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CAPTAIN BLOOD

by Rafael Sabatini

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BEGIN HERE TO-DAY.

Plans for escape from Barbados are made by Peter Blood and fellow conspirators, who have become slaves in Barbados after conviction on charges of treason by King James of England. Colonel Bishop, owner of Peter Blood, cruelly flogs Jeremy Pitt, another of his slaves, for failing to reveal information. Before the escape can be made a Spanish ship captures the town. Blood saves, from probable death by a Spaniard, a girl friend of Arabella Bishop, niece of the colonel. An interesting friendship has been formed by Blood and Arabella.

GO ON WITH THE STORY.

CHAPTER VIII.—(Cont'd.)

At the sound of her voice, the girl Mr. Blood had rescued peered up through the gloom.

"Arabella!" she called. "It is I, Mary Traill."

After a brief pause the door gaped wide. Beyond it in the wide hall stood Miss Arabella, a slim, virginal figure in white mysteriously revealed in the gleam of a single candle which she carried.

Mr. Blood strode in followed by his distraught companion, who, falling upon Arabella's slender bosom, surrendered herself to a passion of tears. But he wasted no time.

"Whom have you here with you? What servants?" he demanded, sharply.

The only male was James, an old negro groom.

"The very man," said Blood. "Bid him get out horses. Then away with you to Speightown, or even farther north, where you will be safe. Here you are in dreadful danger."

The horses came at last—four of them, for in addition to James who was to act as her guide, Miss Bishop had her woman, who was not to be left behind.

Mr. Blood lifted the slight weight of Mary Traill to her horse, then turned to say goodbye to Miss Bishop, who was already mounted. The last he heard of them was Mary Traill's childlike voice calling back on a quavering note—

"I shall never forget what you did, Mr. Blood. I shall never forget."

CHAPTER IX.

THE REBELS-CONVICT.

There were, when the purple gloom of the tropical night descended upon the Caribbean, not more than ten men on guard aboard the Cinco Llagas. The Spanish gunner and his crew—who had so nobly done their duty and insured the easy victory of the day—were feasting on the gun-deck upon the wine and the fresh meats fetched out to them from shore. Above, two sentinels only kept vigil, at stem and stern. Two wherries under cover of the darkness came gliding from the wharf, with well-greased rowlocks to bring up in silence under the great ship's quarter.

From the stern gallery still hung the ladder by which Don Diego had descended to the boat that had taken him ashore. The sentry on guard in the stern, coming presently round the gallery, was suddenly confronted by the black shadow of a man standing before him at the head of the ladder.

The wooden taffrail was a low one, and the Spaniard was taken completely by surprise. Save for the splash he made as he struck the water, narrowly missing one of the crowded boat that waited under the counter, not a sound announced his misadventure.

"Whist!" hissed Mr. Blood to his waiting rebels-convict. "Come on, now, and without noise."

Within five minutes they had swarmed aboard, the entire twenty of them overflowing from that narrow gallery and crouching on the quarter-deck itself. Lights showed ahead. Under the great lantern in the prow they saw the black figure of the other sentry, pacing on the forecastle.

Crouching low, they glided, noiseless as shadows, to the quarter-deck rail, and thence slipped without sound down into the waist. Two thirds of them were armed with muskets, some of which they had found in the overseer's house, and others supplied from

DON DIEGO MOUNTED THE LADDER AND STEPPED UPON THE DECK, ALONE, AND UNSUSPICIOUS.

the secret hoard that Mr. Blood had so laboriously assembled against the day of escape. The remainder were equipped with knives and cutlasses.

Mr. Blood, himself, crept forward with two companions, leaving the others in the charge of Nathaniel Hagthorpe whose sometime commission in the King's Navy gave him the best title to that office.

Mr. Blood's absence was brief. When he rejoined his comrades there was no watch above the Spaniards' decks. When their quarters were invaded and they found themselves surrounded by a score of wild, hairy, half-naked men, the Spaniards could not believe their eyes.

And then, from out of this uncouth pack of savages that beset them, stepped a slim, tall fellow with light-blue eyes in a tawny face. He addressed them in the purest Castillian.

"You will save yourselves pain and trouble by regarding yourselves my prisoners, and suffering yourselves to be quietly bestowed out of harm's way."

Thereupon those gentlemen of Spain were induced without further trouble beyond a musket prod or two to drop through a scuttle to the dark below.

It was soon after sunrise that the rebel-convict who paced the quarter-deck in Spanish corselet and head-piece, a Spanish musket on his shoulder, announced the approach of a boat. It was Don Diego de Espinosa y Valdez coming aboard with four great treasure-chests, containing each twenty-five thousand pieces of eight, the ransom delivered to him at dawn by Governor Steed. He was accompanied by his son, Don Estaban, and by six men who took the oars.

Don Diego mounted the ladder and stepped upon the deck, alone, and entirely unsuspicious.

Before he could even look round, and survey the guard drawn up to receive him, a tap over the head with a capstan bar sfficiently handled by Hagthorpe, put him to sleep without the least fuss.

He was carried away to his cabin, whilst the treasure-chests, handled by the men he had left in the boat, were being hauled to the deck. That being satisfactorily accomplished, Don Estaban and the fellows who had manned the boat came up the ladder, one by one, to be handled with the same quiet efficiency.

With Colonel Bishop at their head, and gout-ridden Governor Steed sitting on the ruins of a wall beside him, the survivors watched the departure of the eight boats containing the weary Spanish ruffians who had glutted themselves with rapine, murder, and voilences unspeakable.

The boats pulled away from the shore, with their loads of laughing, jeering Spaniards. They had come midway between the wharf and the ship, when suddenly the air was shaken by the boom of a gun.

They paused at their oars, astounded into silence for a moment. Then speech burst from them like an explosion. They were still cursing when a second shot came to crumple one of the boats into splinters, flinging its crew, dead and living, into the water.

But if it silenced these, it gave tongue, still more angry, vehement, and bewildered to the crews of the other seven boats.

Plump into their middle came a third shot, smashing a second boat with fearful execution. Whilst they discussed and fumed and cursed two more shots came over the water to account for yet a third of their boats.

After the fourth shot, with one accord they went about, or attempted to do so, for before they had accomplished it two more of their boats had been sunk.

The three boats that remained headed back for the wharf at speed.

If the Spaniards understood nothing of this, the forlorn islanders ashore understood still less. They saw the flag of Spain come down from the main-mast of the Cinco Llagas, and the flag of England soar to its empty place.

That the Cinco Llagas was now in friendly hands could no longer be doubted after the proofs it had given. But who, the people of Bridgetown asked one another, were the men in possession of her and whence had they come. It remained to ascertain the precise identity of these mysterious saviors, and do them fitting honor.

Upon this errand — Governor Steed's condition not permitting him to go in person—went Colonel Bishop as the Governor's deputy, attended by two officers.

Ranged on either side, athwart the deck, stood a score of men in two well-ordered files, with breasts and backs of steel, polished Spanish morions on their heads, overshadowing their faces, and muskets ordered at their sides.

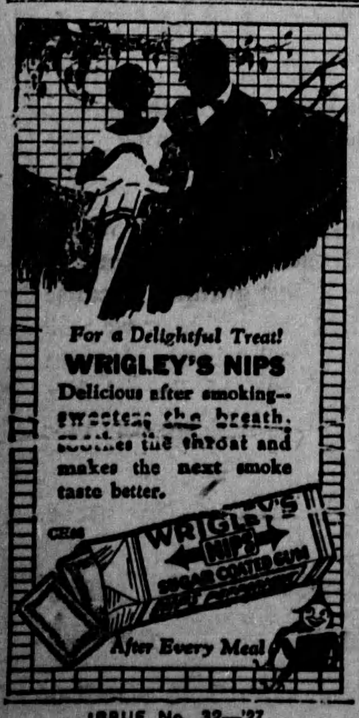
Colonel Bishop could not be expected to recognize at a glance in these the ragged, unkempt scarecrows that but yesterday had been toiling in his plantations. Still less could he be expected to recognize at once the courtly gentleman who advanced to greet him—a lean, graceful gentleman, dressed in the Spanish fashion, all in black with silver lace, a gold-hilted sword dangling beside him from a gold embroidered baldrick, a broad castor with a sweeping plume set above carefully curled ringlets of deepest black.

"Be welcome aboard the Cinco Llagas, Colonel, darling," a voice vaguely familiar addressed the planter. "We've made the best of the Spaniards' wardrobe in honor of this visit, though it was scarcely yourself we had dared hope to expect. You find yourself among friends—old friends of yurs, all."

The Colonel stared in stupefaction.

"Peter Blood!" It was an ejaculation of amazement. Satisfaction followed swiftly. "Was it you, then . . . ?"

(To be continued.)



ISSUE No. 32—'27

"I believe I'll become an aviatrix."
"Well, you have the 'trix' all right."

Minard's Liniment for scaly scalp.

Real Ejoyment

Head steady as a rock, eyes fixed frenziedly on the froth, right arm raised in one long sweeping motion, the whole body pivoting on the waistcoat button which won't do up, they follow well through till the glass is empty.

Many are the golf links who find it easier to hole out a double whisky in one than to grasp their way round the links in a hundred and fifty.

There is a lot of mind gambling on golf, but for this we cannot blame the Scots. The Caledonian does not risk money; because it excites him too much. Occasionally, when there are no Elders about, a couple of Scots will play a match, the loser to put a penny into the plate at kirk next Sabbath an dthe winner nothing, instead of a halfpenny each. But not often. They don't believe in risking heart attacks north of the Tweed.

When a man and a girl marry they become one; but it is for them to discover which one.

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Russian Hymn of Hate For England Appears

Soviet Russia's hymn of hate against England has just reached London. The composer, Alexij Bezymenski, is regarded as one of the most important of the purely Communistic writers.

Following is a rough translation of three stanzas of the "hymn":

England! You country of brainless kings!
England! In purple or ironed top-hat,
Lipsticks and foxtrots, dreadnoughts and grenades,
Your steel-safes forming a paunch of fat!
Home of assassins in frock-coats and walking-sticks,
On their lips lies, but bearing a crucifix.

Curses creep in your ear like melted lead.
England! We have no enemy worse!
Your ships' guns thunder to clear the air
For the deep caress of the long-drawn curse!
Blood, groans and death-screams from China to Egypt's sand,
Australia and India's palms join the wail with the golden Rand.

Curses! Weak word! We act instead!
See, England! Our factories stand wide-eyed,
Mine-shafts gnash teeth, chimney-stacks clench fists,
Peasants' huts muscle-like knots are tied.
Shoulder to shoulder, our cry rises higher
England—Words become deeds. The command is: Fire!

NURSES

The Toronto Hospital for Incurables, in affiliation with Bellevue and Allied Hospitals, New York City, offers a three years' Course of Training to young women, having the required education, and desirous of becoming nurses. This Hospital has adopted the eight-hour system. The pupils receive uniforms of the School, a monthly allowance and traveling expenses to and from New York. For further information write the Superintendent.

Training an Eagle

Last summer Captain C. R. W. Knight, of the British Army, rescued a young female eagle, which he has since succeeded in training to hunt like a falcon. At first the bird was nervous, but she soon learned to perch on her master's arm and feed there. After being made to feel at home, she was tempted to go for stuffed rabbit-skins and sacks of food. The bait was swung or thrown in the air, and the bird would be attracted to it from greater and greater distances. She then learned to fly up into a tree and watch Captain Wright until he produced and projected his lure. If, however, the bait was not thrown up promptly the indignant fowl would make a bee line for the trainer's head, and in order to save himself the Captain would have to toss up the bait at once.

The first time this happened the lure was not extracted in time, and the eagle swooped down on the Captain's head, opening up his neck with her talons so that three stitches had to be taken. After this episode the trainer covered his fist and forearm with mail and wore a fencing mask. To bear the weight of the bird he had to support his arm on a crutch, and the eagle was attached to a clothes-line, tied to a strap on either leg.

At capturing live game the bird proved a great disappointment. She could only catch hares and rabbits when they ran downhill—a fact the animals had sense enough to appreciate Captain Wright believes that a goshawk is ten times as efficient at hunting as an eagle but was surprised to find the larger bird so tractable. On the whole the experiment proved a great success, since excellent slow moving pictures were secured of the eagle seizing the artificial lure, carrying it away, and perching on its master's arm. Once these films were taken the bird was set free.

A golfer missed the ball three times, ploughing up the turf. "You've revoked," said his partner. "But I'm not playing cards," remonstrated the unfortunate player. "All the same," was the reply, "you've been playing a spade instead of a club!"

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"Her men friends say she knows all the holds."

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