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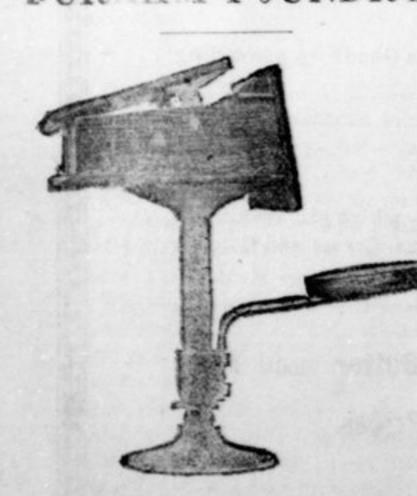
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"To the death!" cried young Teach, who had come forward and mingled with the crowd, lifting a naked cutlass as he spoke. His cry was taken up and repeated, first by one and then another, until the whole body was yelling frantically to be given a chance to fight the Spanish ships.

"That's well," said Morgan grimly. "Master Teach, here, will command forward on the fo'c'sl. Raveneau and Velsers shall attend to the batteries in the waist. I appoint you, Hornigold, to look after the movements of the ship. See that the best hands are at the wheel and have sail trimmers ready. My Portuguese friend, you may look to the after guns. Now to your stations. Cast loose and provide! Man the larboard battery! See everything is ready, but hold your fire and keep silence under pain of death! You frigate over there we'll strike first. She'll be unprepared and unsuspecting. One good blow ought to dispose of

As he spoke the men hurried to their stations. There was no lack of skill on the frigate, and now was seen the value of Morgan's constant drilling. The cannon of the ship were cast loose

"To the death!"



and loaded, loggerheads and matches lighted, small arms distributed and primed, pikes were served out, cutlasses loosened in their sheaths, and such as had armor, still worn in greater or less degree even in that day, donned it, and the ship was full of busy preparation. "We've no flag flying, sir," said Hornigold as the men settled down to their

lish flag. We'll make as much trouble for his gracious majesty King James | Fire! Pour it into them!"

stations, grim and ready.

of England, which had never waved fect tornado of fire burst from her over so despicable a crew before, rip- side. Every gun in her broadside, and pled out in the freshening breeze. As she was a forty-eight gun frigate, was they were rapidly approaching the discharged point blank at the astonish-Spanish ship now, Morgan descended ed enemy. Not waiting to reload the from the poop deck to make a personal guns, the crew seized the small arms inspection of his frigate before begin- ready charged to hand and as they ning action. He found everything to slowly swept by poured a withering his taste and passed along the lines of fire upon the Spaniard's crowded decks. silent men congregated around the Out of the flame and smoke the Mary

proved seamen, men as fearless as they were capable. The weaker and the more wretched of the band had been so placed that opportunity for showing cowardice would be greatly circumscribed, and the stern command of the captain that the officers and petty officers should instantly shoot any man who flinched from duty was not without effect. He did not hesitate to remind the men, either, that they fought

with halters around their necks. "Hornigold," said Morgan as he stepped up on the quarter deck again, "I want the frigate to pass as close to windward of that Spanish ship as you can bring her without touching. Let her not suspect our desire, but whirl into her as we get abreast. Don't fall foul of her as you value your life!"

"Aye, aye, sir," answered that veteran, squinting forward along the jibboom with his one eye as if measuring the distance, "I'll bring her close enough for you to leap aboard and yet | salute?" never touch a rope yarn on her." He spoke with the consciousness and

pride of his skill. erything ready, and when I give the of the English crew. They had elimiword pour it in on yonder ship. I want | nated the first ship from the game. to settle her with one broadside. Stand They had diminished their enemies by by for the word! Now lie down, all, a third, and full of confidence they behind the bulwarks and rails. We swept down upon the other two. must not arouse suspicion."

The two ships, the Mary Rose going free, the Spanish frigate close hauled on the port tack, were now within hailing distance. As they approached each other the buccaneer could see that the other ship was crowded with men. Among her people the flash of sunlight upon iron helms denoted that she carried a company of soldiers. The Spaniards were entirely unsuspecting. The men had not gone to their quarters, the guns were still secured-in short, save for the military trappings of the soldiers on board and the tampioned muzzles of her cannon she was in appearance as peaceful a vessel as

and the Mary Rose was hailed by a tall, richly dressed officer in glistening lieving that their captain's invincible breastplate and polished steel cap standing on the forecastle of the other

"What ship is that?" he cried in broken English

usual answer to such a hail would

have been, "This is his Britannie maj-

esty's frigate Mary Rose," but the Spaniards suspected nothing as Morgan continued, "carrying Sir Henry Morgan, some time vice governor f the island of Jamaica."

"I have the honor to wish the vice governor a very good morning," answered the Spaniard, courteously waving his hand in salutation.

"Now Hornigold; now!" said Morgan in a fierce whisper.

The old boatswain sprang himself to the wheel. With his powerful hands he revolved it quickly until it was hard up. The frigate answered it instantly. She swung away toward the Spaniard to leeward of her with a suddenness

that surprised even her steersman. "And I salute the vice governor," continued the Spanish captain just as the English ship swept down upon him, and then he cried in sudden alarm and

"Have a care, senor! What mean you? You will be aboard of us! Hard up with the helm!"

As soon as the Mary Rose had begun to fall off-aye, even before her motion had been perceptible-Hornigold had reversed the helm.

"Flow the head sheets there," he cried, shoving the wheel over spoke by spoke with all the force of his arms. "Flatten in aft a little, here! Steady! We're right abreast now, captain," he

Almost as quickly as she had fallen off the nimble frigate, beautifully handled, came to the wind again. She was now almost in touch with the other ship. Hornigold's seamanship and skill had been magnificent. He had done all that was asked of him and all that he had promised.

"Aye, aye," answered Morgan in triumphant commendation. "Handsomely done. I could leap aboard!"

The Spanish ship was filled with confusion. The captain, with his face black with rage, stood on the forecastle shaking his fist.

"This is outrageous, sir!" he shouted "You have nearly run us down! What do you want?" "I want to return your salute," an-

swered Morgan suavely. "Up, lads!" "Aye," said Morgan, "show the Eng- he cried. As the men sprang to their feet he roared out fiercely: "Stand by!

The Mary Rose was almost in con-In a short time the glorious colors tact with the Spanish ship when a perguns with words of stern appreciation. Rose burst upon the astonished eyes The crews of the guns had been con- of the officers and men of the two retains in each instance were tried and wreck on the water. Some of the pirate guns had been depressed, great holes

"How like you our salute?"



had been opened by the shot, the masts had been carried away, and the devoted ship was sinking, her decks covered with dead and dying.

"We wish you the compliments of the morning, senor," roared Morgan, facing aft toward the battered and ruined frigate. "How like you our

But the captain of the Spanish vessel from the forecastle, his place being lay dead upon his bloody deck, and if any answered the jeering taunt it was "Now, lads," cried Morgan, "have ev- drowned by the laughter and cheering

CHAPTER VI.

LTHOUGH they could not comprehend the reason for the vicious attack upon their consort by a ship of a supposedly friendly power, it was evident to the Spaniards in the two emaining ships that the English frigate was approaching them with the most sinister and malevolent purpose. Consequently the

ous blow and plucked up courage, beskill, address and seamanship would carry them safely through the next

encounter. The Spanish had "ttle warning after | ry the frigate by boarding. all, for the breeze was rapidly fresh-"This is the frigate Mary Rose." The ening, and in what seemed an incredibly short time the English frigate was close at hand. Though they worked handle the spokes himself. There was

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with a desperate energy, they had not entirely completed those preparations required by the shock of battle. As usual, Morgan was determined to lose no time. If he could have thrown his vessel upon them out of the fire and smoke of the first broadside he would have gained the victory with scarcely less difficulty than he had seized the first advantage, but that was not to be, and it was with considerable anxiety that he surveyed the crowded decks of the two remaining ships.

He had no fear of the armament of wide sweep and came driving straight either one, but if those Spanish soldiers ever got a footing upon his cwn deck it was probable they could not be dislodged without a tremendous sacrifice of life, and as he gazed over his The cutwater of the onrushing ship motley crew he even questioned their loomed up before him tremendously. ability to contend successfully with Instantly all was confusion on the such a mass of veterans. He had hoped Spanish ship. The steersman lost his that the remaining frigate would de- head and without orders put his helm tach herself from the galleon, in which up sharply. Some one cut the sheet of event the superior handiness and mo- the after sail on the huge lateen yard bility of his own ship, to say nothing and the frigate went whirling around of his probable advantage in the way on her heel like a top in a violent and in which his batteries would be fought, fatal as well as vain effort to get out would enable him to dispose of her of the road. without too much difficulty. Then he could with ease place the huge and unwieldly galleon at his mercy. But

the two Spanish ships stuck close together, too close indeed, Morgan thought, for their own safety. They were both on the wind, with their larboard tacks aboard, the frigate slightly ahead and to windward of the galleon-on the side, that is, whence the Mary Rose was approaching. So far as he could divine it, the Spanish plan, stituted with great care. The gun cap- maining ships. The first frigate was a if they had formulated any in their hurry, appeared to be for the frigate to engage the Mary Rose, and while she had the latter ship under her battery the galleon would tack across the English vessel's bows or stern, as might be, rake her, get her between the two ships, run her aboard and thus effect her ruin. The plan was simple, practicable and promised easy success, provided the Englishman did what was

expected of him. Morgan was not to be caught napping that way. As he rushed down upon them there came into his head one of the most daring ideas that have ever flashed across a seaman's brain. Hastily summoning Braziliano, he bade him take a dozen of his men, descend to the after magazine, procure two or three barrels of powder from the gunner and stow them in the cabin under the poop deck. He charged him to do it as quietly as possible and take only men for the purpose upon whom he could depend. While this was being done young Teach was also summoned taken by old Velsers, whose division in the battery was placed under the command of Raveneau. There was a whispered colloquy between the chieftain and his young subordinate, after which the latter nodded his head, ran below and concealed himself in one of the staterooms under the quarter deck. In a little space the Portuguese reappeared with his men and announced that they had completed their task, whereupon they were directed to return to their stations.

Meanwhile the crew had been re charging the battery and reloading the small arms. Morgan addressed to them a few words of hearty approval of their previous actions and predicted an easy victory over the two ships. exultant men on the Mary Rose could | The Spanish captain naturally supposhear the shrill notes of the trumpeters | ed-and indeed the courses upon which on the two other ships calling their the three ships were sailing if persisted in would have brought about the With a confidence born of success, result-that the Mary Rose would pass however, Morgan resolutely bore down along his larboard side and the two upon the enemy. Even the dastards vessels would engage in the formal The two ships were near enough in his crew had been excited by the manner of the period, yardarm to yardnow to make conversation possible, ease and success of the first treacher- arm until the galleon could get into action and so settle it in the purposed way. He intended, of course, if it could be brought about, to throw the masses of soldiers he was transporting home upon the English decks and car-

> Again Morgan put Hornigold in charge of the maneuvering of the ship, and again that old worthy chose to

a brief conversation between them, and then the English captain ran forward on the forecastle. The ships were very near now. In a moment or two they would pass each other in parallel courses, though in opposite directions, and their broadsides would bear. But when the Mary Rose was about a cable's length from the Spanish frigate the astonished don heard a sharp command ring out from the approaching English ship, after which she made a at him at a furious speed. The English captain intended to run him down! There was to be no passage along his broadside. The other was upon him!

It was a most foolish maneuver, for close at hand on the lee side of her the galleon came lumbering along. Her captain, too, had seen the peril and had elected to meet it by tacking under his consort's stern, but he was too near, and the other ship fell off and was swept to leeward too rapidly. His own ship, cumbersome and unwieldy, as they always were, was slow in answering the helm. The frigate and galleon came together with a terrific crash. The shock carried away the fore topmast of the frigate, which fell across the head yards of the galleon. The two ships were instantly locked together. They swung drifting and helpless in the tossing waters.

Morgan had counted upon this very catastrophe. A twist of the helm, a touch of the braces, and the prow of the Mary Rose swung to windward. As her batteries bore she hurled their messengers of death into the crowded masses on the Spanish ships. Although dismayed by the collision, the gunners on the frigate made a spirited reply with a discharge which at such close range did much execution.

Unfortunately for her, the Mary Rose had rushed so close to the two entangled ships that it was impossible for her to escape hitting them. The English captain would have given anything if he could have gone free of the mass, for he could have passed under the stern of the two helpless ships, raked them and probably would have had them at his mercy, but his dash at them had been an earnest one, and in order to carry out his plan successfully he had been forced throw his ship right upon them. Therefore, though the helm was shifted and the braces hauled in an effort to get clear, and though the ship under Morgan's conning and Hornigold's steering was handled as few ships have ever been handled, and though it was one of the speediest and most weatherly of vessels, they could not entirely swing her clear. The stern of the frigate crashed against the stern of the nearest Spanish ship drifting fran tically to leeward.

The Spanish captain, mortified and humiliated beyond expression by the mishap, instantly realized that this contact presented them with a possibility of retrieving themselves. Before the ships could be separated grappling irons were thrown, and in a second the three were locked in a close embrace Morgan had anticipated this situation also, although he had hoped to avoid it, and had prepared for it. As the two ships became fast the high poop and rail of the Spaniard were black over on the lower poop and quarter deck of the Mary Rose in a dense mass. The small arms on both sides had been discharged a moment before, and there

had been no time to reload. The remainder of the engagement to all intents and purposes would be fought with the cold steel.

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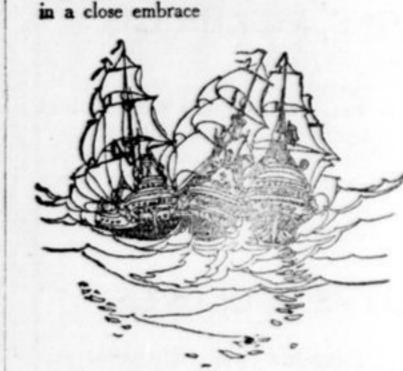
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The three were locked



The advantage was now with the Spaniards, whose force outnumbered the pirates two or three to one. Surprising as it was to the old buccaneers and the bolder spirits among his crew, whose blood was up sufficiently to enable them to long for the onset, Morgan had run to the waist of the ship when he saw the inevitable collision and had called all hands from the poop and quarter. The Mary Rose was provided with an elevated quarter deck and above that a high poop. Massing his men in the gangways just forward of the mainmast and on the forecastle itself, with the hardiest spirits in the front line and Morgan himself in advance of all, sword in hand, the two parties contemplated each other for a little space just before joining in the

The poop and quarter deck were crowded so thick with Spanish soldiers and sailors that room could scarcely be found for the increasing procession, for, anxious to be in at the death, the men of the galleon clinging to the frigate ran across and joined their comrades. Here were trained and veteran soldiers in overwhelming numbers, with the advantage of position in that they fought from above down, to oppose which Morgan had his motley crew behind him.

"Yield, you dastardly villain!" shouted the captain of the Spanish frigate, who was in the fore of his men.

"Shall I have good quarter?" cried

A low growl ran through the ranks of the buccaneers at this question. Yet the rapscallions among the crew back of him instantly took up the cry. "Quarter! Quarter! We surrender!

We strike! For heaven's sake"-"Silence!" roared Morgan, an order

which was enforced by the officers and veterans by fierce blows with pistol butts, hilts of swords and even naked fists. "I would hear the answer of the Spanish captain.

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