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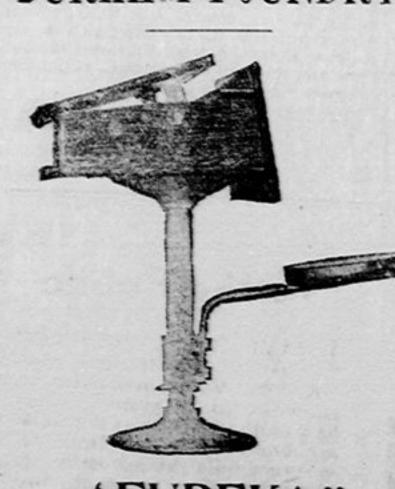
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His eyes turned with faint hope toward the aged priest.

sted. Drafts issued and collections old man, looking from him. "I could gade on all points. Deposits re- forgive this," he touched his battered tonsure, "and all thou hast done against me and mine. What suffering comes upon me I can bear, but thou hast filled the cup of iniquity and must drain it to the dregs. Hark ye-the not interfere! They that take the creed. You believe not in God"-

> "I shall pray for thee; that is all." refuse you. Had it not been for you face of the rock. this man would not have known his desert an old comrade in his extremity? Think, we have stood together sword memory of that old association, by the love you once bore me and by that I gave to you, ask them for my death.

here-now-at once!" "You ask for grace from me!" snarled Hornigold savagely, yet triumphant. "You-you hanged my brother"-"I know, I know! 'Twas a grievous

error. I shall be punished for all. Ask them to shoot me-hang me"-He slipped to his knees, threw him-

self upon the floor and lay groveling at Hornigold's feet. "Beg, you hound!" cried the boat-

swain, spurning him with his foot. "I have you where I swore I'd bring you. And, remember, 'tis I that laid you low-I-I"- He shrieked like a maniac. "When you suffer in that living death for which they design you, remember with every lingering breath of anguish that it was I who brought you there! You trifled with me-mocked me-betrayed me. You denied my request. I groveled at your feet and beg-

Beg, you hound!



II ged you. You spurned me as I do you low. Curse you! I'll ask no mercy for

"My lord," gasped out Morgan, turning to the viceroy in one final appeal as two of the men dragged him to his feet again, "I have treasure. The galleon we captured-it is buried. I can lead you there." "There is not a man of your follow-

ing," said the viceroy, "who would not gladly purchase life by the same means."

"And 'tis not needed," said the boatswain, "for I have told them where it The utter uselessness of it at last

came upon Morgan, and some of his courage returned. He faced them once more, with head uplifted. "At your will, I'm ready!" he cried.

"I defy you! You shall see how Harry Morgan can die. Scuttle me, I'll not give way again!" "Take him away," said Alvarado.

"We'll attend to him in the morning." "Now, we have had enough. See!" cried the old viceroy, pointing to the windows. "The day breaks. Take him away. Agramonte, to you I commit the fort. Mercedes, Alvarado, come with me. Those who have no duties to perform, go get some sleep. As for you, prisoner, if you have preparation to make do so at once, for in the morn-

ing you shall have no opportunity." "I am ready now!" cried Morgan recklessly, furious because he had been balked in his attempt. "Do with me as you will. I have had my day, and it

has been a long and merry one." "And I mine tonight. It has been short, but enough," laughed Hornigold, his voice ringing like a maniae's in the hall, "for I have had my revenge!"

"We shall take care of that in the morning," said Alvarado, turning away to follow the viceroy and Mercedes.

CHAPTER XXV.

EFORE it was submerged by the great earthquake which so tremendously overvenelmed the shores of South America with appalling disaster nearly a century and a half later, a great arid rock on an encircling stretch of sandy beach, resultant of untold centuries of struggle between stone and sea, thrust itself above the waters a few miles northward of the coast of Venezuela. The cay was barren and devoid of any sort of life except for a single clump of bushes that had sprung up a short distance from the huge rock upon a little

plateau sufficiently elevated to resist the attacks of the sea, which at high "Not for such as thou," answered the tide completely overflowed the islet except at that one spot.

Four heavy iron staples had been driven with great difficulty into holes drilled in the face of the volcanic rock. To these four large chains had been made fast. The four chains ended in four fetters, and the four fetters inclosed the ankles and wrists of a man. The length of the four chains had been so cunningly calculated that the arms and legs of the man were drawn far "I will! I do!" cried the buccaneer, apart, so that he resembled a gigantic white cross against the dark surface of the stone. A sailor would have "Hornigold," cried the now almost described his position by saying that frenzied man, his voice hoarse with he had been "spread eagled" by those terror and weakness, "they owe much who had fastened him there. Yet the to you. Without you they had not chains were not too short to allow a been here. I have wronged you griev- little freedom of motion. He could ously, terribly, but I atone by this. incline to one side or to the other, lift Beg them not to let me go, but only to himself up or down a little or even kill me where I stand! They will not thrust himself slightly away from the

The man was in tatters, for his cloth father. He could not have won this ing had been rent and torn by the viowoman. You have power. You'll not lent struggles he had made before he had been securely fastened in his chains. He was an old man, and his in hand and fought our way through long gray hair fell on either side of all obstacles in many a desperate strait his lean, fierce face in tangled masses. -thou and I, old shipmate. By the A strange terror of death-the certain fate that menaced him-was upon his countenance. With the bravado of despair he had looked with seeming indifference on the sufferings of his own men that same morning. After being submitted to the tortures of the rack they had been hanged to the outer walls, and he had been forced to pass by them on his way to this hellish spot. But the real courage of the man was gone now. His simulation had not even been good enough to deceive his enemies, and now even that had left him.

He was alone, so he believed, upon the island, and all of the mortal fear slowly creeping upon him already appeared in his awful face, clearly exhibited by the light of the setting sun streaming upon his left hand, for he was chained facing northward-that is, seaward. As he fancied himself the only living thing upon that island, he took little care to conceal his emotions-indeed, it was impossible for him any longer to keep up the pretense of indifference. His nerves were shattered, his spirit broken. Retribution was dogging him hard. Vengeance was close at hand at last. Besides, what mattered it? He thought himself alone. absolutely alone. But in that fancy he was wrong, for in the solitary little copse of bushes of which mention has been made there lay hidden a man -an ancient sailor. His single eye gleamed as fiercely upon the bound, shackled prisoner as did the setting sun itself.



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that period had been left for the sustenance of Hornigold-alone.

Morgan, however, did not know this. He believed his only companions to be the body of the half breed who had died for him as he had lived for him and the severed head of Teach, a newer comrade who had not betrayed him. The body lay almost at his feet: the head had been wedged in the sand so that its sightless face was turned toward him in the dreadful, lidless staring gaze of sudden death.

They had said to the buccaneer as they fastened him to the rocks that they would not take his life, but that he would be left to the judgment of God. What would that be? He thought he knew.

He had lived long enough on the Caribbean to know the habits of that heautiful and cruel sea. There was a little stretch of sand at his feet, and Old Benjamin Hornigold, who had then the water began. He estimated chemed and planned for his revenge, that the tide had been ebbing for an had insisted upon being put ashore on Lour or so when he was fastened up the other side of the island after the and abandoned. The rock to which he boats had rowed out of sight of the had been chained was still wet, and he captive, that he might steal back and, noticed that the dampness existed far himself unseen, watch the torture of above his head. The water would rethe man who had betrayed him and cede and recede and recede until perwronged him so deeply. Alvarado had haps some 300 feet of bare sand would complied with his request and had fur- stretch before him, and then it would ther promised to return for the boat- turn and come back, back, back, swain in two days. They calculated Where would it stop? How high would nicely that the already exhausted pris- it rise? Would it flood in in peaceful oner would scarcely survive so long, calm as it was then drawing away? and provisions and water ample for Would it come crashing in heavy assault upon the sands as it generally did, beating out his life against the

Of the two he thought he should prefer a storm. He would be beaten to pieces, the life battered out of him horribly in that event, but that would be a battle, a struggle-action. He could fight if he could not wait and endure. It would be a terrible death, but it would be soon over, and therefore he preferred it to the slow horror of watching the approach of the waters creeping in and up to drown him. The chief agony of his position, however, of crime had at last brought him, was

that he was allowed no choice. So long as it was light Morgan intently watched the sea. There was a sense of companionship in it which helped to alleviate his unutterable loneliness. And he was a man to whom

loneliness in itself was a punishment. There were too many things in the past that had a habit of making their presence felt when he was alone for him ever to desire to be solitary. Presently the sun disappeared with the startling suddenness of tropic latitudes, and without twilight darkness fell over the sea and over his haggard face like a veil. The moon had not yet risen, and Pimples and Eruptions, Poor Circulation he could see nothing. There were a few faint clouds on the horizon, he had noticed, which might presage a storm. It was very dark and very still, as calm and peaceful a tropic night as ever shrouded the Caribbean. Farther and farther away from him he could | blood. hear the rustle of the receding waves as the tide went down. Over his head twinkled the stars out of the deep darkness.

Then the moon sprang up as suddenly as the sun had fallen. Her silver radiance flooded the firmament. Light, heavenly light, once more! Far away from him the white line of the water was breaking on the silver sand.

Now the tide turned and came creeping in. It had gone out slowly, it had lingered as if reluctant to leave him, but to his distraught vision it returned with the swiftness of a thousand white horses tossing their wind blown manes. If the cod fish became extinct The wind died down; the clouds were dissipated. The night was so very calm it mocked the storm raging in his soul. And still the silvered water came flooding in. Gently, tenderly, caressingly, the little waves lapped the sands. At last they lifted the ghastly head of young Teach and laid it at his feet.

He cursed the rising water and bade it stay, and heedlessly it came on. It was a tropic sea, and the waters were as warm as those of any sun kissed ocean, but they broke upon his knees with the coldness of eternal ice. They rolled the heavier body of his faithful slave against him. He strove to drive it away with his foot as he had striven to thrust aside the ghastly head, and without avail. The two friends receded as the waves rolled back, but they came on again and again and again. They had been faithful to him in life: they remained with him in death. Now the water broke about his waist;

now it rose to his breast. He was exhausted, worn out. He hung silent, staring. His mind was busy. His thought went back to that rugged Welsh land where he had been born. He saw himself a little boy playing in the fields that surrounded the farmhouse of his father and mother.

He took again that long trip across the ocean. He lived again in the hot hell of the Caribbean. Old forms of forgotten buccaneers clustered about

The water was higher now. It was at his neck. There were Porto Bello, Puerto Principe, and Maracaibo, and Chagres, and Panama-ah, Panama! All the fiends of hell had been there, and he had been their chief! They came back now to mock him.

There was pale faced, tender eyed Maria Zerega, who had died of the plague, and the baby, the boy. Jamaica, too, swept into his vision. There was his wife shrinking away from him in the very articles of death. There was young Ebenezer Hornigold, dancing right merrily upon the gallows, together with others of the buccaneers he had

The grim figure of the one eyed boatswain rose before him and leered upon him and swept the other apparitions away. This was La Guayra yesterday. He had been betrayed. Whose men were those? The men hanging on the walls? And Hornigold had done it-old Ben Hornigold-that he thought so faithful.

He screamed aloud again with hate; he called down curses upon the head of the growing one eyed apparition. And the water broke into his mouth and stopped him. It called him to his senses for a moment. His present peril overcame the hideous recollection of the past. That water was rising still. Great God! At last he prayed. Lips that had only cursed shaped themselves into futile petitions. There was a God after all.

The end was upon him, yet with the old instinct of life he lifted himself upon his toes. He raised his arms as far as the chains gave him play and caught the chains themselves and strove to pull, to lift, at last only to hold himself up, a rigid, awful figure. He gained an inch or two, but his the most terrifying feature in this fetters held him down. As the water dreadful situation to which his years supported him he found little difficulty

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in maintaining the position for space. But he could go no higher if the water rose an inch more the would be the end. He could breat only between the breaking waves not

The body of the black was swu against him again and again, the he of young Teach kissed him upon the cheek, and still the water seemed! rise and rise and rise. He was a del man like the other two-indeed, prayed to die-and yet in fear he clu to the chains and held on. Each n ment he fancied would be his last, b he could not let go.

By and by the waters fell. He cou not believe it at first. He still hu suspended and waited with bate breath. Was he deceived? No. waters were surely falling. The s onds seemed minutes to him; the mi utes, hours. At last he gained assi ance. There was no doubt but that tide was goirs; down. The waves b risen far, but he had been lifted about them; now they were falling, falling Yes, and they were bearing away to accursed body and that ghastly he He was alive still, saved for the f being. The highest waves only too ed his breast now. Lower, lower, the moved away. Reluctantly they gered, but they fell-they fell. To drown? That was not the ju

ment of God for him then. What wo



breast-he had fainted in the sudd relief of his undesired salvation. Long time he hung there, and still tide ebbed away, carrying with it that was left of the only two who l loved him. He was alone now sur save for that watcher in the bush After awhile consciousness returned him again, and after the first swi sense of relief there came to him deeper terror, for he had gone throu the horror and anguish of death had not died. He was alive still, but helpless as before.

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