

A Secret of the Sea

a voyage of three months, representing themselves merely as travelers for pleasure who desired to cruise along the Labrador coast. At last they leased the *Rose of Gaspé*, from a man of wealth, Richard Martin, who had previously used the schooner as a private yacht. It was refitted and provisioned, and the crew arrived from Halifax. None among them was known in Placentia, but the inhabitants say that only two or three among them had the appearance of sailors. They put to sea seven weeks ago. Beyond that we know absolutely nothing."

"But the chest of coins? have you no knowledge as to where it came from?"

"No more than a mere guess; there is no guide. Beyond doubt this Gaston de Lys learned of its existence somewhere in Labrador, and planned its recovery. The men with him also knew what it was they sailed to seek. In my judgment this must be a treasure of the old Hudson's Bay Company, lost and hidden a hundred years ago, yet we can get no trace of such a disappearance of coin in the records. We cannot deny its existence; it is here now in our custody, but who its rightful owner may be, will probably never be determined."

"Then what will become of it?"

He smiled.

"That is rather a fine question of law. I should say that you men who recovered it at sea, have the best claim, although it must be held intact for a certain length of time to give any rightful claimant opportunity to furnish proof of ownership. Of course, in