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Don Miguel had no notion of allowing

Scarcely had we got into the swing of

work than he and a strong party with

him mounted the poop again and com-

menced annoying the little craft whose

bulwarks were grinding against his

came to hand, and finally they dropped

a barrel of powder, which on bursting

scorched several of our lads so severely

that they cried to us in the galleon's

cabin that the deck was too hot to hold

the cabin, returned to his own vessel

and hailed the poop above.

"Don Miguel, ahoy!"

will help her to burn."

ful prize"-

your robber's booty in peace?"

a harsh laugh of impotent rage.

At this Alec, leaving me in charge of

The tall Spaniard appeared above,

"Don Miguel, if you do not cease from

annoying my people you shall have

something else to think about. I swear

to you that if you do not permit me to

finish my task unmolested I'll sweep

your crowded waist with a burricane

of patareroe balls, and that the surviv-

ors may not want employment to keep

them out of mischief I'll fire your gal-

leon's hold before I leave her. There's

a keg of spirits under the table that

"And if I permit you to carry off

"Measure your words, Don Miguel!

The Spaniard interrupted him with

-"my lawful prize, I say, taken from

my country's enemy," went on Alec

calmly, "and if you offer no further an-

noyance to my men, I, on my part,

faithfully promise to do you and yours

no further injury for the present. For-

tune will, I hope, grant us another

meeting on some future day, when ac-

counts may be settled. Meanwhile,

Don Miguel, who seemed almost be-

side himself with suppressed fury, was

evidently about to hurl a defiance at

us and raised his hand to clinch his

refusal with a pistol bullet. But his

officers and underlings had had all the

fighting they wanted. Though each

might have a stake in the golden cargo

below, each remembered that with an-

other throw of the dice he would lose

not only that, but life as well. And

choosing, like wise men, the lesser of

the two evils, they laid violent bands

on their reckless commandant and

dragged him down. Then one of them

jumped up into his place and signified

that they agreed to the armistice. They

promised, he said, not to molest us fur-

ther, and they looked to us to keep a

like faith with them. With a ringing

cheer our lads set to work again on the

gold chests, but none the less we kept

the swivel gun trained on the crowd in

the galleon's waist, for he is a besot-

a Spaniard's word.

ted fool who trusts a penny's worth to

They dared not break faith with us,

however, because of the gun, and so

we were able to transship the golden

in bustled merrily among the booty an-

other party refitted our damaged head-

sails, and when the last chest of gold-

vieces had been dumped upon our deck

we ramed an ironical cheer for the

wealth of Golden Spain, and as the ris-

ing breeze slowly bellied her sails the

little Scourge sheered slowly off from

the red blood still flowed from our

wounds we recked little of the heavy

price we had paid. But when the mad

frenzy of fighting is over gaping cuts

tingle and grow stiff, and then it is that

men begin to count the cost and spare

hope a few short hours before. We

clear that the Scourge could no longer

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The galleon's gold had cost us very

dear. Out of our slender ship's com-

pany 13 had been killed outright, four

had hurts that they would die under,

and of the rest there was no man who

could not show the color of his own !

When the excitement of the battle

had passed away and the grim fever

of slaying had become a memory, not

there was not some deadly throb or

sickening ache-not one who was not

stiff from angry, rainbow colored bruis-

es or faint from loss of blood. Our

captain lay pale and helpless in his

Aye, we were victorious, and while

her whipped and sullen adversary.

While the party in the galleon's cab-

harvest without further loss of life.

senor, your answer is awaited."

If you permit me to carry off my law-

gritting his yellow teeth with rage.

us to spoil his ship unmolested.

# \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

PIRATE.

By WEATHERBY CHESNEY and ALICK MUNRO.

(Copyright, 1900, by Weatherby Chesney and Alick Munro.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* snips of warrare and captivity, we recognized him as Saul Dickory, one of the Bristol Merchant's crew, and hot though the fight raged around us we snatched a moment to press the hand

of a comrade of the old days. He had, so he said, been serving in Spanish ships ever since his capture at the mountain ravine, leading a dog's life, while doing two men's work, and until now had never seen a chance of escape. Further, he had an offer to make us. Give him a light line, and he'd jump overboard again and make it fast to a ringbolt on the don's stern, and then we might warp ourselves up and board through the cabin window.

"But for the love o' heaven," he implored us, "keep the Spanish sharpshooters busy while I swim. I can hear the splash o' their bullets round my ears now."

Alec, however, refused to allow him to make this attempt for fear of the sharks, observing that we should be able to do as much for ourselves with the grappling iron in half an hour's time at our present rate of drifting. "But," he added, "I am afraid that Don Miguel has still too many men for my sman nanorul to tackle,"

"Aye, captain," replied Dickory, "that he has. There are nigher 300 than 200 aboard you galleon who can still hit a good heavy blow, though there's near as many besides wi' their toes turned up. But once get inside the big cabin, an you can clear it an hold it ag'in the dot o' 'em."

"But I want the whole ship, sirrah." Saul Dickory shook his head. "You ean't do it, captain," he declared decidedly. "An if you try the big waves will be rolling over every man o' us tomorrow. But you do what's as good -you can lay your hands on the store

4' dollars." "Without taking the ship? How?" "The hatch o' the treasury is in the cabin floor, an you can strike out the cargo into this queer craft of your'n without a blessed don o' 'em being able to stop you."

And this in the end was what we did. The mermen, or Neptune, or the current, or whatever agency had charge of our heels, swept the two vessels nearer and nearer together till at last a couple of cleverly thrown grapples caught hold and our bulwark ground against the galleon's square

Her crew had no intention of letting us set foot in their stronghold without a tussle and did what they could with fireballs and grenadoes, cold shot and naked steel to stop us. But with a ladder of boarding axes driven int their timbers we scrambled up and soon had a footing in the cabin.

Hemmed in by the packed masses behind, the front rank had the alternative of fight or fall. They fought long and desperately, and then they fell, for they expected no quarter and asked none. We on our side fought as furiously as they, stabbing with shortened weapons where there was no room to swing them and thrusting many a foe through the open portholes into the sea. It was a bloody conflict, a thought for those who have fallen, for not until two-thirds of the cabin's defenders lay dead and dying did the Spaniards suffer themselves to be drivhad a dreary account taking. It was en out into the waist.

We ourselves had lost Jan Pengony, his friend George and three others kill- world. ed outright, and two more were so sorely wounded that they died there on the cabin floor. Scarce a one of us but had his red gash to show.

our wounds. The two doors under the poop were closed and barred with furniture piled up against them, loaded patareroes were thrust through the doopholes to command the waist, and the hatch of the treasure room was cleared of bodies and thrown open. The pieces of eight we found snugly stowed in oak chests, and while half a dozen of us stood ready by the swivel gun the rest made all haste they could to hand up the treasure and lower it through the windows on to the

Scourge's deck below. But rapid as were our movements bunk, brought to death's very door by

which he had borne undressed through half the long fight. The back of the boatswain's bald pate was burned black with powder, and he had more ribs stove in than the pain would let him count. And of the others one alled this and another that; one by the blow of an ax had lost the fingers of his hand, another by the crack of a gunstock had lost the sense of his band.

The active watch on deck consisted of two persons. There was Job Trehallon, with the old scar on his face crossed by a fresher seam, and John Topp, with a pike thrust through the calf of one leg and a dagger wound in the foot of the other.

We had remained in melancholy silence for I know not how long, when suddenly Job Trehalion got up without a word and went down the companion. Returning presently, he gave me a handful of biscuit and a lordly dram of cordial, and these, being sent on their errand, revived me wonderfully. So, after adjusting the bloody bandages round my leg and instep, I told Job that he and I must lay our heads together and consider where to steer to. Job was all chuckles and grins in a moment. It was not often that he was called into council by any one save the

spise, and so he considered his confi-"One thing is sure," said I, looking at the battle havoc round me, "we can't keep the seas in this plight."

old man, and him he affected to de-

"No, Master Topp," chuckled Job. "that we can't. Let alone having no crew to reef or haul the sails, the hull an spars has sich a-many wounds in 'em that the first good squall'll send us all to Davy Jones' locker double Topp, an winged birds has to lie quiet for awhile afere they tries to fly ship far below. They hurled down ev- | again." erything weighty and unpleasant that

"There should be abler heads than ours, Job, to settle matters in a plight like this, but the abler heads are all sadly battered just now, so you and I must do our best to decide a course without them." A look of solemn importance strug-

gled hard to drive the grin from Job's face. But habit was strong, and the "We might go back to the old harbo

on Cave Island, Master Topp. It were snug enough, an them huts on the hill above be a rare place for sick men to "But the Spaniards, Job! You forget

the Spaniards." "Asking pardon," replied Job, screw ing up his face with such a grin that the wound across it began to trickle afresh, "but one o' them Spaniards that we left behind has got off. And if one,

"What!" I cried. "One got off Where did you hear of him?" "Seed him an felt him, Master Topp, which is better than hearing o' him It was his iron as wrote this fresh mark across my face. That comes o disregarding the old man's words an sparing Spaniards," he added sagely.

I, shrugging my shoulders. "But are you sure of your man?" "Sure as I am o' you, Master Topp, or o' uncle, or o' Cantain Ireland, or o' any one else noticeable. This un was a short, cheery kind o' little chap, wi' bandy legs an a bright steel bassinet on's head. Now, sea armor is always blacked, so a man as wears his bright is nat'rally a man you notice."

"Captain Ireland's whim, Job," said

"Why, I remember him!" said L. "A merry, cowardly little wretch named Sancho something or other. Your uncle gave him a pretty scare in the Ser-

"That's him; Don Sancho! An if this blow he gave me had been driven home 'stead o' falling half hearted through the frightened trembling o' the don's arm I should have gone down sure enough. As it was, I stood an toppled him into the sea for cumbering my way. Saul Dickory maybe could tell us how bandy legs came to be the galleon."

"Fetch him," said I. And Job went



"You and I must do our best." had really succeeded in leaving Cave sland, nothing could be more fortustate. There we could recruit our war weary bodies and refit our wounded ship at our leisure, and when our comrades who were alive and full of pulses beat full and strong again we would be ready for another throw with Don Miguel, for I, for one, felt sure that we had by no means seen the last of that yellow fanged grin of rage. But if our late slaves were still on the Island it would be madness to attempt the landing. Heaven grant they

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a fishing cruise." "How did they get there?" "Well, you see, they're a scratch lot-

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"Aye," said Saul Dickory when I gerly questioned him, "they've got off, sure enough. I've seed a-many o' them, an, what's more, through them I've quick. No, no; we'se winged, Master | heard all about your doings on the is-

"How did they get away?" "Sighted a trading snow the day after you left, signaled her wi' a smoke from that 'ere Sarpint hill I've heard tell of, an got took off. The snow set them ashore at Barcelona. From there some o' 'em took ship to Cartagena, where, as we was short handed, they joined our galleon.

"Then," said I cheerily, "our course is clear. We'll run to the old harbor to recruit and refit." And with the decision I felt more hopeful and light hearted than I had since first my wounded

leg began to tingle. When we rounded the bluffs at the harbor's mouth and the foreshore front of the cave opened out to view, it was with anxious gaze that those of us who were hale enough to stand on deck or to lean against mast or bulwark scanned the beach and the heights above the cave for sign of human habitation. The island was a pleasant enough spot to dwell in, and some of the Spaniards might have elected to stay and plant a colony there.

But not a trace of man did we Our old fortifications lay ruined and decayed, and in places the quick growing tropical vegetation had almost hidden them from sight. The heavy door with which we had closed the cave's mouth lay half covered with sand, and the doorposts from which it had once hung had fallen shantwise across the

No, there was nothing to fear. The island had returned to the possession of the pigs and the gulls and the

parrakeets, its original owners. To reach the huts on the high ground above was for the most seriously had hoped much from the healing vir- parent, soon there began to roll forth tues of the flower scented breeze of the uplands, but there was no help for it.

Ah, it was a time to make the greediest plunder hunter sicken of his trade! The angel of death was hovering round us and claiming now one good sailor and true comrade and now another as part payment of the price of plunder. Not that we were cheerless company, for the old man's caustic wit and Willie Trehalion's cumbersome attempts to reply to him raised many a smile from the weaker ones and many a loud guffaw from the stronger. And Job Tre-

halion's grin we had always with us. But the summons of death came all too often, and the tale of sandy rounds on the yellow harbor grew sadly long in spite of all that the old man's skillful surgeoning and John Topp's tireless nursing could do to shorten it. All that man could do we did, but our enemy was too strong for us.

The end of our nursing came at last Some conquered their wounds, and some their wounds conquered, and when the last grave had been dug and filled there were but 12 men left out of the two and thirty who had been hale and strong when the fight for the galleon's gold began.

CHAPTER XXIX. "Twelve men on their legs," said the man an Tinker Tom, which is both

"Twelve men," said I, "are more than every one would have got off the

"Credit where credit is due, Master Topp," replied the boatswain. "All praise to your surgeoning. But for you an the old man an nevvy Job, which, though little better than natural in general, has unstowed a few grains two more. But as it is we got 12, an what I say is 12 men bain't able to take the Scourge to England."

"It could be done," interposed Alec in a half musing tone, "if we could keep off the scurvy."

"But you can't," replied the boatswain gruffly. "Might as well try to escape fleas in a London tavern as scurvy on a long ocean voyage, an newly healed men is particular liable to it. Mark me, Captain Ireland, if the Scourge sails from here with none but us 12 aboard her she'll never work up Bristol river."

"But with the men Saul Dickory tells of," said I, "we could do it." "Could we get them?" inquired Alec, turning to the man.

"Why, yes, captain, an easy. Los Roques is the name o' the islands they're on. an you'll find that down in your charts. The chap as told me was a half breed that got blown off there in

English. Frenchers an Danes-that banded together at the mines to escape. They gets out, reaches the coast, seizes a boat an puts to sea. They meant to reach one o' the islands an live there till they could steal a ship that would carry them home, but the boat was knocked to splinters in the surf on landing, an having no tools to build another they found themselves safely

"See, Alec," said I, unrolling a chart and sprending it on the ground. "Give me a crew of six, and I'll take the Scourge round, leaving you others here. By keeping plenty of northing we shall be out of the usual track and can be back here in ten days without sighting

But no-Alec would not bear it. we went at all, it should be with all hands aboard, and himself in command. And finally, after much discussion, this was what we decided to do. Further, it was resolved to leave the treasure on Cave !sland for the present, The repairs to the Scourge were soon finished, and the earliest possible day

was fixed for the embarking. But at the last moment an unexpect ed difficulty arose. The old man refused absolutely to quit the island. He had been ailing of late, and it seemed that he had never quite recovered from the wound he got in the battle with the galleon. His wits were queerer than usual, and he continually complained of the cold, though the hot summer sun drew streams of sweat from the rest of

We all felt great concern for the old man, and, though we knew he would never play us false, but would defend our treasure even with magic arts if need be, still we did not like to leave him behind, ailing as he was. But none of us dared to gainsay his wish except our captain. Fully an hour did Alec spend in useless argument trying to turn him from his purpose and seemed all the time to be strangely moved, though from what cause we could not tell. But he failed. And when at last the Scourge set sail and the old man was left on the beach my sworn shipmate covered him with his eyes till we had rounded the spit and run out of sight. Then with a heavy sigh he

turned and went down to the cabin. It was a strange affair, and perhaps we should have taken it as an omen of ill luck. Though I am myself singularly free from superstitions of all kinds, I must believe that the old man had some foreknowledge of misfortune to come, and yet I cannot think that he knew that the fire would break out in the Scourge's spirit room or surely he would have warned us. But perhans, as Willie Trehalion says, the seer

That, however, is peither here nor there. But the fact remains that a fire second day out from Cave Island during the first watch of the glass while

Alec held the deck. I was in my bunk, but came up when the alarm was given and was soon passing buckets with the rest. But the dainty Scourge was doomed, and our puny efforts were without avail. The water seemed only to irritate the blaze to further fury, and where at first was pale, lambent flame, blue and transan avalanche of lnky smoke, riven by greedy, shooting tongues of vellow fire



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