

PIECES OF EIGHT

By Richard Le Gallienne

Being the Authentic Narrative of a Treasure Discovered in the Bahama Islands in the Year 1903. Now First Given to the Public.

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LOVE AND ADVENTURE

"Pieces of Eight!" Immediately the imagination begins its magic work. Thoughts fly to the old pirate days of the West Indies—the days of the buccaniers, of fighting, adventure and treasure. "Pieces of Eight"—Spanish dollars bearing the figure 8—mean to the imagination great, dark, steel-bound chests, with their puzzle-locks and mysterious riches of gold and gems. They mean pirate loot buried and lost to their pirate owners—and still waiting through the years a lucky finder.

They mean, too, tropic climes where it is always green and frost is a thing unthinkable—where fruit is ready to the hand and clothing is an ornament and the sun "comes up like thunder," and blue skies and crystal waters run the gamut of all that is lovely in color.

Richard Le Gallienne is a literary craftsman. Poetry and prose come equally to his pen. So, in addition to interest of plot, we have in "Pieces of Eight" the charm of the written word.

Love, adventure, mystery, buried treasure amid scenes far from the ordinary—what more can the reader ask in entertainment?

Book I.

CHAPTER I.

Introduces the Secretary of the Treasury of His Britannic Majesty's Government at Nassau, New Providence, Bahama Islands.

During the summer of 1903 I was paying what must have seemed like an interminable visit to my old friend John Saunders, who at that time filled with becoming dignity the high-sounding office of secretary of the treasury of his majesty's government, in the quaint little town of Nassau, in the island of New Providence, one of those Bahama islands that lie half lost to the world to the southeast of the Caribbean sea and form a somewhat neglected portion of the British West Indies.

Time was when they had a sounding name for themselves in the world; when the now sleepy little harbor gave shelter to rousing freebooters and tarry pirates, tearing in there under full sail with their loot from the Spanish Main.

But those heroic days are gone, and Nassau is given up to a sleepy trade in sponges and tortoise shell, and peace is no name for the drowsy tenor of the days under the palm trees and the scarlet poincianas.

Here a handful of Englishmen, clothed in the white linen suits of the tropics, carry on the government after the traditional manner of British colonies from time immemorial, each of them, like my friend, not without an English smile at the humor of the thing, supporting the dignity of offices with impressive names—lord chief justice, attorney general, speaker of the house, lord high admiral, colonial secretary and so forth.

My friend the secretary of the treasury is a man possessing in an uncommon degree that rare and most attractive of human qualities, companionship. As we sit together in the hush of his snuggerly of an evening, surrounded by guns, fishing lines and old prints, there are times when we scarcely exchange a dozen words between dinner and bedtime, and yet we have all the time a keen and satisfying sense of companionship. It is John Saunders' gift. Companionship seems quietly to ooze out of him, without the need of words.

And occasionally we have as third in those evening conclaves a big, slow-smiling, broad-faced young merchant of the same kidney. In he drops with a nod and a smile, and takes his place in the smoke cloud of our meditations, radiating without the effort of speech that good thing—humanity; though one must not forget the one subject on which now and again the good Charlie Webster achieves eloquence in spite of himself—duck shooting.

John Saunders' subject is shark fishing. Duck shooting and shark fishing. It is enough. Here, for sensible men, is a sufficient basis for lifelong friendship, and unwearied, inexhaustible companionship.

It was in this peace of John Saunders' snuggerly one July evening in 1903, the three of us being duly met and ensconced in our respective armchairs, that we got onto the subject of buried treasure. It was I who started us off by asking John what he knew about buried treasure.

At this John laughed his funny little quiet laugh. "Buried treasure!" he said; "well, I have little doubt that the islands are full of it—if one only knew how to get at it."

"How?" I asked.

"Certainly. Why not? Weren't these islands for nearly three centuries the stamping ground of all the pirates of the Spanish Main? Morgan was here. Blackbeard was here. The very governors themselves were little better than pirates. This room we are sitting in was the den of one of the biggest rogues of them all—John Tinker—the governor when Bruce was here building Fort Montague at the east end yonder; building it against pirates, and little else but pirates at the Government house all the time. A great old time Tinker gave the poor fellow. You can read all about it in his 'Memoirs.' Nassau was the rendezvous for all the cutthroats of the Caribbean sea. Here they came in with their loot, their doubloons and pieces of eight; and John's eyes twinkled with enjoyment of the rich old romantic words, as though they were old port.

"Here they squandered much of it, no doubt, but they couldn't squander it all. Some of them were thrifty knaves, too, and these, looking around for some place of safety, would naturally think of the bush. The niggers kept their little hoards there to this day."

"It is their form of stocking," put in Charlie Webster.

"Precisely. Well, as I was saying, those old fellows would bury their hoards in some cave or other, and then go off—and get hanged. Their ghosts perhaps came back. But their money is still here, lots of it, you bet your life."

"Do they ever make any finds?" I asked.

"Nothing big that I know of. A Jug full of old coins now and then. I found one a year or two ago in my garden here—buried down among the roots of that old fig tree."

"Then," put in Charlie, "there was that mysterious stranger over at North Cay. He's supposed to have got away with quite a pile."

"Tell me about him," said I.

"Well, there used to be an old eccentric character in the town here—a halfbreed by the name of Andrews. John will remember him—"

John nodded.

"He used to go around all the time with a big umbrella, and muttering to himself. We used to think him half crazy. Gone so brooding over this very subject of buried treasure. Better look out, young man!"—smiling at me.

"He used to be always grubbing about in the bush. Well, several years ago there came a visitor from New York, and he got thick with the old

"I should say I do. A wonderful old villain—"

"But the document, for heaven's sake," I said. "The document first; the story will keep."

"Well, they were pulling down Wicks' own house just lately, and out of the rafters there fell a roll of paper—now I'm coming to it—a roll of paper, purporting to be the account of the burying of a certain treasure, telling the place where it is buried, and giving directions for finding it—"

Charlie and I exclaimed together; and John continued, with tantalizing deliberation:

"It's a statement purporting to be made by some fellow on his death-bed—some fellow dying out in Texas—a quondam pirate, anxious to make his peace at the end and to give his friends the benefit of his knowledge."

"Oh, John!" said I, "I shan't sleep a wink tonight."

"I don't take much stock in it," said John. "I'm inclined to think it's a hoax. Someone trying to fool the old fellow. . . . But, boys, it's bedtime, anyhow. Come down to the office in the morning and we'll look it over."

So our meeting broke up for the time being, and taking my candle I went upstairs, to dream of caves overflowing with goldpieces, and John Tinker, fierce and mustachioed, standing over me, a cutlass between his teeth and a revolver in each hand.

CHAPTER II.

The Narrative of Henry P. Tobias, ex-Pirate, as Dictated on His Death-bed, in the Year of Our Lord 1859.

The good John had scarcely made his leisurely, distinguished appearance at his desk on the morning when I too entered by one door and Charlie Webster by the other.

"Now for the document," we both exclaimed in a breath.

"Here it is," he said, taking up a rather grimy-looking roll of foolscap from in front of him, which, as he pointed out, was evidently the work of a person of very little education, and began to read as follows:

County of Travis, State of Texas, December 1859.

Feeling my end is near, I make the following statement of my own free will and without solicitation. In full exercise of all my faculties, and feel that I am doing my duty by so doing.

I was born in the city of Liverpool, England on the 3th day of December 1784. My father was a seaman and when I was young I followed the same occupation. And it happened, that when, on a passage from Spain to the West Indies, our ship was attacked by free-traders, as they called themselves, but they were pirates. We all did our best, but were overpowered, and the whole crew, except three, were killed. I was one of the three they did not kill. They carried us on board their ship and kept us until next day when they asked us to join them. They tried to get us to join them willingly, but we would not, when they became enraged and loaded three cannon and lashed each one of us before the mouth of each cannon and told us to take our choice to join them, as they would touch the guns and that did not quicken us, it is useless to say we accepted everything before death, so we came one of the pirates' crew. Both of my companions were killed in less than six months, but I was with them for more than two years, the which time we collected a vast quantity of money from different ships we captured and we buried a great amount in two different lots. I helped to bury it with my own hands. The location of which it is my purpose to point out, so that it can be found without trouble in the Bahama Islands. After I had been with them for more than two years, we were attacked by a large warship and our commander told us to fight for our lives, as it would be death if we were taken. But the guns of our ship were too small for the warship, so our ship soon began to sink, when the man-of-war ran alongside of our vessels and tried to board us, but we were sinking too fast, so she had to haul off again, when our vessel sank with everything on board, and I escaped, by swimming under the stern of the ship, as ours sank, without being seen, and holding on to the ship until dark, when I swam to a portion of the wrecked vessel floating not far away. And on that I floated. The next morning the ship was not seen. I was picked up by a passing vessel the next day as a shipwrecked seaman.

And let me say here, I know that no one escaped alive from our vessel except myself and those that were taken by the man-of-war. And those were all executed as pirates—so I know that no other man knows of this treasure except myself and it must be and is where we buried it until today and unless you get it through this statement it will remain there always and do no one any good.

Therefore, it is your duty to trace it up and get it for your own benefit, as well as others, so delay not, but act as soon as possible.

I will now describe the places, locations, marks, etc., etc., so plainly that it can be found without any trouble.

The first is a sum of one million and a half dollars (\$1,500,000)—

At this point John paused, and Charlie Webster gave a soft whistle and smacked his lips.

"A million and a half dollars. What ho!"

Then I, happening to cast my eye through the open door, caught sight of a face gazing through the ironwork of the outer office with a fixed and glittering expression, a face anything but prepossessing, the face of a halfbreed, deeply pockmarked, with a coarse hook nose and evil-looking eyes, unnaturally close together. It was evident from his expression that he had not missed a word of the reading.

"There is someone in the outer office," I said, and John rose and went out.

"Good morning, Mr. Saunders," said an unpleasantly soft and cringing voice.

"Good morning," said John, somewhat grumpily, "what is it you want?"

It was some detail of account, which, being dispatched, the man shuffled off, with evident reluctance, casting a long, inquisitive look at us seated at the desk, and John, taking up the manuscript once more, resumed:

. . . . a sum of one million and one half dollars—buried at a cove known as Dead Men's Shoes, near Nassau, in the Bahama Islands. About fifty feet (30 ft.) south of this Dead Men's Shoes is a rock, on which we cut the form of a compass. And twenty feet (20 ft.) East from the cove is another rock on which we cut a cross (X). Under this rock it is buried four feet (4 ft.) deep.

The other is a sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000). It is buried on what was known as Short Shift island; on the highest point of this Short Shift island is a large cabbage wood stump and twenty feet (20 ft.) south of that stump is the treasure, buried five feet (5 ft.) deep and can be found without difficulty. Short Shift island is a place where passing vessels stop to get fresh water. No great distance from Nassau, so it can be easily found.

The first pod was taken from a Spanish merchant and it is in Spanish silver dollars.

The other on Short Shift island is in different kinds of money, taken from different ships of different nations—it is all good money.

Now friends, I have told you all that is necessary for you to know to recover these treasures and I leave it in your hands and it is my request that when you read this, you will at once take steps to recover it, and when you get it, it is my wish that you use it in a way most good to yourself and others. This is all I ask.

I am, truly your friend,

HENRY P. TOBIAS.

"Henry P. Tobias?" said Charlie Webster. "Never heard of him. Did you, John?"

"Never."

And then there was a stir in the outer office. Someone was asking for



"Who is That Fellow?" I Asked Charlie.

the secretary of the treasury. So John rose.

"I must get to work now, boys. We can talk it over tonight." And then, handing me the manuscript: "Take it home with you, if you like, and look it over at your leisure."

As Charlie Webster and I passed out into the street I noticed the fellow of the sinister pockmarked visage standing near the window of the inner office. The window was open, and anyone standing outside could easily have heard everything that passed inside. As the fellow caught my eye he smiled unpleasantly and slunk off down the street.

"Who is that fellow?" I asked Charlie. "He's a queer-looking specimen."

"Yes! he's no good. Yet he's more half-witted than bad, perhaps. His face is against him, poor devil."

And we went our ways till the evening, I to post home to the further study of the narrative. There, seated on the pleasant veranda, I went over it carefully, sentence by sentence. While I was reading, someone called me indoors. I put down the manuscript on the little bamboo table at my side and went in. When I returned a few moments afterward the manuscript was gone!

A million and a half dollars buried on Dead Man's Shoes and a million on Short Shift island—what ho!

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Wanted Masculine Touch.

Bobby was a small boy, but he objected vigorously to a little waist that had a big collar and cuffs with a narrow ruffle around the edge. When asked the reason he said he didn't like the "girl" on it.

NEBRASKA HAPPENINGS CONDENSED TO A FEW LINES

Unmistakable evidence of the working of an incendiary, whose purpose was to burn the wheat crop on the W. H. Grassmeyer farm, near Riverdale, and destroy the threshing outfit working there, was discovered by Sheriff Funk. Boxes of matches were hidden in the bundles of grain which were to be threshed and matches were widely scattered over various parts of the field. Pieces of steel, old bars, etc., were also hidden in the grain bundles, evidently with the deliberate intention of crippling the threshing machinery. Grassmeyer gave the principal evidence which resulted in the internment of the German pastor, Kraudels.

O. W. Langley, Cortland farmer, shot and killed justice of the Peace Pfeiffer, following a fight in which he wounded two deputy sheriffs. After overpowering the officers Langley entered a store and shot the undefended police official through the heart. Langley was recently arrested by state agents with 105 gallons of home-made whisky in his possession. He was taken to the Beatrice Jail for safe keeping.

A terrible tragedy occurred at a railroad crossing, seven miles northwest of Beatrice, Sunday, August 17, when an automobile containing Mr. and Mrs. Dan Esch and their seven children, was struck by a fast passenger train. Four of the children, Nora, 12; Dan, 5; Esther, 2; and George, 1, were killed, and the other three, together with the father and mother, were injured.

Promoters of the referendum on the governor's code bill have appealed to the supreme court from the decision of the Lancaster district court, which ruled that a full and correct copy of the 463-page code bill should be attached to each sheet for petitioners' signatures.

Word has reached Lincoln that Marshal Foch of France and Gen. John J. Pershing, commander of the American forces in Europe during the war, will be present at the organization and first convention of the American Legion to be held in Minneapolis November 10-12.

Letters circulated by stock salesmen in Nebraska, purporting to be recommendations of the state bureau of securities urging the public to make certain stock investments have been branded as "fakes," in a statement issued by the bureau.

An epidemic of anthrax exists among cattle in northern Cedar county, some raisers having lost as high as twenty-five head. A campaign to combat the plague has already been started.

Railroad crop officials place Nebraska's 1919 wheat crop at 54,000,000 bushels. This is an increase of 5,000,000 bushels above government and state figures.

Assessors' reports on grain and grain valuation reaching the state board at Lincoln show Valley county with 987,726 bushels of popcorn, valued at \$6,369,000.

J. L. Jacobs, Chicago efficiency expert, is at the state house at Lincoln, helping the new departments under the code law get started in an efficient manner.

John Krause, for the last fifty years known as the potash king of Nebraska, died at Alliance, following injuries received from an explosion of gasoline.

The school board of Sidney has let a contract for the construction of a new grade school. The building will cost \$22,000.

Contract has been awarded for the construction of the McCook-Bartley Federal Aid highway. The contract calls for the expenditure of \$95,000.

Buildings of the Fremont Normal school have been turned over to the Midland college, which was moved from Atchison, Kan., to Fremont.

A movement is on foot to build a new short-cut highway between Sidney and Bayard, Scottsbluff and Geting via Reddington.

A seat on the Omaha Grain Exchange sold the other day for \$8,100, the highest price on record for a membership on the exchange.

A \$15,000 water extension bond proposition carried at a special election at Ord by a margin of barely ten votes.

A number of Ord business men have bought a Curtiss flying machine that carries a pilot and one passenger.

The Yankee Girls at Gibbon have erected a large arrow pointing to a beautiful park and inviting automobile tourists on the Lincoln highway to stop there and camp.

In an effort to reduce the cost of living to its members, the Lincoln Central Labor Union has decided to establish a co-operative store in the city.

Crop experts of the Burlington estimate that Nebraska corn production will total 175,000,000 bushels. This is virtually the same as estimated by the State Board of Agriculture.

Fire of unknown origin destroyed the Electric theater at Plymouth. The loss is placed at \$7,000.

The goddess of liberty, molded life size in pure butter, and preserved for exhibit in a double glass-walled refrigerator, will feature the dairy exhibit at the Nebraska state fair, August 31-September 5, at Lincoln.

T. S. Allen, United States district attorney for Nebraska, at Lincoln, has announced he will call a federal grand jury to indict those guilty of violating provisions of the Hoover food control act.

News that both houses of congress passed the repeal of the daylight saving law over the president's second veto was received with a great deal of satisfaction in virtually all sections of Nebraska. When the clocks go back to normal time, the last Sunday in October, the practice will be a thing of the past. The fight for the repeal of the measure has been centered in the middle west and to the churches and women's organizations goes much credit for its discontinuance.

Judge Morning of the Lancaster county district court has issued a writ of mandamus to compel Secretary of State Amsberry to accept and file the petitions calling for a referendum vote on prohibition in the state. The secretary of state had refused to accept and file the petitions, claiming the question was a federal issue. According to the secretary of state the case will be appealed to the Nebraska supreme court.

The selection of candidates for the constitutional convention to be voted upon at the November 4 election was completed without the necessity of a primary in all but twenty-seven districts. This means that in fifty districts there will be no primary and the candidates filed will be the men from whom the voters will choose their delegates at the regular election.

The state government has launched its investigation of profiteering, hoarding, waste and other illegal causes of the high cost of living. The probe started in Omaha last week with Leo Stuhr, secretary of the state department of agriculture, and Attorney General C. A. Davis in charge. Similar hearings will be held at Lincoln and other Nebraska cities.

The Tecumseh home guard company has bought a bronze memorial tablet for the soldiers, sailors and marines of Johnson county. Raised letters will give the names of all the men of the county in the world war, with those who made the supreme sacrifice duly prominent.

A complaint charging O. W. Langley of Cortland vicinity with first degree murder has been filed. The complaint charges Langley with inflicting two mortal wounds on the person of Chris Pfeiffer, whom he shot and instantly killed at Cortland.

The University of Nebraska withdrew from the Missouri Valley conference when the governing board of the conference, in session at Kansas City, refused Nebraska permission to play a football game at Omaha this fall.

Applications coming into G. A. R. state headquarters at Lincoln indicate that more than 1,200 persons will journey from Nebraska to the national encampment at Columbus, O., September 7 to 14.

A "better babies" day is to be one of the new features at the Nebraska fair at Lincoln this fall, in which free medical advice will be given for all children who enter the better babies contest.

After making all preparations for voting on a \$40,000 sewer bond proposition the city authorities of Ord discovered they were working under a law vetoed by the governor. The election was called off.

Lutherans of Nebraska are planning a campaign to raise \$500,000 to make further improvements for Midland college, which has recently moved from Atchison, Kas., to Fremont.

An aero club has been organized at Fremont, capitalized at \$10,000. Its purpose is to give the city publicity through the medium of airplanes.

Mrs. W. T. Judy of Kearney was killed and her husband badly hurt when a passenger train hit their automobile at a crossing near Kearney.

A total of 70,000 head of live stock were received at the South Omaha market, August 18, shattering all past records for a single day's receipts.

Work is expected to commence soon on the reconstruction of Seward's brick works, which was nearly destroyed by fire a few days ago.

General Pershing will visit members of his family at Lincoln early in October, according to word reaching the Nebraska capital.

Preparations are to be made at Gibbon before the snow flies for the laying of twenty-one blocks of paving early next spring.

The school board of Ashland has advertised for bids on a new \$125,000 school house, which it plans to complete next year.

General Pershing has been asked to attend the Ak-Sar-Ben festivities at Omaha, September 24 to October 4.

Kearney Elks are to have a new home. Plans have already been drawn for a building to cost \$45,000.

Hog prices are sliding downward at the South Omaha market. The past week saw a drop of more than \$1 per hundred.

Despite the fact that a great shortage of school teachers exists in Nebraska, every one of the seventy-seven schools in Fillmore county has a full crew of instructors for the opening next month.

Dr. B. F. Williams, chairman of the State Board of Control, has tendered his resignation to Governor McKelvie to take effect as soon as his place can be filled.

Nebraska's potato crop for 1919 is estimated at 8,500,000 bushels, compared with 10,000,000 bushels last year.

The government has sent word to Federal District Attorney Allen at Lincoln to prosecute anyone found making liquor containing more than one-half of one per cent alcohol. Therefore, those who have assembled the well-known malt, hops and yeast to concoct basement beer of unauthorized test, are running the chance of immediate arrest by government officials.