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A PIRATE'S TRAP.

By F. S.

Jack Kempton and I came home together in the old seventy-four Delaware, early in the spring of '44, and were paid off at Norfolk. Through our own folly, we were very soon fleeced of our money, and in order to get to Baltimore we were forced to work our way upon one of the Chesapeake steamers. Arrived at the latter city, we at once set about finding a berth on shipboard, for to "land, reef and steer" was our calling, and we knew no other. Out in the stream lay a beautiful brig, neat, tidy and rakish, bound for Fayal; so the bit of lettered canvas upon her main rigging attracted us.

"I declare," said Jack, "I should like to make a trip aboard that craft. Ain't she a beauty?" It was toward the middle of the forenoon, on Sunday, and we stood upon a pier, looking off upon the brig.

Hardly had Jack spoken, when a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a voice said:

"All right, my boy. We are three hands short, and I must sail to-day. Ship for the round trip and I'll give you one-third extra wages. What say?"

"Do you want both of us?"

"Of course."

"Then we are your men."

We did not stop to reflect; we knew of no occasion. Here was a fine new brig, bound for a pleasant port, with a gentlemanly commander, extra wages offered, and a sure shot of grub without sponging or begging—why shouldn't we jump at it?

The captain of the brig was a youngish man, not over 30, very stout and strong, and evidently a Cuban, though he spoke English with perfect freedom and fluency. His name, as inscribed upon his manifest, was Carl Lorraine; and I must say I rather liked his appearance, though I could see that he would be a tiger if aroused to hot anger. But then I never meant to arouse the anger of my superiors, so I cared nothing for that. Enough to say, Jack and I went with the captain to the private residence of a shipping agent, where we signed the necessary papers, the date being carried back a day, in order to take our first night out from the Sabbath. A visit to our boarding-house, and the securing of a very small bundle of clothing, finished our shore duties, and by noon we were on board the brig.

The beauty and symmetry of the vessel, together with her extreme neatness, and the perfect order of everything about the deck, struck me very forcibly; and I remarked to Jack:

"No man-o'-war was ever kept more trim."

"And why shouldn't a merchantman keep as clean a face as a ship?" suggested Captain Lorraine, who had been standing near us.

We did not answer him, and he quickly added:

"I hope you'll both do your part toward keeping my lovely Nell in good and safe condition," after which he handed us over to the steward, and then walked aft.

The name of the brig, as painted outside, was simply "Helen," but the captain called her "Nell," prefixing such adjectives as suited him at the moment.

We did not get under way until 9 o'clock in the evening, when Jack and I turned in. There was no bunk in the fore-cabin, the crew sleeping in hammocks, which suited me better. In the morning, when I turned out, I found between twenty and thirty men on deck. A big crew, I thought, for such a vessel; but it was soon explained to me that half of them were passengers—men when Captain Lorraine had consented to land at the Bermudas, for the service of vessels that lay there helpless. It was far out of his way; but he appeared to be a kind-hearted man, and willing to accommodate.

For two days nothing occurred unusual, save that we were striking a course to the westward of the wind. On the morning of the third day, however, the brig assumed a new face; or, she threw off her mask, and showed her true face.

We found the twelve men who had been presented as passengers hard at work. And such strange work! The topgallant fore-cabin was built in sections, the middle half so contrived that it could be lowered to the main deck, and raised again even with the high-rail, by means of the wind-lass. And upon this, the middle section, we were now resting on the deck—a part of the crew were mounting a long black gun; but I could see, where the paint was chipped off at the muzzle, that the piece was of the finest bronze. And others of the crew were mounting a second gun upon the quarter-deck. On the mainmast, I saw a half-dozen men, and a brace of halibut, which were being hoisted up to the main-deck, and raised again even with the high-rail, by means of the wind-lass. And upon this, the middle section, we were now resting on the deck—a part of the crew were mounting a long black gun; but I could see, where the paint was chipped off at the muzzle, that the piece was of the finest bronze. And others of the crew were mounting a second gun upon the quarter-deck. On the mainmast, I saw a half-dozen men, and a brace of halibut, which were being hoisted up to the main-deck, and raised again even with the high-rail, by means of the wind-lass.

"Well, my boy, do you begin to see what sort of trade my 'Pretty Nell' is engaged in?" The speech was made to Jack, who replied:

"Looks kind o' rovelish-like, sir."

"Aye, and rovelish it is. You are old men-o'-war's men, and used to big guns. When I found you on the dock I knew you were hard up, and I fancied you would take anything that would pay for a job; and here you are, a part of a free-hearted and liberal crew. Do your duty, and ask no questions. Don't go behind the main-deck. Insurrection finds quick work at my hands."

I nudged Jack, and whispered to him that we would put a pleasant face upon the matter, and so we did. We gave the captain to understand that we were all right. We wouldn't have sought such a berth; but, since we were in for it, he might count on us. But we didn't tell him which side he might count on.

He looked entirely satisfied when he left us.

As soon as we had eaten breakfast Jack and I got away under the lee of the fore-rigging, and talked the matter over, and this was the conclusion we very quickly arrived at, to begin with.

We had been entrapped on board a pirate, and were to be forced to enter the awful business. If we refused to take a part when the time came, a brace of halibut would settle our accounts, extra wages and all. What could we do? We must watch and wait.

Two days Jack and I spent in studying the crew, and in the end we made up our minds that we were the only men who were not voluntarily and willingly shipped for the bloody business; so we must study and wait, and be as free of the pirate before blood was spilled, if the thing could be accomplished.

The first work toward the consummation of our plan we did was to investigate, and we were not long in making a partial discovery. In the hold, between the shot-bunk and the cable-tree, was an open space of more than a yard, clear to the keelson. We trembled when we saw it, and were more careful than ever in our behavior on deck. Of course we wanted one thing to go with the open space below, and that was in the carpenter's chest, where we could put our hands upon it at

any moment, and we did not mean that the moment should be far distant.

On the fifth night Jack and I had the first watch. As we started to turn below at midnight Jack pulled me by the sleeve.

"Say, Tom, I've got the big anger from the chest, and dropped it into the hold; so keep your eye open bright, for I'm going to work."

And he worked bravely and stoutly. I kept a sharp look-out, but nobody was near the lower hatch, nor could I hear the sound of Jack's anger, so carefully did he turn it. At half-past three he came and got into his hammock, wearing like a beaver. He had bored three holes, each two inches in diameter, entirely through the brig's planking, and broken away the copper sheathing upon the outside, and he had fitted pine plugs into the holes, which could be removed in a very few seconds.

Towards sunset, on the following day, a sail was reported to leeward, which was toward the Bermudas. In a short time we made her out to be a brig, standing to the north and west, and we were at once heading for her, though not under full press of canvas; for it was Lorraine's plan to lie low until dusk, then take a dash at the stranger's vessel.

Course, and, under cover of the night, swoop down upon her and capture her.

A fever of excitement reigned on board the Pirate. Carl Lorraine paced up and down the quarter-deck, ever and anon stopping by the rail and lifting his large eyes to the sky. His officers were superintending the sailing of the brig, while the crew made sure that their pistols were in order and the grappling gear and tackle in readiness. At eight o'clock we caught sight of the stranger's top hamper, against the pale, blue sky; and, if we kept on an hour longer, we should strike her under the fore-foot. Jack came to me and breathlessly whispered that I should go down and pull out the plugs and he would keep watch.

I reached the hold unobserved, but weak from excitement. I took a long breath, then loosened the plugs, and then pulled them out. Merely how the water rushed in! But I did not stop to be washed by it. Within two minutes from the time of removing the plugs, Jack and I were upon the quarter-deck, our pistols in our belts, and expressing the hope that the chase had plenty of gold and silver on board.

The minutes seemed hours until the steward came rushing up from below with the cry of "A leak! a leak! A whole plank must be knocked out of the brig's bottom!" The order was given for rigging the pumps—we had two—while the captain went below to investigate. But his investigation was a very brief one. As he reached the edge of the lower hatch, the sound of fiercely-rushing water struck upon his ears, and he had all possible hands he made his way back to the deck, where he set as many men to work at the brakes as could find room. I listened anxiously as he spoke with his first officer, and felt greatly relieved when I heard him say:

"This is the result of hurrying a vessel from the stocks. It must be that one of the planks was not properly secured—very likely not bolted at all—only fitted to its place and temporarily doweled."

And then he turned to his laboring crew and urged them to save the brig, if possible. But our work had been too well done. In less than half an hour the water was two feet above the berth deck, and gaining fast; and finally, with tears in his eyes, Lorraine gave the order for manning the boats. He had cursed and sworn while there was hope of saving his vessel; but when that hope died out, his anguish of heart took a deeper hold, and drew the tears. And yet, there was not vengeance in those tears, as I could tell by the gritting of his teeth, and the spasmodic clenching of his powerful hands.

We had three coats, all sufficient for the crew, and having gathered up what of value we could secure, we would secure it, and put off the captain easily stepping from the gangway into the cutter. A few strokes of the oars—not many yards away from the door of the brig—and she struggled mightily with the power that was dragging her down—struggled a few brief moments; then her bows rose high up, and she went down stern foremost—down into the grave of waters, and the sea was rid of one of the most dangerous scourges that ever threatened christian life and commerce.

The weather was favorable, and as we were not over fifty miles from the Bermudas, we had no trouble in reaching land in safety. Jack and I did not stop to expose our heads, where a single smelt was purchased of a fisherman, in which Lorraine and the chief of his crew set sail for the States. As for Jack and me, we made our way to St. George's, where we found good berths on board a trader bound for New York.

All this happened five and twenty years ago, and during all this time I have kept the adventure to myself, from fear of Carl Lorraine. I know a man well enough to know that, had he guessed my secret, he would have sought my life, even to the ends of the earth. But not long since I learned that the pirate captain was dead—killed in a bar room in San Francisco—and I dare hence publish the facts connected with the escape of Jack Kempton and myself from the Pirate's Trap.

Colds, fevers, and inflammations broken up by Dr. Pierce's Extract of Smart-Weed.

A Good Girl.

From the Detroit Free Press.

"Wall," said the boot-black who sat next to the alley, and who had been keeping very quiet for a long time, "my gal ain't no more handsome, and she ain't got small feet and a Grecian nose, but she's awful good-hearted."

"How good?" asked the one who carried three cigar staves in his vest pocket.

"Well, the other night when I'd been eating onions and she hadn't, she rubbed limburger cheese all over her mouth so as not to make me feel embarrassed."

"This is a cold map," said the burglar as he broke open a refrigerator.

Silver that is not in frequent use will not tarnish if buried in oatmeal.

Mrs. George Simpson, Toronto, says: "I have suffered severely with corns, and was unable to get relief from treatment of any kind until I was recommended to try Holloway's Corn Cure. After applying it for a few days I was enabled to remove the corn, root and branch—no pain whatever, and no inconvenience in using it. I can heartily recommend it to all suffering from corns."

Lemons may be kept for a time by running a string through the nib and hanging them in a dry locality.

Do not delay in getting relief for the little folks. Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator is a pleasant and sure cure. If you love your child why do you let it suffer when a remedy is so near at hand.

Salts of lemon will clean the handles of desert knives that have been stained with fruit.

John Hays, Credit P.O., says: "My shoulder was so lame for nine months that he could not raise his hand to his head, but by the use of Dr. Thomas' Electrolytic Oil the pain and lameness disappeared, and after three months has elapsed, he has before the men 'what it aches.'"

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IN

"LADIES' JOURNAL."

Bible Competition No. 7.

CLOSING SEPTEMBER 11th

Open to the World.

GREAT CLUB OFFER.

The Leading Rewards are Lot 50 x 150 at Toronto Junction, Plains, Organs, Sewing Machines, Gold and Silver Watches, Silver Tea Sets, &c.

The proprietor of the Ladies' Journal now announces a magnificent list of rewards for correct answers to Bible questions. It is surprising how little is known of the Bible. The questions are not so difficult this time as last, and we should be glad if there was a hearty response so as to encourage the proprietor of the Journal to persevere in his good work. It was announced in the June issue of the Ladies' Journal that the competition, which closed last month would be the last for the present, but it has been decided to try one more.

All money must be sent by post office or express. No information will be given to any one more than is stated here. So send on answers, and don't waste time writing. Do not send postage stamps unless six cents is added for the discount. Remit by post-office order, scrip or small coin.

THE BIBLE QUESTIONS.

1.—In the Bible referred to in the Bible?

2.—In the Bible made mention of in the Bible?

3.—In the Bible made mention of in the Bible?

These all refer to the previous questions.

Now, any one having a knowledge of the Scriptures ought to be able promptly to answer these questions with a little study, and so secure some one of those rewards. Bear in mind every one competing must send FIFTY CENTS with their answers, for which the Ladies' Journal will be sent one year to any address. If you answer each of these questions correctly, and your answers are in time you are sure to secure one of these costly rewards.

THE FIRST REWARDS.

1.—One Elegant Rosewood Piano, \$500.00

2.—One Fine Cabinet Organ, by Bell & Co., \$250.00

3.—One Beautiful quadruple plate finely chased Silver Tea Set, \$100.00

4.—One Lady's Fine Gold Hunting Case genuine Elgin Watch, \$100.00

5.—One Heavy Black Silk Dress Pattern, \$100.00

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just as well as though you had sent singly. This is simply an inducement to get up clubs. We are sure our readers could not do better than to try their skill in hunting up these questions and competing for these rewards. Everything will be carried out exactly as promised.

Prizes in last competition went all over Canada and to many parts of the United States.

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