

and of clinging to a tattered piece of mast as he drifted shoreward. But from that point his memory was a perfect blank. He could not remember his right name, he said, but had called himself Signor Ishmael Macaroni, being an inventor. He had constructed many things, but of these the most wonderful was the one they now saw—the marvel of marvels—the submarine vessel.

"Yes," said he, "I made just four hundred and forty-four boats before I struck this perfection, sirs, and I'm free to say it's the one and only, gentlemen, the one and only one of its kind in existence to-day!" Dick and the faithful Jerry spoke their applause.

After the brief meal Signor Macaroni insisted on learning where the adventurers were bound and their mission. Indeed the old man was so simple they deemed it right to tell him all.

"We're off to the Indies," quoth Master Redbuckle. "To an island we know nothing of save its name."

"And that is —?"

"Praeda," answered Dick. The old man gave a gasp; his face grew livid and he reeled and almost fell, saving himself by clutching at a steel bar that protruded from the side of the boat. "Go on! Go on!" he stammered. "On with your story!"

"Well, sir," continued Master Redbuckle, though he felt uneasy, "My grandsire, my old grandsire, who was a pirate in 1585, and roamed the seas with the worst of 'em, he was hanged at Whitechapel, and left a will, leaving all he possessed on earth to me. Now that 'all he possessed' is in the form of a treasure, a huge treasure of a hundred thousand pounds, and it is, so reads the parchment, buried in the Isle of Praeda, in the West Indies."

The old man had been betraying alarming symptoms as the narrative proceeded, and at each word his hands fastened more tightly on the seat, his eyes started from their sockets, and his thin lips twitched excitedly, as though he was struggling 'neath some awful truth that was wont to burst from his burning brain; but now he arose from his place with a cry, or, rather, a shriek, and shook Master Redbuckle from side to side as a fox-

hound might a mouse. "His name!" he shrieked. "His name, I say! Your grandsire's name!"

"Why," quoth Dick, "surely it was none other than Simeon Redbuckle. Why —" He rose to his feet in dumb amazement, and well he might, for Signor Macaroni had fallen prostrate in his chair.

CHAPTER VIII.—DEATH TO THE PICCAROONS.

Much fanning and cold water revived Signor Macaroni to a state of consciousness. "Oh!" he gasped. "To think that after all these years I —, oh!!" and he seized his head as if in a fit of dizziness.

"Come, come!" quoth Master Redbuckle, in some anxiety. "What is there to cause you such alarm at the mention of my old grandsire, who has been dead for years, pray?"

"Dead?" whispered the old man in a breath. "He is not dead! for I am he!!"

Dumbly they stared at him, dumbly their startled sight encountered his, then, with a tap to his forehead, Dick whispered "He's mad, plain mad," and turned to the awestruck Jerry.

"Mad?" howled the old man, seizing Dick by the shoulders, "Me? No, not mad. Not mad! only dreaming! 'Tis I, 'tis I who bear the name of Simeon Redbuckle. Hanged at Whitechapel. Yes! they thought they had hanged me, but no! Nay! nay! I had on my patent iron hangless rope-proof collar, guaranteed not to itch! Hanged? I should guess not! and when they put me in my two-by-six coffin I wiggled out of it! Yes, sir! I hadn't been taking lessons from Mr. Houdini, the handcuff king, for nothing! No indeed."

Ere he had completed this alarming statement there was a crash that bode well to destroy their deep-sea craft. Rushing to the lookout window Jerry peered through, crying out, "We've smashed clear through the keel of Captain Kuttlefish's vessel! We've cut a complete hole in her!"

Even as he spoke dim forms could be discerned through the glass trap above clinging tenaciously to the submarine. "The pirates," thought Dick. "Let them perish, the rascals."