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THE ISLAND OF THE STAIRS

Being a True Account of Certain Strange and Wonderful Adventures of Master John Hampdon, Seaman, and Mistress Lucy Wilberforce, Gentlewoman, In the Great South Seas.

By

CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY

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We Fell In With a Spanish Ship of War.

SYNOPSIS

The body of Sir Geoffrey Wilberforce, ruined gambler and suicide, is found by Hampdon, a sailor. Hampdon quarrels with the Duke of Arcester.

Hampdon breaks the news to Lucy Wilberforce and delivers a letter found on her father's body.

It contains half of a map of a treasure island. Lucy already has the other half. There are directions for finding the treasure.

Hampdon punishes the duke for insulting Lucy. Hampdon and Lucy start in a ship for the island of the Stairs.

Hampdon steals a kiss, and Lucy has him imprisoned in a cabin. Desperate men in the crew mutiny.

Pimball and Glibby demand the map of the island of Hampdon, who pretends to join the mutiny. Hampdon demands possession of Lucy.

He treats her with respect and offers to save her from the mutineers. The pair plot to escape to the island of the Stairs.

The mutineers become intoxicated, and Hampdon and Lucy leave the ship for the island, which is nearby.

They are carried over a coral reef to the island, where they find rude statues and mount a gigantic staircase of stone.

The mutineers pursue them, but are stopped by the reef, and Hampdon and Lucy make a search for the hidden treasure.

They pass a strange altar surrounded by masses of human bones and skulls and find the cave mentioned on the map.

They discover a vast quantity of gold, silver and precious stones. War canoes of savages approach the island. Hampdon and Lucy flee to the treasure cave.

They are attacked by the savages, led by Pimball and Glibby. Lucy asks Hampdon to kiss her goodby.

They are saved by an earthquake, which routs the savages and mutineers, but closes the mouth of the cave.

They escape from the cave and the island, are picked up by a ship, and Hampdon wins the love of Lucy.

ress caught me by the arm.

"Look!" she cried, pointing far up the horizon.

I turned, and there, bottom upward, floated the dinghy. The sight of her was like a draft of wine. I turned and ran up the sand, followed by my lady. When opposite the boat I kicked off my shoes—I had on little else but shirt and trousers—jumped into the lagoon, swam to the dinghy and towed her ashore. Assisted by Mistress Lucy, I turned her over. I then hunted up the few things we had saved, with a little store of coconuts which we had accumulated in one of the caves, shipped the oars, which, being tied to the rowlocks, had not been washed away, and shoved off.

The mast was still lashed to the thwarts, and a boat cloak had been caught under the forward thwart. The painter was still fastened to a ring bolt in the bow, and as soon as I had rowed through the narrow entrance I stepped the mast and improvised a sail with the boat cloak and the painter. The breeze blew softly. We passed the island and then set our course by the compass to the eastward, headed for the great South American coast so many miles away.

We had gone through many perils, but had sustained them all. Fortune, as if ashamed of her allotted trouble, made it up to us in the end, for in a few days we fell in with a Spanish ship of war in the service of the viceroy of Peru, which had been exploring the south seas and had been driven far out of her course by the same storm which had wrecked the Rose of Devon. Commander Don Antonio Re-

calde was an officer and a gentleman. There was no war between our English king and the Spanish monarch then, and he treated us courteously, gave us food and raiment, assigned a spare cabin to my mistress and berthed me aft with the officers. He was bound for Valparaiso, which in due course, without mishap, we reached. There we took ship for the Portuguese possessions on the other shore of the continent and thence we got a ship from Rio de Janeiro to Lisbon, and so at last we came to England and to Plymouth harbor, whence we had set forth nearly a year ago.

I paid the captain of the Spanish frigate which had picked us up with an emerald of great price, which he was loath to accept, but which we pressed upon him. We had little difficulty, through his kind offices, in selling another stone or two for ready money at Valparaiso, so we experienced no difficulties which could be avoided by the expenditure of money upon the way.

I took my mistress to the house of the devoted Master Ficklin, who, with that kindly woman, his sister, greeted us as if we had risen from the dead, and, greatly rejoicing in my lady's good fortune, gave us the warmest of welcomes. There I had what I expected

would be my last interview with her. We had been thrown constantly together during the six months that had elapsed between our great adventures upon the island of the Stairs and our arrival in England. We had discussed everything else, I think, but I had said naught of my love. Indeed, each league of sea over which we passed on our way homeward seemed to remove her farther from me.

We were alone. Good Mistress Ficklin had given us her parlor for the afternoon. I took from my pockets the canvas pouches filled with her treasure and laid them on the table.

"These, Mistress Wilberforce," said I, formally enough, although my heart was beating rapidly, "are yours."

She waved her hand as if they were of small moment.

"We have discussed that before," she said. "What of yourself?"

"Last night," I replied, "I went down on the docks. A company's ship sails for India next week. They want a chief mate, and if my references serve they will engage me."

"And you have these references?"

"I thought, madam, that your friends in the city might give them to me when they know."

"But I have no friends in the city," she said.

"These," said I, pointing to the table, "will buy them for you."

"And so," she said, without looking at me, "and so it is goodby, then. May you be happy."

She extended her hand to me, and I caught it. I kissed it passionately, but when I made to let it go she would not.

"Master Hampdon," she said, looking at me; her eyes brighter than the diamonds and brier than the sapphire upon the table, "you are a fool."

"Right well do I know that, mistress," said I, striving to let a smile to match her own.

"And a blind man as well."

Whereat I was a blind man indeed, for my eyes misted up, but not with the blood as in the battle. And I, as strong and tough as a mountain oak, was as like to faint as any lovesick girl.

"John, John," came the sweetest voice in the world to me through the darkness, "don't you see? Don't you know that I love you and you only, that you have all my life, and that my life, which is yours a thousand times on sea and shore, is not worth living without you?"

"But your friends, your world," I protested as she came nearer.

"I have no other friends, I want no other, and you are my world."

Well, it is not in me to resist after that, and for the third time in my life I held her in my arms, where since that hour she has often been again, and for the third time I drank the sweetness of her lips.

"Do you remember that night on the Rose of Devon when first you kissed me?" she asked, laughing.

"If I should kiss you a million times, sweetheart, as I mean to do," I answered boldly, "I should not forget a single one of them, much less that."

"And to punish you for your presumption, although my heart went out to you, I confess, I struck you; and to teach you to be a dutiful husband, loving, devoted to me," she paused and laughed again. "I strike you once more."

Whereat she laid her hand once again, but in tenderness, upon my cheek, following it with a kiss.

I have had his majesty's sword laid upon my shoulder after I had led one of the king's ships to victory in the French wars, and I am now, if you please, Sir John Hampdon. We live at Wilberforce Castle, and our children play on the sward, but the royal accolade meant not so much to me as that light blow upon my cheek with which my dear mistress sealed our plighted troth.

THE END.

His Long Suit.
"Isn't Deeds, the lawyer, a rather extravagant man?"
"By no means. I've known him to make one suit last for several years."—Boston Transcript.

Help One Another.
Bachelor.—Why should I get a cook book? I have no wife. Agent.—But I have, and I need your commission. Have a heart!—St. Paul Dispatch.

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Lesson XIII.—Second Quarter, For June 28, 1914.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Text of the Lesson, Heb. iv, 14 to v, 10. Quarterly Review—Golden Text, Luke xix, 10.—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

LESSON I.—Christ's Table Talk, Luke xiv, 7-24. Golden Text, Luke xiv, 11. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted"—a threefold message in the house or one of the chief Pharisees who had invited Him to eat bread on the Sabbath day; a message on humility for the guests, on recompense at the resurrection for the host and man's indifference to God's provision and invitation for one of the guests who spoke of the kingdom.

LESSON II.—The Journey to Emmaus, Luke xxiv, 13-35. Golden Text, Rom. viii, 34. "It is Christ Jesus that died—yea, rather, that was raised from the dead." Here we see the reality of Christ's resurrection body having the nail wounds in hands and feet, a tangible body of flesh and bones, that could be handled, that could walk and eat and also pass through unopened doors and vanish at pleasure.

LESSON III.—The Cost of Discipleship, Luke xiv, 25-35. Golden Text, Matt. xvi, 25. "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it." The difference between being a Christian and a disciple is very marked, the cost of our salvation falling wholly on Christ, but the cost of discipleship on the believer, salvation being a gift, but reward in proportion to service.

LESSON IV.—The Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, Luke xv, 1-10. Golden Text, Luke xv, 10. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth"—a threefold parable concerning the love of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This lesson concerns the Son and the Spirit. The sinner's helplessness and proneness to stray is seen in the sheep, and his deadness in the piece of money.

LESSON V.—The Lost Son, Luke xv, 11-24. Golden Text, Luke xv, 18. "I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight." That was not all he intended to say (verses 18, 19), but it was nearly all that he did say (verse 21). The father's welcome cut it short. The whole parable teaches us what God thinks of lost ones and how unwilling He is that any should perish.

LESSON VI.—The Unjust Steward, Luke xvi, 1-13. Golden Text, Luke xvi, 10. "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much." We are stewards of all that with which the Lord has intrusted us, whether it be the gospel or talents or time or money, and we are using it either for ourselves or for Him, for time or eternity.

LESSON VII.—The Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke xvi, 19-31. Golden Text, Prov. xxi, 13. "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he shall also cry, but shall not be heard." This is a story of the rich poor and the poor rich. The rich man lived only for himself and had no use for God or His word and no belief in a future till he found himself in torment.

LESSON VIII.—Unprofitable Servants, Luke xvii, 1-10. Golden Text, I Cor. i, 31. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." If we do only what seems to be our duty, what we think we ought to do, we are unprofitable, but when the love of Christ constraineth us and we are so occupied with Him and His kingdom and glory as to be above being offended with people or even with Himself, whatever He may do, we shall better glorify Him.

LESSON IX.—The Grateful Samaritan, Luke xvii, 11-19. Golden Text, Luke xvii, 18. "Were there none found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger." We wrote on the Holy Spirit lesson in I Cor. ii, as well as on the leper lesson, and saw that all unbelievers as well as Israel are spiritually lepers and unclean, but when the Holy spirit, who alone can convince of sin, shines in us by His word, then come cleansing and real gratitude.

LESSON X.—The Coming of the Kingdom, Luke xvii, 20-37. Golden Text, Luke xvii, 21. "Lo, the kingdom of God is within you"—more correctly, as in the margin, "among you." The kingdom which was at hand did not come as He said in Luke xix, 11, 12. The kingdom is postponed and will not come till He shall return in glory with His church, now being gathered.

LESSON XI.—The Friend of Sinners, Luke xviii, 9-14. Golden Text, Mark ii, 17. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." There is no Saviour nor salvation for such as think that they are good enough, but for such as the publican in the temple or Zaccheus, for poor or rich, there is abundant mercy and a welcome from Him who came to seek and to save the lost.

LESSON XII.—The Great Refusal, Mark x, 17-31. Golden Text, Luke xvi, 13. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The great contrast is between the empty helpless little children who came to His arms and were blessed and the rich young ruler, full of his riches and his own righteousness, who went away empty because he was not willing to be emptied.

Continued on page 7.

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