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Genuine Buried Treasure Of Far Pacific Islands

Has Caused Excitement

UNLESS the signs mislead, the current year will witness the setting forth of many treasure-seeking expeditions. For the most part, these are the romantic story of Cocos Island and its hoarded loot. The stir and ferment arise from the fact that the old familiar legends concerning and its elusive possessions have been authenticated by the British Foreign Office. The fabled treasure was a reality; it has been discovered, it is there to-day — nearly \$25,000,000 worth.

It is seldom that a government department favors the world with so intriguing a narrative. The circumstances are exceptional.

For the purpose of the peace conference a historical section of the Foreign Office was established to furnish information as to such parts of the world as might conceivably come under review. One of the handbooks deals with Cocos Island, which lies in the eastern Pacific, some 540 miles from Panama, and is indisputably a possession of the Republic of Costa Rica. It is a mere dot on the ocean, four and a half miles in length, fourteen in circumference; has been discovered, lost and re-discovered repeatedly; has been the scene of one attempt at colonization—in 1897, which failed and left the island unpopulated, as it is believed to be to-day.

Barrie's latest play, "Mary Rose," turns upon the habit of the "island which likes to be visited" periodically vanishing from mortal ken, and Cocos Island became a treasure repository because it was frequently forgotten by the generalities of marines and geographers. The men who did not forget were the old buccaniers. They remembered. The forgotten island was a safe sanctuary for their stolen gear. Least one should either exaggerate or diminish the romantic possibilities of the island, let the official handbook itself declare the story.

Advantage of one of these recurrent periods of oblivion was taken, in 1818 or 1819, it states, by a notorious pirate known as Benito alias Benito Graham, to secrete there a vast plunder he had obtained by rilling churches in Peru. A few years afterwards, it is said, Benito deposited a fresh quantity of gold bars and specie, worth 11 million dollars.

In or about 1826, a man passing as William Thompson, who appears to have served previously under Benito, but was then in command of the brig Mary Rose, concealed about 12 million dollars' worth of stolen gold coin, jewels, and silver ingots in Cocos Island.

This accords with the legends of Cocos which most of us have read, but here comes the imprimature of the historical section of the Foreign Office: "Some of the circumstances of the three lodgments of treasure at the island, and of the manner in which they were recovered, are related (by persons who were more or less concerned in the matter) in documents preserved at the Admiralty."

No fewer than a dozen organized attempts to unearth the buried treasure have been made. In matters of this sort it seems that "man never is, but always to be, blest." Our authority tells us that "Clues to the spot where one batch of treasure was deposited have led some searchers to a marked rock; and one man is said to have come upon some gold bars and kegs of Spanish coin through an accident in falling over the face of a scarp. A silver ecclesiastical cross was also found in the bed of a stream. But the main stores of treasure are still hidden, in spite of various excavations and blasting operations which have been undertaken from time to time."

One of the most notable searches was that carried out by Lord Fitzwilliam's party in 1905. The Costa Rican government, who had at that time granted a concession to a Mr. T. Barr, at first professed to regard Lord Fitzwilliam's expedition as a filibustering one. Ultimately the rival parties reached an agreement, joined forces, worked together—and failed. Seven years later two enterprising women, Miss L. Brocklesby Davis and Mrs. Barr Till, determined to devote any gains to philanthropic work in London, obtained a two years' concession from the Costa Rica Government, but, like their forerunners, they wrought and sought in vain.

And there the matter stands unto this hour. One cannot but picture a cloud of romantic adventures descending upon the volcanic island. "There has been an unprecedented demand for the booklet," the present writer was informed by the Foreign Office. "The Daily Mail published an article on it—and we have been inundated with inquiries from all parts, by post, telegraph and telephone. Whether the inquirers are all prospective treasure-hunters, it is impossible for the Foreign Office to say, but one can draw one's own conclusions."—Overseas.

Canadian treasure-seekers who may wish to set out on the quest to Cocos Island should write for the illustrated booklet which may be secured from H. M. Stationery Office, Imperial House, King St. W., London. Its title is "Malpelo, Cocos, and Easter Islands" and its price is 6d., plus postage.

King's Long Reign. Of the five British sovereigns in the last hundred years only one—his grandmother, Queen Victoria—has reigned for a longer period than King George V.

A CLEVER YOUNG WOMAN.

Lloyd George's Secretary Is Foremost Member of Profession.

Because Miss Frances Louise Stevenson is without doubt the foremost woman in her profession, I went to No. 10, Downing street, the official residence of the Prime Minister, to glean points from her experience which might be of value to thousands of girls.

At her desk near a wide window sat Miss Stevenson. She rose to shake hands, and I saw that she was astonishingly young and astonishingly good-looking. It might be expected that some one who had held so big a position through the strain of war might show traces of overwork in her face and threads of grey in her hair. But here was a young woman with fresh, clear English complexion and with soft hair the color of a gold watch. If this sounds too good to be true, let me add that Miss Stevenson has a pair of keen and very purposeful blue-grey eyes, accustomed to taking the measure of people.

My second impression went much deeper than mere appearances. I discovered that my hostess was remarkably unassuming. Here she was, at the very heart of the British Empire, within a stone's throw of the Admiralty, of the Foreign Office, of Parliament and of the many of their inner mysteries, and yet she was assuring me that her work was not so difficult or complicated as it might seem, for, as she said, "I began in a very humble way and grew as the work grew."

When Miss Stevenson finished college she secretly longed to strike out on the beaten path of teaching which opened before her as her predestined calling. She thought of secretarial work. However, she wanted to begin earning her living at once, so into teaching she went. As a student at the Clapham high school she had formed a schoolgirl friendship with Lloyd George's elder daughter, and afterward the youngest, Miss Megan, became her pupil. Mr. Lloyd George was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Miss Stevenson used sometimes to visit the family at No. 11 Downing street, the residence of the Chancellor. The latter, after he had had time to observe her and judge her abilities offered her a place as his secretary.

In May, 1915, the Ministry of Munitions was created and Lloyd George was placed at its head. The task before him was enormous, and at the start his entire staff consisted only of Miss Stevenson, Mr. J. T. Davis, and one other person.

When they opened their office, a table and two chairs comprised their whole equipment. The first thing they did to take away even this modest outfit before permanent furniture could be secured. That very day Miss Stevenson received word that her brother had been killed at the front.

To-day, working under her in Downing street, she has about a dozen stenographers. In addition to having charge of the Prime Minister's very heavy correspondence, she sees the countless people who wish to present ideas, grievances, and "causes" to Mr. Lloyd George. She was careful to make it clear that she is not his secretary, but that herself there are two men, while a third man devotes himself to the Prime Minister's problems in British politics.

"The first step toward being a good secretary, according to Miss Stevenson, is to have a good education. Without a good education she believes a stenographer cannot progress, for ability to put marks on paper must be accompanied by intelligence and a thorough knowledge of English. She makes it a rule in her office never to engage a stenographer who has not had at least a high school course.

As to speed, she regards it as vital in some branches of stenography, but intelligence she emphasizes as requisite in them all. She added that Mr. Lloyd George is not a rapid or a difficult dictator, but I couldn't help doubting whether the average stenographer, if confronted with the famous Welshman, would agree with her.

It was characteristic of her to refuse to draw a line of distinction between the sexes. To her impartial view ability is ability and faults are faults, regardless of whether their possessors are male or female.

If one were to ask her the foolish question, "Could a woman ever be prime minister?" she would reply simply, "If she had brains and experience enough she could; if she hadn't, she couldn't." Over-conscientiousness comes second on Miss Stevenson's list of pitfalls to be avoided. Women, she believes, don't know when to stop working. Instead of realizing that they have reached the limit of endurance as men generally do, they spur themselves beyond, calling on their reserve energy to see them through. In the long run this leads to shattered nerves and is to no one's advantage.

Pictorial Review.

A Witty Dean. A witty dean was staying at the house of a friend in London whose small daughter was just beginning to try her hand at writing essays. During his visit she began an attempt on "Man," and had got as far as "Man was made, and for some time he lived in innocence, and he—"

At this point she was called from the room, and in her absence the dean entered. Taking up the child's pen, he continued writing where she had left off.

—at an early stage of his existence met Eve, and she—"

Lewis Carroll. How many people know that Lewis Carroll, the famous author of Alice in Wonderland, was an eminent Oxford scholar, who wrote an "Elementary Treatise on Determinants?" His real name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson.

That the universe rests on the shoulders of love is the unconditional truth. It is only when love grows cold or seemingly so that we become unhappy and life not worth while.

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PICKING A JURY. It is Not Always Easy to Tell How Men Will Jump.

A blind musician in Kansas City, Kan., being a party to a lawsuit, added his attorney in the selection of a jury to try the case. Judging their qualifications as jurors by the quality of music in their voices.

A leading lawyer relates this experience: He was defending a young woman charged with a crime. Col. Watkins was an eloquent man and in defence of the young woman he was at his best.

When the jury retired the lawyer said to the attorney associated with him in the case: "The jury will never convict the young woman. There is one man on the jury who will hang on for her until hell freezes over."

"Same to you, sir!" The appointment of Mrs. Macnamara, wife of the British Labor Minister, as a justice of the peace, reminds me of two amusing stories she tells about her husband.

On one occasion, while speaking in a marquee during a heavy down-fall of rain, he said, "I'm afraid I've kept you too long," when a voice in the rear replied, "Go on, it's still raining!"

The "lilies of the field" so often mentioned in the Bible are thought to be the red and purple, particularly the red, anemones with black centers.

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These anemones grew among the thorn hedges in the east, which accounts for the saying "lilies among thorns."

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