

surface. Instead of metal, they drew up, what was supposed "by persons likely to know," to be a grass peculiar to the Spanish Main. In addition to this curiosity, they succeeded in bringing up part of the head of an oak cask with the marks of the cooper's knife plainly visible upon it. They worked on for a while longer, but nothing having been discovered, except the tuft of grass and the oak stave, at length, says the narrative, "they grew weary of the work."

A few, nevertheless, of the more determined spirits remained. Having observed that the water in the pit generally stood at about the same level as the tide, and that it was salt and brackish, the idea occurred that a connection existed between the pit and the sea. A thorough search was now made along the shore of the island, which resulted in the discovery of five small and well-made drains entering the bank at low-water-mark, and connecting with one of larger dimensions,—the stones forming which had been prepared with a hammer, and were mechanically laid. On the top of this larger drain, they found a layer of the same description of foreign grass as has been already noticed, and over that a layer of blue sand, of a kind not known in the locality.

Further examination showed that the larger drain was carefully constructed, and as it evidently ran in the direction of the old pit, it was determined to intercept it by a shaft sunk midway. At the depth of seventy-four feet, accordingly, the drain was struck and found to be perfect, and in the position anticipated. Had the ground not been hollow where this shaft was sunk, the depth would have been more than one hundred feet.

But operations of this kind require money to sustain them, and the money expected from the bottom of the pit having been kept there by Old Nick, who was supposed to be the guardian of the treasure, and none forthcoming from other quarters, the enterprise again collapsed.

Nine or ten years later, in the winter of 1861, a public meeting of parties interested in the undertaking, was held at Truro. After full discussion of all the *pros* and *cons*, it was decided that it would be folly to abandon the work finally without mak-

ing another effort. A further and vigorous effort was consequently resolved upon. Another joint-stock company was started; the sum of five hundred pounds was raised in shares of five pounds each; a competent foreman engaged, and work once more resumed.

The results were not strikingly different from those of previous efforts; hard work, abundance of water, plenty of mud, but no money. To the catalogue of curiosities discovered years before, the operators now added another piece of oak four feet long, a plank of cedar, and part of a spruce slab "mill-sawed." These were found at a great depth. At this stage of the work, persons of more scientific knowledge were consulted, a steam-engine was set up for pumping, and several new shafts were sunk. Tracing the course of the drain spoken off still further, they found a layer or top-dressing composed of husks of cocoanut, and over that another layer of the blue sand already alluded to as unknown in those parts.

For a time considerable excitement was kept up, and Halifax newspapers teemed with reports detailing the daily progress of the workmen, whose confidence in ultimate success appeared to be unabated. The "metallic" chest, or whatever it was, according to accounts, was reached again and again, but, by some mysterious fatality, the water always rushed in, or the bottom of the pit dropped out, in the very moment of triumph. Finally the excitement abated; the adventurers, losing heart as well as money and time, gave up Kidd and his infernal colleagues as a bad job, and returned to other, and it is to be hoped, more profitable pursuits.

It does seem incredible that persons possessed of common sense could be so deluded. The fact remains, nevertheless, that many business men in the City of Halifax and elsewhere—men known to have means, and reputed to be shrewd and sagacious—did venture very considerable sums in this wild undertaking. The whole history of the affair, now extending at intervals over a period of a century or more, forms an exceedingly interesting episode in our local annals, and will, no doubt, be referred to in future times as a