The Two Captains

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CHAPTER XXIII.—Continued.

He ordered the cabin-man to bring his breakfast on deck, and a cloth was laid upon the skylight. While he was eating Laura came out of the cabin and stood opposite to him. She was as pale as a dead body, and her beauty had that sort of droop and lusterless-ness which you observe in the plumage of glorious birds when they sicken.

"Have you breakfasted?" said he.

"I cannot eat," she answered. "Oh, cousin, why did you kill him?"

He stared at her in silence with a dark frown, chewing his food like a ruminating bull. She was afraid of his gaze and said with a change of voice and even of manner:

"Now that I am under your protection you will tell me what you mean to do."

"Yes," he answered, "I will tell you. When the brig is clear of those villains," says he, with a sideway drop of his head, "I will steer you to your father's house. We are now lying a straight course for Kingston, Jamaica. You shall be sent ashore with a communication from me to your father, who will come on board. If he refuses to help me I shall know how to manage single-handed. Meanwhile you will be safe, but I shan't expect you to thank me."

The captain's servant came from the cabin to attend to Crystal's wants. He said to him:

"Make a neat job of the corpse, and take care to double shot it; we'll bury him through the cabin window, you and me alone."

By this time the armed seamen of the Thetis and the men who had joined them from the body of the pirates had eaten their breakfast, and were smoking their pipes about the little caboose. When they had made an end and returned to their stations, Crystal began to sing out. The long-boat was to be got over and provisioned and watered, she would accommodate all that were to go in her.

Soon the boat was swayed out and lowered; the brig lying hove-to. Casks of bread, a quantity of cheese, and other matters along with plenty of water were put into her; the mast was stepped, the big lug made ready for hoisting, the rudder shipped. The hatch cover was then lifted, the armed men stood round, and Crystal, putting his foot on the coaming, shouted down:

"Below there! Up with you, all hands; but two of you at a time."

When this was said Grindal and three or four pirates, all of whom were in liquor, came and stood in the light under the hatch, and the boatswain called up, "What are you going to do with us?"

"The long-boats's ready for you alongside," answered Crystal.

"Are we to be sent adrift?" said the ugly ruffian.

"If," roared Crystal, "you give me the least bit of trouble"—and here again he swore dreadfully—"I'll sweep the 'tween-decks with these guns; I'll butcher every mother's son of ye."

Then spoke the true pirate; it was no longer Captain Pope, but the devil incarnate, and his own men stared a little wildly at the figure of that savage seamen with his scar, and his frown, and his face of fury, and his cocked and leveled pistol.

"Come along!" said Grindal, and he and another came up the ladder.

"Into the boat with ye!" shouted Crystal.

A couple of the armed seamen sprang to guard the gangway. Grindal's companion dropped into the boat; the boatswain turning and swinging off on his great hairy hand, with which he had grasped the bulwark rail to say: "Ain't you going to let us have our share of the booty?"

"If you ask me another question, you are a dead man," answered Crystal and he approached him by a stride or two and again covered him, and all who looked expected to see the weapon spout fire, and the man drop.

Drop he did, but into the boat, very much alive, as might be gathered by his curses.

In this way the pirates were got up out of those 'tween-decks—always in twos, and one pair had to disappear before the next brace were allowed to come up. Their scowls, their deep hoarse mutterings, their murderous glances were of no use: they needed but to look at Crystal to read death, pitiless and instant, in his face.

"Cast off, up sail, and away with ye!" roared Crystal. "If you're not astern of us in a minute I'll fire into you and sink you alongside."

Those of the men who had their senses hoisted the big lug. Grindal in the sternsheets grasped the tiller. The water slopped greasily betwixt the two craft, and the long-boat which, though deeply laden, still showed a fair height of side, glided off, blew slowly on to the brig's quarter, then astern, a number of her people shaking their clenched fists at Crystal, and howling oaths and curses at him in ecstasies of helpless wrath.

"So amen to them," said Crystal. And after casting another look at the boat, and sweeping the horizon with his vision, he bade the fellow who had read the newspaper on the capstan to keep a lookout, and heavily sank down the companion-steps.

Just as he entered the cabin, Pope's servant came out of his late master's berth.

"Have you stitched him up?" says Crystal.

"He's ready for launching, sir," was the man's answer.

The fellow knowing Crystal and fearing him had worked nimbly, and there, secreted in a hammock, on the floor of the berth, with a couple of shot secured in the clews at the foot of the corpse, lay all that was mortal of the heroic Irishman, Captain Richard Pope.

White and large-eyed with horror.

"I want no fuss," says Crystal. "No prayer. Nothing of that sort."

The stern window was opened, that window through which a former owner of this brig of curious adventures had thrown himself into the sea to escape the gibbet.

"Pick him up with me," continued Crystal.

They lifted the body, bore it to the window, and, pointing it feet foremost, dispatched it to the ooze.

Thus ingloriously terminated the career of Captain Pope. An Irishman of a hundred crimes, of many villainous qualities, of many generous and romantic virtues.

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Now it so happened that when the frigate that had chased the Gypsy returned to the two vessels she was convoying she fell in shortly afterward with his Majesty's ten gun brig Turk. The vessels were brought to a stand and a lieutenant of the Turk in response to signals went on board the frigate: he was then told that a pirate brig named the Gypsy was in those waters and that she had been on the lookout for the Madre de Dios; having missed her, it was presumed that she would proceed to the pirates' happy hunting ground in the Spanish Main. As the Turk was bound for a West Indian Station she was requested to keep a sharp lookout for the brig, to ascertain from passing ships if anything resembling her had been sighted by them, and to communicate to other men-of-war the news of such a ship being in those seas.

Four days later the Turk spoke H.M.S. corvette Saxon. To her she gave the news she had received from the frigate, and from the instant of the Saxon filling upon her main-topsail a bright lookout was kept aboard of her for any floating fabric rigged with two masts, and carrying square sails even to the height of skysail poles.

This communication of men-of-war was to prove Crystal's doom. How could it have been otherwise? A ten gun brig had gone before the Gypsy and was heralding her: to the pressure of shining heights she was scouring the plain like another Camilla, bugling her alarms over the sea, and Crystal ambled in her wake without intellect enough to suppose that the news and character of his brig had passed ahead of his flying jibboom.

In the ensuing days they sighted several sail, one of which was a large full-rigged ship that might have proved the Alnwick Castle, but she was hull down, and showed only from the tacks of her courses, and curiosity was no longer a passion in that brig. Then came the fourth morning, and one bell, which is half an hour after eight o'clock in the forenoon watch, found Laura and her cousin sitting at the cabin table at breakfast, while the man who could read stumped the planks of the quarter-deck in charge of the little fabric.

After breakfast, Crystal lighted his pipe, took Pope's telescope from its brackets in the cabin, and went on deck. His eye was immediately taken by the marble brightness of the sails of a ship about two points on the lee bow. Crystal pointed his glass at the ship on the lee-bow: he was an old sailor and could not mistake; by her hoist of topsail, by the squareness of her yards, by the fit of the clews to the yard-arms, he knew her at once in the lenses to be a British man-of-war.

He was disconcerted; he turned a shade pale; the glass sank with his hand, he turned to the man who was keeping a lookout and said, "She looks to me like a British frigate or corvette."

"If that's so," answered the man, "hadn't we better up hellum while time's allowed us?"

"If I shift my helm," said Crystal, after pondering, "I may provoke suspicion. She may be from the West Indies or a South American port. How'll she have got the news to enable her to guess at us? No," said he in a tone of decision, "hoist the English ensign. We'll not stir from our course by a spoke. We look, and now are, an honest English brig, and she's got no excuse to stop us and overhaul us. D'ye see that now? Stand by to dip as we pass; that tickles 'em."

Crystal had made a fatal blunder; but he did not know it. And now there was no time to put a change of opinion into practice, even had his heart misgiven him. The man-of-war was coming along handsomely with a frequent curtsey that lined her glossy black sides with the sifted snow of the crushed brine, over which in a grim line bristled her artillery, tompions out, as Crystal, with a ghastly sinking sensation of soul at this moment, managed to see.

When the two vessels were within gunshot, the corvette shook the wind out of her canvas, her way was arrested. A stout, conspicuous figure stood upon a quarter-deck gun; he grasped a speaking-trumpet. As the Gypsy went floating past, without the least shift of helm, the commander of the corvette, if indeed that figure commanded her, raised the trumpet to his lips; and while his proud ship's helm was again put down, causing the spaces om milky softness aloft to tremble into a hundred hurrying fingers of shadow, the trumpet spoke, in a note of thunder:

"Ho, the Gypsy, ahoy! Back your main-topsail that I may send a boat aboard of you!"

'Twas plain he had the vessel's name pat; nor was it possible as yet that he could have read it upon her stern!

"We have been reported," Crystal instantly thought, and he knew he was a lost man.

"They'll be firing into us if we don't heave to," said the fellow who had charge.

Crystal stood irresolute with his hand upon the companion-hood. At this instant, a shot was fired by the corvette.

"What shall we do, sir?" roared the men.

Then, finding that Crystal had disappeared, they sprang to the main-topsail brace, and were in the act of rounding in upon it hand over hand, when a second heavy shot, followed by a third, struck the main-topsail, crash! a foot above the main-masthead. Instantly, the whole fabric of yards, and canvas, and masts, and stunsail-booms, fluctuating on high as though gazed at through the transparency of running water, fell aft in a roar as though a gale of wind came sweeping from the bows. The huge wreck missed the wheel, but killed the fellow who was standing at it. It smothered the quarter-deck in a vast heap of canvas and spars. A long space of bulwarks was crushed flat.

"Back your fore-topsail!" was roared through the trumpet.

This was promptly done by the wretched and terrified remnant of the crew of the pirate, and in a few minutes a boatful of armed seamen, in charge of a lieutenant, arrived alongside. It was of course known that the Gypsy was the pirate brig that was wanted; no need to ask any questions. Her crew were at once ordered over the side, and sent on board the Saxon. Meanwhile, a gang of naval seamen cleared the quarter-deck so as to provide access to the cabin, and the lieutenant and two or three seamen descended the steps. They found a beautiful young woman, white and large-eyed with horror, standing at the table. When the men entered, she pointed dumbly to the cabin occupied by Crystal, and they saw a man lying on the deck, dead, with a pistol beside him, and a bullet wound in his brow.

He had kept his word, and the annals of the Crystals were not to be disgraced by the importation of the gibbet.

The girl told her story to the lieutenant, who sent her on board the corvette. And within two hours of the Saxon falling in with the Gypsy, both vessels, the brig with nothing set aft but trysail and mainsail, were heading north and east on a course for the English Channel. The End.

Siberian Rivers.

Exploration of the Yenisei and Obi rivers of Siberia, which empty into the Antarctic ocean near Nova Zembia, has shown them to be navigable to ocean steamers for a distance of nearly 1,000 miles.

GETTING TOGETHER

HARMONY RESTORED AMONG IOWA REPUBLICANS.

Speeches of Governor Cummins, Senator Allison and Congressman Lacey Show the Party to Be United on the Paramount Issues of the Day.

An encouraging sign of the times, a gratifying indication of the persistence of the right and the weakening of the wrong, is to be found in three notable Republican speeches delivered in the state of Iowa. In the first of these speeches, that of Gov. Cummins, at Des Moines, Sept. 26, one naturally looks for the reappearance of the "Iowa idea." But it is not there. You will not find a single allusion to the "monopoly-sheltering tariff;" not a word about the immediate necessity for tariff revision; no insistence upon "potential competition" as a means of bringing in an era of lowering prices; "domestic competition if possible, foreign competition if necessary." None of these things which Gov. Cummins has urged so strenuously in the past two years appears in the speech of Sept. 26. The "Iowa idea" is seemingly laid away and forgotten. For the most part the speech is sound in its Republicanism and stalwart in its protection as "the best adjustment that we can make within ourselves to enlarge the production of the country," he yet favors, through reciprocity, the larger admission of competitive goods from foreign countries, and the inevitable decrease of domestic production that must follow in the lines of industry selected for slaughter. Is it not astonishing that intelligent men should in one breath dilate upon the tremendous blessings and advantages of protection and in the next breath advocate the purchase of a greatly increased volume of foreign competitive goods? Yet that is precisely the attitude of Gov. Cummins. From the standpoint of sound and logical economics it is the attitude of a schoolboy!

Senator Allison, in his speech at Clinton, on the 10th of October, was much wiser and shrewder. He did not put both feet in the reciprocity trap. After telling his hearers that tariff revision must not be thought of at least until after the election next year, "not until the voters have again passed upon the policy that should prevail in our tariff laws," the discreet and level-headed senator took safe, sensible ground regarding reciprocity. Thus:

"It is probable that in the future provisions for such trade will be largely made by modifying our tariff on condition that such countries modify their laws so as to give us an equivalent and so that we will receive as well as grant benefits. This will be done so as not to impair our protective policy."

If done at all—which it never will be or can be under a Republican administration—"this will be done so as not to impair our protective policy." That was McKinley's stand in the speech at Buffalo in 1901 that has been and still is being so flagrantly distorted and perverted. It is the stand of all sound Republicans: "Not to impair our protective policy." If our protective policy is not to be impaired, there can be no such thing as reciprocity in competitive products.

Again said Senator Allison, always insisting upon safe and consistent qualifications:

"'In making these reciprocal arrangements, whether by law or treaty, with any country, care must be taken not to do injustice which would involve us in difficulty with other friendly countries with which we have treaties, or which have already given us great advantage in their laws for the free export of our products to such countries. Great Britain is an illustration of an open market for all our products.

"In making modifications of our tariff in the future the possibilities of reciprocal legislation should be utilized so far as practicable, securing thereby valuable concessions without impairing the protective policy in our own country, and without doing injustice to countries that already give us free access to their markets, or access to them upon favorable terms."

Note the saving clauses that we must frame no reciprocity arrangements that will do injustice to friendly countries—for example, Great Britain—and that in securing concessions we must do it "without impairing the protective policy in our own country." By these wise and intelligent standards we can never have reciprocity in competitive products. It is an impossibility. Senator Allison has strengthened his reputation for big brains and profound political sagacity.

The third of the great group of Iowa speeches was that of Congressman John F. Lacey at Allerton, Oct. 13. Here was a fine, old-fashioned, straightaway Republican speech. We do not find in it any reciprocity foolishness. It does not deal with that question at all. Mr. Lacey devoted himself wholly to the practical issue of Republican tariff making versus Democratic tariff making. He sketched in bold outlines our tariff history from the organization of the government up to the present day, and clearly demonstrated the invariable value of the protective policy and the invariable blight and curse attending our occasional lapses into or toward free trade. That is the point to be kept in view: Under whose scheme of tariff making, that of the protectionists or that of the free traders, has the country prospered most? That is the issue now, just as it has been the issue every time the Democratic party has undertaken to regain control of national affairs, just as it is going to be the issue next year. It is well that men of Congressman Lacey's great ability should make genuine, orthodox Republican speeches. The country needs them. "Lest we forget."

Shall We Abolish It?

Mr. Chamberlain is presenting some sad pictures of British industrial decline. In his speech at Greenock he said: "The sugar trade has gone, the iron trade is threatened, and the turn of the cotton trade is coming next." Yet the Democratic party would make our protective tariff the paramount issue in 1904. "The wicked tariff, the tariff which makes the rich richer and the poor poorer, which fosters trusts, which gives no real prosperity, let's abolish it," they say. Yes, let's abolish it. Let's forget the experience of 1893. Let's get a taste of this industrial decline which has opened the eyes of our British cousins to the fact that the protective nations have prospered amazingly, while Great Britain has gone backward.—Springfield Union.

TARIFF REFORM'S GREAT ENGINEERING FEAT.

Tariff Reformer—You see, Mr. Miller, dividing the stream cannot take anything from the force and power of Protection.

Uncle Sam (Miller)—Say, but you're a chump. Don't you see the wheel has stopped going round?

Sugar Trust's Latest Move.

The active efforts of the Sugar trust to buy up the beet sugar factories in the West ought to result in improving the prospect of a reciprocity treaty with Cuba. The American Sugar Refining Company, as the trust is known, is said to have obtained a controlling interest in the following Michigan factories: Sebewaing Sugar Refining Co., Sebewaing; Sanita C. Sugar Refining Co., Croswell; Peninsula Sugar Co., Caro; Tawas Sugar Co., East Tawas, Mich.; Michigan Sugar Co., Bay City; Alma Sugar Co., Alma; Saginaw Sugar Co., Saginaw; Valley Sugar Co., Saginaw; Menominee River Sugar Co., Menominee. It is expected that as soon as the beet sugar season is over the management of the factories will be placed under one head. The combined capitalization of the companies absorbed by the American Sugar Refining Co. is placed at $6,350,000.—Hartford Times.

The Outcome of Protection.

Says Mr. Mosely, in summing up the Report of the Industrial Commission to this country from England:

"My personal conclusion is that the true-born American is a better educated, better housed, better fed, better clothed and more energetic man than his British brother, and infinitely more sober; and, as a natural consequence, he is more capable of using his brains as well as his hands."

And it is all due to American wages, the outcome of protection which has built up and maintains our home market.

Not Yet.

The beet sugar output next year will be enormous if—but we will not borrow trouble. The Cuban treaty is not in operation yet.

HUMOR OF THE DAY

Tragedy Averted.

"I hear," said Hi Tragedy, "that while you were playing in one of the western towns a fire broke out in the theater."

"Yes," replied Lowe Comedy, "and there might have been a horrible panic but for one thing."

"What was that?"

"There weren't enough people in the audience to create one."—Stray Stories.

The Cattle Car.

The Lady—"You say there were some very affectionate passengers in the car you came on. How did they show it?"

Gritty George—"Why, mum, one old cow licked my face all night."

Diplomacy.

Mrs. McCall—And what did you say your eldest boy's full name was?

Mrs. de Coursey—Michael Brannigan de Coursey.

Mrs. McCall—Well—er—that's rather odd.

Mrs. de Coursey—Yes, but you see, when he was born we were living in a flat, and we didn't want to move out. Mr. Michael Brannigan was the janitor.

Sinister Subtlety.

"I'm going to write a book," said the man who assumes superior wisdom.

"Do," answered the person who affects the disagreeable. "I'll buy 10,000 copies and give them away to all your friends."

"As an advertisement?"

"No. For the purpose of exposing you."—Exchange.

One Description of It.

"What," asked the teacher, "do you understand by 'the strenuous life'? Does it convey any meaning to you?"

"Sure," replied the bad boy.

"What?"

"Why, what happens in the woodshed when pa gets home after you've been naughty," was the prompt reply.

Maxims for All Purposes.

"Remember, my son," said the prudent man, "that a penny saved is a penny earned."

"That's so," replied the reckless youth. "The trouble with me is that I am always getting hold of the wrong proverb. I was thinking, 'Nothing ventured, nothing have.'"

Suspicion.

"I am a little bit afraid of her," said Miss Cayenne.

"She has wonderful tact."

"Yes. She must know everything that could possibly annoy one. Otherwise she couldn't be so skillful in avoiding all disagreeable subjects'

Actress—I am going to give you back your engagement ring. I can never marry you; I love another.

Actor—Give me his name and address.

Actress—Do you want to kill him?

Actor—No; I want to try and sell him the ring.

When It's Necessary.

"Here's an article for women," he said, "on 'How to Make Yourself Attractive to a Man.'"

"Before or after marriage?" she inquired, thinking it was about time to have a little sport with him.

"After, of course," he replied, promptly. "No woman ever loses the knack until after she marries."

No doubt he was, as she said, "a mean old thing."

Unanimous.

Lawson—What did the convention of barbers say when you addressed them?

Dawson—Why, do you know, I hadn't been talking three minutes before they all began shouting "Next!"—Somerville Journal