

THE FROZEN PRIZE.

BY W. CLARK RUSSELL. [Concluded.] CHAPTER XXX.

"Dye mean to tell me, Paul, that the first question my relative asked, 'that this vessel was on the ice eight-and-forty years'?"

"Surely you dream?" "I think not." "What we have been eating and drinking—is that forty-eight years old, too?"

"Yes, and older." "Well, such a thing shall make me credulous enough to duck old women for witches. But what brandy—what brandy! Never had spirit such a bouquet. Every pint is worth its weight in guineas to a rich man. To think of Deal boatmen and niggers willing such nectar!"

"Mason," said I, speaking low, "give me now your attention. In the run of this schooner are ten chests loaded with money, bars of silver and gold, and jewelry. This vessel was the property of Deal boatmen and niggers willing such nectar!"

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"There is evidence that I speak the truth," said I. "A little sample only—but look at it!" And I put the pirate captain's watch into his hand.

"Who told you that the people of the vessel valued their plunder at that amount?" "I answered by giving him the story of the recovery of the Frenchman.

"He listened with a gaze of consternation. I saw how it was: he believed my sufferings had affected my reason. There was only one way to settle his mind: I took a lantern, and asked him to follow me. As we passed through the cabin I whispered Wilkinson that I meant to show my relative the leading below, and bade him keep the Deal men about him. I had the keys of the chest in my pocket; lifting the after-hatch, we entered the lead, and Mason gazed about him with astonishment. But I was in too great a hurry to return to second to idly stand and stare. I opened the second hatch and descended into the run, and crawling to the jewel chest opened it, removed a few of the small-arms, and bade him look for himself.

"Incredible! incredible!" he cried. "It is possible! it is possible! Well, to be sure!" And for some moments he could find no more to say, so amazed and confounded was he.

"I quickly looked him the gold and silver ingots and then returned the fireman and locked the chests.

"Then," said I emphatically, pointing to the cases, "have been my difficulty; not the lading, though there is value there too. My crew know nothing of these chests: of their value, I mean; they believe them cases of small-arms. How am I to get them ashore? If I tell the truth, they will be seized as piratical plunder. If I equivocate, I must carry them to the Thames, the river swarms with thieves and Cut-throat poops. I am terrified to linger here, lest I be boarded and the booty discovered. There is but one plan, I think: we must hire some Deal smugglers to run these chests and the cargo for us. The boat now alongside might serve, and I don't doubt the men are to be had at their own price."

"My relative had regained his wits, though the sight of the treasure had temporarily scattered, and surveyed me thoughtfully while I spoke; and then said, 'Let us return to the fire; I think I have a better scheme than yours.'"

"The men still sat around the table talking. Some liquor yet lay in one of the bowls, and the fellows were happy enough. I smiled at Wilkinson as I passed, that he might suppose our inspection below very satisfactory, and saw him look meaningly and pleasantly at Washington Greenwell, who sat with a leered look on his head.

"Paul," said Mason, sitting down and folding his arms, "your smuggling plan will not do. It would be the height of madness to trust those chests to the risks of running and to the honesty of the rogues engaged in that business."

"What is to be done?" "Tell me your liking," said he. I gave it to him as accurately as I could.

"Why," he exclaimed, "a single boat would take a long time to discharge ye—observe the perils—several boats would mean a large number of men; they would eat you up; they would demand so much, you would have nothing left. And suppose they opened the chests! No, your scheme is worthless."

"What's to do, then." "I'll tell you," he exclaimed, smiling with the complacency of a man who is master of a great fancy. "I shall sail to Dover at once. This now a quarter past four. Give me twelve hours to make Dover. I shall stop straight to London and be there by early morning. Now, Paul, attend you to this. To-day is Wednesday; by to-morrow night you must contrive to bring your ship to an anchor off Barking Level."

"The Thames?" he cried. "He nodded. I looked at him anxiously. He leaned to me, putting his hand on my leg.

"I own a lighter," said he; "she will be alongside of you at dusk. I have people of my own whom I can trust. The lighter will empty your hold and convey the lading to a ship chartered by me, arrived from the Black Sea on Sunday and lying in the Pool. The stuff can be sold from that ship as it is—"

"But the chests—the chests, Mason?" "They shall be lowered into another boat, and taken ashore and put into a wagon that will be waiting—I in it."

Children Cry for

—and driven to my home." I clapped him on the shoulder in a transport.

"Nobly schemed indeed!" I cried; "but have we nothing to fear from the Customs people?"

"No, not low down the river and at dark. You bring up for convenience, d'ye see. Mind it is dark when you anchor. A lighter and boat shall be awaiting you. It is down the river, you know, that all the lumpers drop with the lighters they go adrift in from ships' sides. There's more safety in smuggling over Thames mud than on this coast single. One thought more: you say that Wilkinson believes the chests hold small-arms?"

"Yes." "Then account to him for sending the chests away separately by saying that I have found a purchaser, and that they are going to him direct. You have your cue—you see all!"

"Let me hurry, then, Paul; that brandy should fetch you half a guinea apiece. You are in luck's way, Paul. See that you bring your ship along safely. To-morrow night!"

"He clapped and wrung my hand and ran into the account of it was recovered from the Great Britain, which in December, 1854, was reported to have steamed 50 miles along the outer side of the longer shank." One ship was lost upon it: others embayed.

THE END.

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filled with the bodies of the frozen crew. "His own sailors, however, would not suffer him to search the vessel thoroughly, through superstition, and wished to leave her immediately."

A pity they did not try their hand at thawing one of the poor fellows: the result might have kept Mr. Rodney's strange experience in countenance!

Accounts of vast bodies of ice, such as that which Mr. Rodney fell in with, will be found in the South Atlantic Directory. For instance:—

"Sir James C. Ross crossed Weddell's track in Lat. 65° S., and where he had found an open sea, Ross found an ice-pack of an impassable character, along which he sailed for 150 miles; and again, when only one degree beyond the track of Cook, who had no occasion to enter the pack, Ross was navigating among it for fifty-six days."

"But these appear insignificant when compared with a body of ice reputed to have been passed by twenty-one ships, during the months of December, 1854, and January, February, March, and April, 1855, floating in the South Atlantic from Lat. 44° S., Long. 28° W., to Lat. 40° S., Long. 20° W. Its elevation in no case exceeded 500 feet. The first account of it was received from the Great Britain, which in December, 1854, was reported to have steamed 50 miles along the outer side of the longer shank." One ship was lost upon it: others embayed.

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Legal Notices. Notice of Sale. To John Loban, Thomas A. Loban, Martha Pove, Mary E. Loban, Catharine Loban, William D. Loban, John Loban, Mary Loban, now or formerly of Chatham, in the County of Northumberland, children and heirs of William Loban, late of Chatham, deceased, and to all other persons or persons whom it may concern.

NOTICE OF SALE. To Sylvester Sullivan, of the Parish of Southwick in the County of Northumberland and Province of New Brunswick, Farmer, and to all others whom it may concern.

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NOTICE. John Potheringham Esq. J. P. I. authorized to sell all accounts due to the undersigned in New Brunswick and generally to act for us in doing all business connected with the same.

Caution & Notice. I hereby caution any and all persons against giving employment to my son, James Walls, a minor, who is generally to act for us in doing all business connected with the same.

CIRCULAR. Dear Sir,—We beg to inform you that we have sold the stock and good will of the business of the late J. S. Maclean & Co., to Messrs. John W. Gorham and Sons, of Chatham, N. B., who will carry on the business at the old stand, "JERAMIC WAREHOUSE," as successors to J. S. Maclean & Co.

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