

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."

"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."

"Here is evidence that I speak the truth," said I. "A little sample only—but look at it!"

"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."

"There was only one way to settle his mind. I took a lantern, and asked him to follow me. As we passed through the labyrinth of Wilkenson that I meant to show my relative the leading below, and bade him keep the Deal men about him."

"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."

"I told the truth, they will be seized as practical plunder. If I equivocate, I must carry them to the Thames, the river swarms with thieves and Cut-throat boys."

"My relative had recognized his wit, the sight of the treasure had temporarily scattered, and surveyed me thoughtfully while I spoke."

"The men still sat around the table talking. Some liquor yet lay in one of the bowls, and the fellows were happy enough."

"What is to be done?" "Tell me your lading," 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 you—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."

"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."

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.

—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."

"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."

"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."

"Now, lads, off with us!" he cried. "Off to Dover! Put me ashore there smartly and you shall find my account, Off now—time presses."

When fortune falls in love with a man she makes him a bounteous misdoer. Everything fell out as I could have desired. We got our anchor at five, and by daybreak were off Hastings jogging quietly along towards London river, the weather conveniently obscure, the wind south, and forty hours before us to do the run in. I exactly explained my relative's scheme to Wilkenson and the others, who declared themselves perfectly satisfied."

Once fairly round the Forelands half my anxieties fell from me. There was no longer the French cruiser or privateer to be feared, and however wonderful the people of my own country's vessels might stare at the uncommon figure of my schooner, they could find no excuse to board us. Besides, as I have said, I was greatly helped by the weather, which continuing hazy though happily never so thick as to oblige me to stop, delivered me to the sight only of such vessels as passed close, and offered me as a rarer smudge to the shore."

We arrived off Barking Level on the Thursday night, and dropped anchor close to a lighter that lay there with a large boat hanging by her. It was then very dark. The first person to come on board was Mason. He was followed by several men, one of whom he introduced to me as his head clerk, who would see to the unloading of the schooner and to the transhipment of the goods to the ship in the Pool. He informed me that there was a covered walk waiting on shore; and telling Wilkenson that the small arms had been disposed of, and that Mr. Mason would hand over the proceeds on our calling at his office, I went with a party of my relatives into the run and presently had the whole of the chests in the boat. Mason went with her."

Then, as she disappeared in the darkness, but not till then, did I draw the first easy breath I had fetched since the hour of the collision of the Laughing Mary with the iceberg. A sob came from my throat, and I was almost overcome by the many wonderful things had happened to me: I had been delivered from such perils that the mere recollection of them will stir my hair, though it is years since; my duty I knew, and I discharged it by withdrawing from my cabin and kneeling with humble and grateful heart before the throne of that Being to whom I owed everything of that.

Here concludes the remarkable narrative of Mr. Paul Rodney. It is to be wished that he had found the patience to tell us a little more. The circumstances of his dying in 1823, worth 21,000, leads me to suspect that his associate Tassar greatly exaggerated the value of the treasure. I am assured that he lived very quietly, and that the lady he married, who bore him two children, both of whom died young, was of a simple and unassuming character and loved show and extravagance as little as her husband. Hence there is no reason to suppose that he squandered any portion of the fortune that had, in the most extraordinary manner ever heard of, fallen into his hands. I have ascertained that he very substantially discharged the great obligation that his relative Mason laid him under, and that his three men received a thousand pounds apiece. It is possible, then, that the pirates were themselves deceived, that what they had taken to be gold or silver ingots were not all so; or it might be that the cases of jewellery were less valuable than the admiring and astonished eyes of a plain sailor, who admits that he had never before seen such a sight, figured it. By this, however, as it may, it is nevertheless certain, as proved by Mr. Rodney's last will and testament, that he did uncommonly well out of his adventure on the ice.

Whatever may be thought of his story of the Frenchman's restoration to life, in other directions Mr. Rodney's accuracy seems unimpeachable. It is quite conceivable that a stoutly-built vessel locked up in the ice and thickly glazed, should continue in an excellent state of preservation for years. The confusion of his superstitious fears exhibits honesty and candour. It is related that a Captain Warren, master of an English merchant ship, found a derelict (in August, 1775) that had long been ice-bound, with her cabin 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: the others embayed.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC! The subscribers have just received for sale, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND OATS. Sugar Cured.

HAMS & BACON, Spiced Beef Hams, Timothy and Clover Seed. They keep on hand a full line of GROCERIES, PROVISIONS, LIME & COAL.

SAMPLES DOMINION Horse Liniment. DR. G. J. SPROUL, DENTIST.

AMALPINE'S Province of New Brunswick Directory. D. M. ALPINE & SON are now preparing a Directory of the Province of New Brunswick.

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CHATHAM RAILWAY. SUMMER 1889. On and after MONDAY, JUNE 10th, trains will run on this Railway in accordance with the Intercolonial Railway, daily, (Sunday nights excepted) as follows:

CHATHAM RAILWAY. SUMMER 1889. LOCAL TIME TABLE. GOING NORTH. No. 1 EXPRESS, No. 3 ACCOMMODATION. No. 2 EXPRESS, No. 4 ACCOMMODATION.

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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