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A LONE HAND;

or

The Capture of a German Pirate

CHAPTER I.—(Cont'd).

As he wandered back by the end warehouse about five o'clock, however, he saw something that galvanised him into activity. A train of cars had been run alongside the warehouse, and a gang of porters were busily engaged in loading the long boxes, with other merchandise, into them. Also, the big, dark man was there, overseeing the work and evidently enforcing special care in handling.

John Crane walked rapidly back to his hotel, but stopped at a second-hand store to make some purchases. He knew that the next train across the isthmus to the Pacific side would leave in half-an-hour, and would already be made up. Those cars, then, could not be a portion of it; they would probably leave the next morning When he hurried back and caught the train he was dressed in the soiled dungarees and cap, and carried the dunnage-bag, of a common sailor. Carrying out the part, he purchased a second-class ticket, and passed an uncomfortable night in a reeking day-car.

Arrived in Salina Cruz, the Pacific port of the Tehuantepec Railway, in the early morning, he secured a room in a sailors' boarding-house near the water front, deposited his bag, and, after assuring himself that the lock on the door was a serviceable one, dropped the key into his pocket and set out for a tour of inspection.

Along the docks several small coasting-steamers were discharging or taking on freight. The big cross-seas freighters which, before the days of the Panama Canal, had picked up the burdens laid down by their Atlantic mates on the other side of the isthmus were conspicuous by their absence. He visited each of the coasters, making casual inquiry for work. Everything seemed entirely regular. Only three ships lay at anchor in the harbor. At a ship-chandler's he was told that two of them awaited overhauling at the dry dock. The other was the Cocos, a Dutch pearl and copra trader from the Islands—something rather unusual in this port.

He picked up a glass from the counter and examined the Cocos with interest. She was a ship of some thousand tons burden, low in the water, and rather narrow in the beam and keen in the stem for a trader. She was painted a dull gray, except for a broad red band around her hull at the portholes, and her two funnels were red and black. She carried the flag of Holland. A number of sailors were busy on her deck, and Crane noted that they were all white men, a noteworthy fact, since the bulk of the crew on most ships in the copra trade is made up of Kanakas and other Island natives. Crane loafed around the water-front all morning, ate his lunch, then retired to his room for a siesta—very welcome after his sleepless night on the train.

About five o'clock he sallied out, still dressed in his sailor's dungarees, and went back to the docks. He found the Dutch ship at the wharf, and the reeking stench of shell that met him as he approached left no room for doubt, that she was a pearler. She had unloaded some shell and copra, though a small cargo for her tonnage. She was now taking in supplies and the ordinary assortment of Island freight, a large part of which consisted of kerosene-oil in wooden cases, each case containing two five-gallon tins. A big hose writhing across her deck was filling her fresh-water tanks; while a close scrutiny discovered another big hose passing under the dock to a value below her deck-line, and this, he knew, conveyed crude oil. 'Must be a small quantity for her donkey-engines,' he thought; for an oil-burning Island trader would be a novelty, and the smoke floating lazily from her funnels showed that she was a steamer; also that she had steam up and did not intend to linger long. Her crew, busy with the cargo and routine work on deck, were all white men, so far as he could see; a stocky, heavy set lot many of them bearded. Not an Islander was in sight. The portholes were closed by wooden shutters outside the glass.

Crane walked boldly up the gang-plank, but as he reached the deck he was accosted by a seaman at work near by. Speaking in Dutch, the man asked his business. Thanks to his four years in Belgium and Holland, Crane could speak Dutch like a native, and was also proficient in German. Constant contact, in his work, with men of these nations, and his natural habit of doing well anything he did, had kept his linguistic abilities at par. Now he answered in German, but the man shook his head. So, feigning to speak only a smattering of Dutch, he laboriously explained that he wanted to see the captain. This, the man said, was impossible; the captain was ashore, he did not know just where. Crane asked for the mate. He wanted work, he said in broken Dutch. The ship was full handed, replied the man; and as Crane kept edging across the deck he roughly ordered him back to the dock, saying that no one was allowed on board except on business. So Crane, making the best of abad job, turned and sauntered away.

He now headed for the railway station, as the train from the Atlantic side was due at six o'clock. Slouched on a truck, he watched it pull in. There was his man all right, the first off the steps. He struck a smart gait for the docks, and Crane following at a discreet distance, saw him go straight up the gang-plank of the Cocos, touching his cap in response to the salute of the sailor near its head. Crane disposed himself on the shady side of a pile of bales, and settled down to watch developments.

The first came in half-an-hour. A puffing switch-engine backed a string of cars down the warerhouse track, a car door was opened, and the stevedores swarmed in. They began to unload freight from trucks and wheel it directly aboard the ship, where a donkey-winch lowered it into the hold, as the big dock cranes had stopped at sundown. The deck was brightly lighted with electric globes, and hummed with activity. Evidently she would finish loading and sail in a few hours. Crane sprang to his feet and hurried uptown.

One after another, he visited several ship-chandleries, second-hand stores, and pawnshops, and made a strange assortment of purchases. Then he hurried to his room; and when he left it, a few minutes later, the dunnage-bag he carried was both bulky and heavy.

He slipped quietly down to the docks, avoiding the brightly lighted places, and sought out a landing-stage in a dark corner, where he had marked, during the afternoon, several small skiffs tied up. Placing the bag in one of these, he cast off its painter and pushed it back under the dock, then paddled cautiously along between the piles toward the Dutch ship.

The velvety-black tropic night had now descended. He felt his way along with the prow of the little boat, through the warm stench of rotting piles and the echoes of the water lapping against them. Presently the Cocos's bulk cut off the starlight outside, and he located the gang-plank by the rumble of the trucks overhead. Here he tied the boat to a brace, and climbed carefully up its slippery length till he reached the cap timber, on which rested the sills of the wharf-floor.

In the black darkness he worked his way along on the narrow, slippery timbers till he reached the edge of the wharf and found footing on the walling strips against which the ship's hull restetd, rubbing slowly up and down with the slight swell of the harbor waters. Then he felt along her till he located the cover of one of the portholes.

His exploring fingers soon told him that this cover was of wood, with heavy iron hinges, and was fastened inside. He had seen similar ones many times. So he produced from his pocket a Yankee tool set, with numerous small tools concealed in its hollow handle. He selected a thin steel blade, fixed it in the handle, and set patiently to work; he had no desire to excite suspicion by leaving a plain trail behind. After about ten minutes he had the satisfaction of hearing the bolt slip back; he cautiously prised the cover outward till a gleam of light showed through, then applied his eye to the crack. What he saw brought an exclamation from his lips a good deal louder than he could have wished. He had rightly guessed that this porthole looked into the engine-room; and he knew that he could judge a ship by her engines as a racehorse by its legs, of a wrestler by his shoulders.

The room into which he gazed was extra large for a ship of this size, and was literally filled with massive machinery. A single attendant lounged beside a small motor which hummed quietly in one corner, supplying the lighting system. The electric lights glittered on polished metal, and showed everything spick and span as the power-plant of a millionaire's yacht Moreover, he saw that these were not steam-engines at all, but large internal-combustion engines of the Diesel type, which has been brought to great perfection in Germany in recent years. These massive units were evidently of tremendous power for so small a ship, and must render her capable of extraordinary speed. Using crude oil as an automobile engine uses gasoline, they dispensed with coal-bunkers, boiler-room, and stokers, giving space for fuel-tanks of great capacity, and giving the ship a correspondingly wide radius of action. Also, she could be rushed into full speed at a moment's notice, without awaiting the slow process of getting up a high head of steam. A most remarkable power-plant, truly, for an Island copra-trader.

Another thing he noted, for he remembered those red-and-black funnels and the smoke floating from them. There was a small furnace amidships, from which two pipes ran up through the ceiling. Doubtless a smudge was kept up in this whenever it was desired to complete the illusion of the funnels. Such deliberate plants to create a false impression could be for no honest purpose. This thought ran through Crane's mind as he looked, and hardened his determination to see this matter through.

CHAPTER II.

He closed the shutter, and patiently worked the bolt back into place, filling the tiny crack made by his tool with rotten wood from a pile; then he found his way back beneath the gang-plank. He had decided that this vessel must be a scout for some hostile war-ship; hence her elaborate precautions to sail under false colors in waters where the natives of the Allies were in control. However, there was no war-vessel of any Power in this port just now, and she would doubtless slip away to sea before he could arrange an effective plan to stop her. Only one plan seemed to offer and chance. The risk was great, but he determined to take it. But how? Every inch of the ship was brigthly lighted; men came and went everywhere. He knew that, in spite of the casual appearance of things, a sharp lookout was being kept.

As he pondered he heard voices close over his head carrying on a heated colloquy in bad Dutch and worse Spanish. He drew himself up to the edge and risked a peep. The bulky captain confronted a swarthy little man in uniform, who seemed to represent the harbor authorities. This functionary had informed the captain that he could not sail till morning. Certain regulations of the port had not been complied with. The captain expostulated; he wanted his clearance papers. The officer admitted that the matter might be arranged, by the payment of fines and other means.

It was a plain case of hold-up for a substantial sum. The big captain did not take kindly to it. In face, his attitude toward the suave representative of the authorities was decidedly discourteous. He raged and swore; he would not be blackmailed, so he would wait till morning, and have this person fired. He stamped off the ship, muttering. But, under the gang-plank, Crane drew a sigh of relief. This would give him his chance.

(To be Continued).

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On the Farm

To Make First-Class Butter.

Begin by having the milking done in a cleanly way and in a clean stable. Keep the separator in condition by washing and scalding thoroughly after each using. Cool the cream immediately to 50 degrees or lower, in a tub of ice and water and keep cool and sweet until the churning is gathered. Keep the cream covered securly, but not air-tight. Let the temperature rise to 60 degrees or therabouts, and add a good starter. There is nothing better for this purpose than well flavoured butter milk. Stir frequently until the cream is thick, sour and has a glossy appearance, when it is ready for the churn.

Scald the churn and rinse with cold water before putting in the cream. The temperature should not be above 58 degrees in summer and 62 in winter and the butter should "come" in from 20 minutes to half an hour. Stop churning when, the butter is in granules about the size of small wheat, draw off the butter-milk, and rinse with cold water until no trace of milk remains. Care in this matter has much to do with the keeping qualities of the butter.

Remove the butter, (which should still be in grains) to a vessel in which it can be weighed, I use a shallow candy pail, weigh, turn out on the butter worker, and apply salt, from one pound to one and one-half ounces to a pound of butter. You will have to regulate the amount to suit the taste of your customers. Much of mine is sold unsalted. Work very gently, being careful not to spoil the texture of the butter by unnecessary pressure. Let stand half an hour, work again, and print or pack. In printing, make the prints full weight, perfectly shaped and wrap neatly with a good quality of parchment, bearing your name and address, or farm name. Keep in a cool place until wanted for marketing, then place in a clean box or basket, having a clean white cloth around and over the butter, and paper over that and under the box lid. Never let cream or butter stand when there is an odor of any kind.

When you go to market be sure your butter is good and say so. Have it looking neat and clean, yourself (or salesman) ditto, and you'll have no trouble in making good sales.

No, I didn't forget the coloring. The above describes my way of making butter and I never use butter coloring.—Mrs. Alex. Agilary in Farm and Dairy.

Cutting Potato Seed.

In a bulletin issued by the South Dakota Agricultural College, it was shown the the yield of potatoes from pieces of large seed potatoes was 28 per cent. higher than from pieces of small seed potatoes. A more recent bulletin is now to hand from South Dakota, giving a series of experiments designed to determine the relative influence of the mere size of tuber and the strain of tuber in the increased yield obtained by planting pieces of larger tubers. Five series were arranged as follows :—

1. Seed pieces of a given size from selected tubers.
2. Seed pieces of this same size from small tubers or culls.
3. Small seed pieces from tubers of a given size.
4. Medium seed pieces from tubers of a given size.
5. Large seed pieces from tubers of a given size.

These series of plots were carried out with two varieties of potatoes Early Ohio and Carman No. 3.

With regard to the first two series, out of a total of nine pairs of rows, six gave differences in favor of the selected tubers, though the seed pieces were equal in size in all cases. This superiority for the two varieties averaged 5.53 bushels per acre.

In the series 3, 4 and 5 the size of the seed pieces was the only variable factor, each piece being reduced to one eye, only. In every instance there was a pronounced difference in favor of the large seed pieces and the increase in production varied with the increase in size of the seed pieces. The average results of the two varieties (8 plots) were :—

	Bushels per Acre	Per cent.
Small seed pieces	174.73	100
Medium seed pieces	271.71	155.5
Large seed pieces	298.59	170.9

In order to determine the effect of strain of tuber on quality of crop, the crops of potatoes obtained in series 1 and 2 were weighed individually and from small seed 64.8 per cent. weighed 2 ounces or more, whilst the percentage from large seed was 67.5 thus showing a slight superiority in the quality of the crop from selected tubers.

Warm Water for Cows.

Care and attention to the little things pay. Often, little improvements in our system of methods accomplish surprising results.

Milk is nearly 90 per cent. water, To make large quantities of milk a cow requires a large amount of water. In summer she usually has access to water at all times and helps herself at will, but when winter comes she is in the barn most of the time and is offered water only once, or possibly twice, a day. To make matters worse, the water is often at or near freezing temperature, the cold water chills he entire digestive system. The water must be warmed by some means and a considerable amount of heat energy is required to do it. This can be supplied either by feeding the cow plentifully and letting her warm the water, or by heating it with fire.

The question of warming water, then, resolves itself into which method is cheaper. Corn is a great heat-supplying food. It is not profitable, however, to burn it in a stove to heat a house, because coal accomplishes the same result at a small fraction of the cost. Then why use corn to warm water for the cow ?

The amount of water that a cow drinks will be found to have a direct relation to the amount of milk she produces; in general, the more water, the more milk. It is essential, then, to provide all the water that a cow will drink at any season of the year. In the winter, especially in the northern states, water must be warmed in order to produce the best results. Probably the easiest and cheapest way to accomplish this is by using a tank heater.—Circular No. 21, United States Department of Agriculture.

What Piano Would Say.

"So Miss Banger played for you ? She claims that she can make the piano speak."

"Well, I'll bet if it spoke it would say, 'Woman you have played me false.' "

A horse may pull with all its might, but never with its mane.

An Irishman had just landed in New York, and as he made his way from the docks he came upon a street fight. Going over to the nearest policeman, Pat asked—"Well ye kindly tell me, sor, is this a friendly fight or can anyone join in?"

THE KAISER'S LOST EMPIRE.

Particulars of Captured German Colonies.

Mr. Bonar Law has furnished a table giving the following particulars of the German colonies captured, and the value of their revenue:—

S. W. Africa—Area, 322,450 square miles. In 1914 estimated revenue £1,175,000, and expenditure £2,017,000. In 1913 imports valued at 43,000,000 marks, and exports at 70,300,000 marks.

Cameroons—Area, 300,000 square miles. In 1914 estimated revenue £565,000, and expenditure £863,000. In 1913 imports valued at 34,600,000 marks, and exports at 29,100,000 marks.

Togoland — Area, 33,700 square miles. In 1914 estimated revenue £175,000, and expenditure £209,000. In 1913 imports were valued at 10,600,000 marks and exports at 9,100,000 marks.

In the Pacific—Samoa 650 square miles, and Upolu 340 square miles. In 1914 estimated revenue £595,000 and expenditure £690,000. In 1913 imports valued at 5,700,000 marks, and exports at 5,300,000 marks.

Kaiser Wilhelmsland and Pacific Islands—70,000 square miles. No details of revenue.

Bismarck Archipelago — 26,640 square miles. The chief towns are Rabaul and Herbertshoe, both in New Pommern.

Caroline Islands, Pelew Islands, Marianne Islands, and Marshall Islands—Area, 1,000 square miles, and estimated population, 70,459. Revenue estimated at £105,000, and expenditure at £191,500.

Imports of Kaiser Wilhelmsland and the Bismarck Archipelago, estimated at 5,872,000 marks, and these of Caroline and Marshall Islands at 3,385,000 marks, a total of 9,207,000 marks. Exports for the former estimated at 5,041,000 marks, and for the latter at 7,046,000 marks, a total of 12,087,000 marks.

Kiao-Chau — Area, 200 square miles. The principal town is Tsingtau. Revenue for 1914 estimated at 8,060,000 marks, and expenditure at 18,410,000 marks. In 1912, imports valued at 121,254,000 marks, and exports at 79,640,000 marks.

Probably the best way to get rich quick is to go slow.

PAINS AFTER EATING

WIND IN THE STOMACH—ACIDITY, HEADACHES—CONSTIPATION

ARE SIGNS OF INDIGESTION.

Indigestion—the complete or partial failure of the digestive processes—frequently throws out of gear the whole machinery of the body. You can't enjoy the vigour and vitality of good health unless your stomach, liver and bowels do their work regularly and efficiently.

MOTHER SEIGEL'S SYRUP

As a digestive tonic and stomachic remedy, Mother Seigel's Syrup is esteemed in tens of thousands of homes, wherever the English language is spoken. If you suffer much or little from disorders of the stomach, liver or bowels, try the effect of taking 15 to 30 drops of this famous remedy in water, after meals, for a few days and note its beneficial effects. 4015

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And all diseases of the horse affecting his throat speedily cured; colts and horses in same stable kept from having them by using **Spohn's Distemper Compound**, 3 to 6 doses often cure; one bottle guaranteed to cure one case. Safe for brood mares, baby colts, stallions, all ages and conditions. Most skilful scientific compound. Sold by the bottle or dozen. Any druggist or delivered by manufacturers.

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