of Nep's fingers. Bring him in to the kitchen fire, an see if we can't thaw him a bit."

Job, still grinning, took his dusky sarvint on to his back and carried him into the kitchen. The effect of the heat on the pagan was marvelous. He sat down in front of the fire, chuckling and gurgling with glee, and, after rinsing his numbed fingers with the glowing ash as we might with water and bathing his shivering limbs with the hot embers, though not actually devouring any of the flames as I had confidently expected to see him do, he was a new man again. A pot of warm ale, which we roused our sleeping host to brew, completed the cure, and Job's pagan was as blithe and cheerful a pagan as one could wish to see.

When he was thoroughly recovered, we spoke to him about the city of Manoa, and by means of broken sentences, copiously helped out by gestures, he expressed his willingness to lead us there. He took a glowing stick from the fire and drew a chart for us on the lime washed wall, showing the position of the golden city, and quaint pictures he made, too, of the houses and the men and of the treasures that were to be had there for the taking. And we stared at his uncouth drawings and listened to his gabbling talk as if moonstruck.

Suddenly Alec sprang up from the stool where he was sitting and called to me to come up to our room, and, though I longed to hear more of the pagan's luring tale, there was a look of excitement on Alec's face that was

even more interesting, and so I went.

"Jack," he cried when we were alone, "it's time we were moving!"

"To Manoa?" I asked eagerly.

"Yes. Here we have been sitting idle, while the sibil is tearing leaf after leaf from the book of destiny. Even now we may be too late."

"Well, let's start as soon as we can. But, Alec"—And I stopped and looked at him.

"Well, Jack? What is it?"

"Inez."

"You can't help her by staying. Useless to think of going to Vigo Bay again for her till the Spaniards have been utterly crushed, and now is our chance to help at that crushing."

"How, Alec? I thought you meant to go to Manoa."

"Don't you see? At this very moment the Spaniards may be thundering at the gates of Manoa itself, and if once they carry off the golden wealth of that city and get it safely into Philip's hands he will raise armadas that will squash us like so many beetles. Here is our opportunity for serving England, Jack!"

"I see," said I, "and of filling our own pockets too."

"No, no, Jack! Never hanker after the gold. It's a good bait to catch a crew with. Might as well give up the sea, settle down and become a merchant at once."

"Not while there's adventure to be had for the seeking—adventure, that is, with plenty of your golden bait at the end of it," I declared shamelessly.

"You've got a good smack of the pirate in you, Jack, I fear."

"Perhaps. And you of the knight errant. Well, fortunately we can each of us sail with our own particular ideal in front of us and still keep together and work together. I fight for gold, to win wealth for myself and my sweetheart; you fight for glory, to win your country's thanks. Perhaps in the event neither of us may get what he hopes."

"Perhaps not. Anyway, we can do no more than try. Where can we get a ship?"

"Peter Waltham's brig, the Bristol Merchant, is nearly ready for sea. He will be glad enough to let us have her for such a venture."

"Then let's go and see him now. We have had no sleep tonight; but, never mind, we can make up for it tomorrow."

And so it happened that Peter Waltham, who had given us our supper the night before, was called upon to furnish a breakfast also. Manoa, whose wealth had lured the father to his grave, was now summoning the son.

Heaven grant that our fortune be better than that of Captain Harry Ireland, who had gone before us.

(To be continued next Friday.)

The Name Sioux.
The Indian name Sioux, as it appears in such town names as Sioux Falls, Sioux City and Sioux Rapids, is usually pronounced "Soo," but sometimes, in the east chiefly, that simple pronunciation is not known. A committeeman not long ago visited a school in New England, where he heard the pupils say "Sioux" with complete assurance. At a favorable opportunity he quietly spoke to the teacher of the error, saying, "You know, it is 'Soo,' whereupon she asked the attention of the school and solemnly announced: "You have all been pronouncing this word wrong. It is not 'Sioux,' but 'Soo-ox.'" The committeeman lacked the courage to pursue the subject further. —Exchange.

That Settled It.
"Why do you think the plaintiff insane?" a witness examined as to somebody's mental condition was asked by counsel at a trial.

"Because," replied the witness, "he is continually going about asserting that he is the prophet Mohammed."

"And pray, sir," retorted the learned gentleman of the wig, "do you think that when a person declares he is the prophet Mohammed that is a clear proof of his insanity?"

"I do."

"Why?"

"Because," answered the witness, regarding his questioner with easy complacency, "I happen to be the prophet Mohammed myself." —London Answers.

No wonder they call it roasting a man to raze him over the coals.—Philadelphia Record.

Order for Hearing of Final Account.
In the matter of the estate of M. E. Andrus, deceased.

In the county court of Madison county, Nebraska.

Now on the 13th day of December, 1900, came Burt Mapes the administrator, de bonis non, of said estate, and prays for leave to render an account as such administrator.

It is therefore ordered that the 16th day of January, 1901, at one o'clock p. m. at my office in Madison, be fixed as the time and place for examining and allowing such account. And the heirs of said deceased, and all persons interested in said estate, are required to appear at the time and place so designated, and show cause, if such exists, why said account should not be allowed.

It is further ordered that said Burt Mapes, administrator, de bonis non, give notice to all persons interested in said estate by causing a copy of this order to be published in the N. P. ROLK NEWS-JOURNAL a newspaper printed and in general circulation in said county for three weeks prior to the day set for said hearing.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal this 13th day of December, 1900.

(SEAL) Wm. Bates
County Judge.

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