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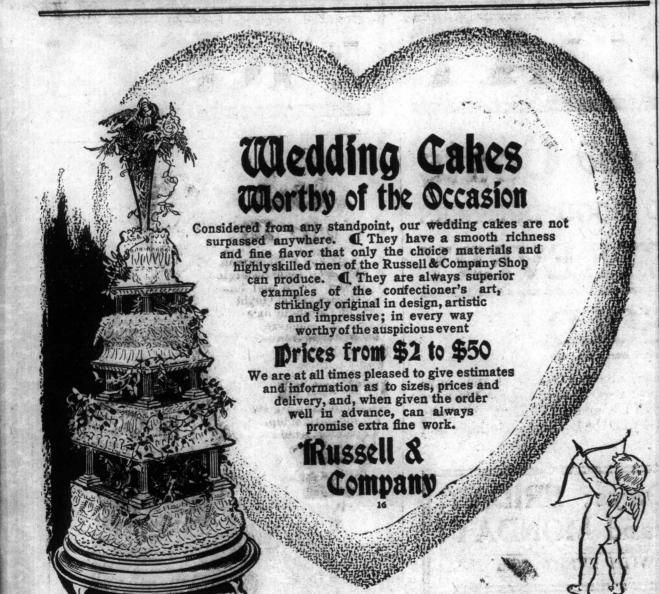
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By A. Conan Doyle

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With a flush upon his olive cheeks and with pride smoldering in his dark eyes, he looked round him at the eager faces of the men who had been his comrades from Sluys and Gadsand to Creey and Calais. They caught fire from that warlke gleam in his masterful gaze, and a sudden wild, fierce shout pealed up to the vaulted celling, a soldierly thanks for what was to come. The King's teeth gleamed in a quick smile, are his large white hand played with the jeweled dagger in his belt.

"By the splendor of God!" said he in a loud clear voice, "I have little doubt that you will rejoke with me this night, for such tidings have come to my ears as may well bring joy to everyone of you. You know well that our ships have suffered great seathe from the Spaniards, who for many years have slain without grace or ruth all of my people who have fallen into their cruel hands. Of late they have sent their ships into Flanders, and thirty great cogs and galleys lie now at Sluys well-filled with archers and men-at-arms and ready in all ways for battle. I have it to-day from a sure hand that, having taken their merchandise aboard, these ships will sail upon the next Sunday and will make their way through our Narrow Sea. We have for a great time been long-suffering to these people, for which they have done us many contraries and despites, growing ever more arrogant as we grow more patient. It is in my mind therefore that we hie us to-morrow to Winchelsea, where we have twenty ships, and make ready how twenty ships, and make ready have twenty ships, and make ready how the wenty ships, and make ready how twenty ships, and make ready how twenty ships, and make ready how the first, came like a ferror than the first, came like a work ere their preparations were com-

A second shout, far louder and fiercer than the first, came like a thunder clap after the King's words. It was the bay of a fierce pack to their trusted huntsman.

"How found you them, Thomas?"
"Very excellent people, sire, and no man could ask for better. On every ship they have a hundred crossbowmen of Genos, the best in the world, and their spearmen also are very handy men. They would throw great cantles of iron from the tops of the masts, and many of our people met their death through it. If we can bar their way in the Narrow Sea, then there will be much hope of honor for all of us."

Thomas," said the King, "and I make no doubt that they will show themselves to be very worthy of what we prepare for them. To you I give a ship, that you may have the handling of it. You also, my dear son, shall have a ship, that evermore honor may be thing."

have a ship, that evermore honor may be thine."

"I thank you, my fair and sweet father," said the Prince, with joy flushing his handsome boyish face.

"The leading ship shall be mine. But you shall have one, Walter Manny, and you, Stafford, and you, Arundel, and you, Stafford, and you, Arundel, and you, Audley, and you, Sir Thomas Holland, and you, Brocas, and you, Berkeley, and you, Reginad. The rest shall be awarded at Winchelsea, whither we sail to-morrow. Nay, John, why do you pluck so at my sleeve?"

Chandos was leaning forward, with an anxious face. "Surely my honored lord, I have not served you so long and so faithfully that you should forget me now. Is there then no ship for me?"

me?"
The King smiled, but shook his head.
"Nsy, John, have I not given you two hundred archers and a hundred men-at-arms to take with you into Brittany? I trust that your ships will be lying in Saint-Malo Bay ere the Spaniards are abreast of Winchelsea. What more would you have, old wardog? Wouldst be in two battles at once?"

once?"
"I would be at your side, my liege, when the lion barner is in the wind once more. I have ever been there. Why should you cast me now? I ask little, dear lord—a galley, a balinger, even a pinnace, so that I may only be there."

"Nay, John, you shall come. I cannot find it in my heart to say you nay. I will find you place in my own ship, that you may indeed be by my side."

Chandos stooped and kissed the King's hand. "My Squire?" he asked.

The King's brows knotted into a frown. "Nay, let him go to Brittany with the others," said he harshly. "I wonder, John, that you should bring back to my memory this youth whose pertness is too fresh that I should forget it. But some one must go to Brittany in your stead, for the matter presses and our people are hard put to it to hold their own." He cast his eyes over the assembly, and they rested upon the stern features of Sir Robert Knolles.

"Sir Robert," he said, "though you are young in years you are already

"Sir Robert," he said, "though you are young in years you are already old in war, and I have heard that you are as prudent in council as you are valiant in the field. To you I commit the charge of this venture to Brittany in place of Sir John Chandos, who will follow thither when our work has been done upon the waters. Three ships lie in Calais port and three hundred men are ready to your hand. Sir John will tell you what our mind is in the matter. And now, my friends and good comrades, you

A second shout, far louder and fiercer than the first, came like a thunder clap after the King's words. It was the bay of a fierce pack to their trusted huntsman.

Edward laughed again as he looked round at the gleaming eyes, the waving arms and the flushed joyful faces of his liegemen. "Who hath fought against these Spaniards?" he asked. "Is there anyone here who can tell us what manner of men they be?"

A dozen hands went up into the air; but the King turned to the Earl of Suffolk at his elbow.

"You have fought them, Thomas?" said he.

"Yes, cire, I was in the great seafight eight years ago at the Island of Guernsey, when Lord Lewis of Spain held the sea against the Earl of Pembroke."

"How found you them, Thomas?"

"Year available trade in took them four days of hard work ere their preparations were complete, for many were the needs of a small force sailing to a strange country. Three ships had been left to them, the cog Thomas of Romney, the Grace Dieu of Hythe, and the Basilisk of Southampton, into each of which one hundred men were stowed, besides the thirty seamen who formed the crew. In the hold were forty horses, amongst them Pommers, much wearied by his long idleness, and homesick for the slopes of Surrey where his great limbs might find the work he craved. Then the food and the water, the bow-staves and the sheaves of arrows, the horseshoes, the nails, the hammers, the knives, the axes, the ropes the vats of hay, the green fodder and a score of other things was packed aboard. Always by the side of the ships stood the stern young knight Sir Robert, checking.

things was packed aboard. Always by the side of the ships stood the stern young knight Sir Robert, checking, testing, watching and controlling, saying little, for he was a man of tew words, but with his eyes, his hands, and if need be his heavy dog-whip, wherever they were wanted

and if need be his heavy dog-whip, wherever they were wanted.

The seamen of the Basilisk, being from a free port, had the old feud against the men of the Cinque Ports, who were looked upon by the other mariners of England as being unduly favored by the King. A ship of the West Country could scarce meet with one from the Narrow Seas without one from the Narrow Seas without blood flowing. Hence sprang sudden broils on the quay side, when with yell and blow the Thomases and Grace Dieus, Saint Leonard on their lips and murder in their hearts, would fall upon the Basilisks. Then amid the whirl of cudgels and the clash of knives would spring the tiger figure of the young leader, lashing mercilessly to right and left like a tamer among his wolves, until he had beaten them howling back to their work. Upon the morning of the fourth day Upon the morning of the fourth day all was ready, and the ropes being cast off the three little ships were warped down the harbor by their own pinnaces until they were swallowed up in the swirling folds of a Channel mist.

(To be Continued.) Men's odd trousers, specially priced at 98c., and up, at Whitlock's.

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