

# SPANISH DOUBLOONS



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(CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.)  
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Long ago Mr. Shaw had left the field to Violet and with a curt shrug had turned his back and stood looking out over the cove, stroking his chin reflectively. Miss Browne's eloquence had risen to amazing flights, and she already had Mr. Tubbs inextricably mixed with Annals and Sapphira, when the Scotchman broke in upon her ruthlessly.

"Friends," he said, "so far as I can see we have been put a good bit ahead by this morning's work. First, we know the grave which should be our landmark has not been entirely obliterated by the jungle, as I had thought most likely. Second, we know that it is on this side of the island, for the reason that this chap Tubbs hasn't nerve to go much beyond shouting distance by himself. Third, as Tubbs has tried this hold-up business, I believe we should consider the agreement by which he was to receive a sixteenth share null and void, and decide here and now that he gets nothing whatever. Fourth, the boat is now pretty well to rights, and as soon as we have a snack Bert and Magnus and I will set out, in twice as good heart as before, having had the story that brought us here confirmed for the first time. So Tubbs and his tombstone can go to thunder."

"I can, can I?" cried Mr. Tubbs. "Say, are you a human iceberg, to talk that cool before a man's own face? Say, I'll—"

But Cuthbert Vance broke in. "Three rousing cheers, old boy!" he cried to the Scotchman enthusiastically. "Always did think that chap a frightful bouncer, don't you know? We'll stand by old Shaw, won't we, Magnus?" Which comradesly outbreak



"Tubbs and His Tombstone Can Go to Thunder!"

showed the excess of the beautiful youth's emotions, for usually he turned a large cold shoulder on the captain, though managing in some mysterious manner to be perfectly civil all the time. Perhaps you have to be born at High Stanton manor or its equivalent to possess the art of relegating people to immense distances without seeming to administer even the gentlest shove.

But unfortunately the effort of the honorable Cuthbert's cordiality was lost, so far as the object of it was concerned, because of the surprising fact, only now remarked by any one, that Captain Magnus had disappeared.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### Some Secret Diplomacy.

The evanishment of Captain Magnus, though quite unlooked for at so critical a moment, was too much in keeping with his eccentric and unsocial ways to arouse much comment. Everybody looked about with mild ejaculations of surprise, and then forgot about the matter.

Whistling a Scotch tune, Dugald Shaw set to work again on the boat. In the face of difficulty or opposition

he always grew more brisk and cheerful. I used to wonder whether in the event of a tornado he would not warm into positive geniality. Perhaps it would not have needed a tornado, if I had not begun by suspecting him of conspiring against Aunt Jane's pocket, or if the Triumvirate, inspired by Mr. Tubbs, had not sat in gloomy judgment on his every movement. Or if he hadn't been reproached so for saving me from the cave, instead of leaving it to Cuthbert Vane—

But now under the stimulus of speaking his mind about Mr. Tubbs the Scotchman whistled as he worked, and slapped the noble youth affectionately on the back when he came and got in the way with anxious industry.

As I wanted to observe developments—a very necessary thing when you are playing Providence—I chose a central position in the shade and pulled out some very smudgy tanning, a sort of Penelope's web which there was no prospect of my ever completing, but which served admirably to give me an appearance of occupation at critical moments.

Mr. Tubbs also had sought a shady spot, and was fanning himself with his helmet. From time to time he hummed, in a manner determinedly gay. However he might disguise it from himself, this time Mr. Tubbs had overshot his mark. The truth was, since our arrival on the Island Mr. Tubbs had felt himself the spoiled child of fortune. Aunt Jane and Miss Higglesby-Browne were the joint commanders of the expedition, and he commanded them. The Scotchman's theoretical rank as leader had involved merely the acceptance of all the responsibility and blame, while authority rested with the petticoat government dominated by the bland and wily Tubbs.

But now, faced with the failure of his coup d'etat, Mr. Tubbs' situation was, to say the least, awkward. He had risked all and lost it. But he maintained an air of jaunty self-confidence, slightly tinged with irony. It was all very well, he seemed to imply, for us to try to get along without H. H. We would discover the impossibility of it soon enough.

Aunt Jane, drooping, had been led away to the cabin by Miss Higglesby-Browne. You now heard the voice of Violet in exhortation, mingled with Aunt Jane's sobs. I seemed to see that an ear of Mr. Tubbs was cocked attentively in that direction. He had indeed erred in the very wantonness of triumph, for a single glance would have kept Aunt Jane loyal and prodigal of excuses for him in the face of any treachery. Not even Violet could have clapped the lid on the up-welling font of sentiment in Aunt Jane's heart. Only the cold contemplating eye of H. H. himself had congealed that tepid flow.

The morning wore on with ever-increasing heat, and as nothing happened I began to find my watchful waiting dull. Crusoe, worn out perhaps by some private nocturnal pig hunt, slept heavily where the drip of the spring over the brim of old Heintz's kettle cooled the air. I began to consider whether it would not be well to take a walk with Cuthbert Vane and discover the tombstone all over again. I knew nothing, of course, of Mr. Tubbs' drastic measures with the celebrated landmark. As to Cuthbert's interrupted courtship, I depended on the vast excitement of discovering the cave to distract his mind from it. For that was the idea, of course—Cuthbert Vane and I would explore the cave, and then whenever I liked I could prick the bubble of Mr. Tubbs' ambitions, without relating the whole strange story of the diary and the Island Queen.

But meanwhile the cave drew me like a magnet. I jealously desired to be the first to see it, to snatch from Mr. Tubbs the honor of discovery. And I wanted to know about poor Peter—and the doubloons that he had gone back to fetch.

But already Captain Magnus had forsaken the post of duty and departed on an unknown errand. Could I ask Cuthbert Vane to do it, too? And then I smiled a smile that was half proud. I might ask him—but he would refuse me. In Cuthbert's simple code, certain things were "done," certain others not. Among the nots was to

fall in standing by a friend, and just now Cuthbert was standing by Dugald Shaw. Therefore nods and becks and wreathed smiles were vain. In Cuthbert's quiet, easy-mannered, thick-headed way he could turn his back calmly on the face of love and follow the harsh call of duty even to death. It would not occur to him not to. And he never would suspect himself of being a hero—that would be quite the nicest part of it.

And yet I knew poor Cuthbert was an exploded superstition, an anachronism, part of a vanishing order of things, and that the ideal which was replacing him was a boiler-plated monster with clockwork heart and brain, named Efficiency. And that Cuthbert must go, along with his Jacobean manor, and his family ghost, and the oaks in the park, and everything else that couldn't prove its right to live except by being fine and lovely and full of garnered sweetness of the past—

At this point in my meditations the door of the cabin opened and Miss Browne came out, looking sternly resolute. Aunt Jane followed, very pink about the eyes and nose. With a commanding gesture Miss Browne signaled the rest to approach. Mr. Tubbs bounced up with alacrity. Mr. Shaw and Cuthbert obeyed less promptly, but they obeyed. Meanwhile Violet waited, looking implacable as fate.

"And where is Captain Magnus?" she demanded, glancing about her.

But no one knew what had become of Captain Magnus.

As for myself, I continued to sit in the shade and tat. But I could hear with ease all that was said.

"Mr. Tubbs," began Miss Browne, "your recent claims have been matter of prolonged consideration between Miss Harding and myself. We feel—we cannot but feel—that there was a harshness in your announcement of them, an apparent concentration of your own interests, ill befitting a member of this expedition. Also, that in actual substance, they were excessive. Not half, Mr. Tubbs; oh, no, not half! But one-quarter, Miss Harding and myself, as the joint heads of the Harding-Browne expedition, are inclined to think no more than the reward which is your due. We suggest, therefore, a simple way out of the difficulty. Mr. Dugald Shaw was engaged on liberal terms to find the treasure. He has not found the treasure. He has not found the slightest clue to its present whereabouts. Mr. Tubbs, on the contrary, has found a clue. It is a clue of the first importance. It is equivalent almost to the actual discovery of the chest. Therefore let Mr. Shaw, convinced I am sure by this calm presentation of the matter of the justice of such a course, resign his claim to a fourth of the treasure in favor of Mr. Hamilton H. Tubbs, and agree to receive instead the former allotment of Mr. Tubbs, namely, one-sixteenth."

Having offered this remarkable suggestion, Miss Browne folded her arms and waited for it to bear fruit.

It did—in the enthusiastic response of Mr. Tubbs. "Well, well!" he exclaimed. "To think of our takin' old H. H. that literal! O' course, havin' formed my habits in the financial centers of the country, I named a stiff price at first—a stiff price, I won't deny. But that's jest the leetle way of a man used to handlin' large affairs—nothing else to it, I do assure you. The Old Man himself used to say, 'There's old H. H.—you'd think he'd eat the paint off a house, he'll show up that graspin' in a deal. And all the time it's jest love of the game. Let him know he's goin' to win out, and bless you, old H. H. will swing right round and fair force the profits on the other party. H. H. is slicker than soap to handle, if only you handle him right.' Can I say without hard feelin's that jest now H. H. was not handled right? Instead o' bein' joshed with, as he looked for, he was took up short, and even then which he might have expected to show confidence"—here Mr. Tubbs cast a reproachful eye at Aunt Jane—"run off with the notion that he meant jest what he said. All he'd done for this expedition, his loyalty and faith to same, was forgotten, and he was thought of as a self-seeker and voracious shark!" The pain of these recollections dammed the torrent of Mr. Tubbs' speech.

"Oh, Mr. Tubbs!" breathed Aunt Jane, heart-brokenly, and of course a tear trickled gently down her nose, following the path of many previous tears which had already left their saline traces.

Mr. Tubbs managed in some impossible fashion to roll one eye tenderly at Aunt Jane, while keeping the other fastened shrewdly on the remainder of his audience.

"Miss Higglesby-Browne and Miss Jane Harding," he resumed. "I accept. It would astonish them as has only known H. H. on his financial side to see him agree to a reduction of profits like this without a kick. But I'm a man of impulse, I am. Get me on my soft side and a kitten ain't more impulsive than old H. H. And o' course the business of this expedition ain't jest business to me. It's—er—friendship, and—er—settlement—in

short, there's feelin's that is more than worth their weight in gold!"

At these significant words the agitation of Aunt Jane was extreme. Was it possible that Mr. Tubbs was declaring himself in the presence of others—and was a response demanded from herself—would his sensitive nature, so lately wounded by cruel suspicion, interpret her silence as fatal to his hopes? But while she struggled between maiden shyness and the fear of crushing Mr. Tubbs, the conversation had swept on.

"Mr. Shaw," said Miss Browne, "you have heard Mr. Tubbs, in the interest of the expedition, liberally consent to reduce his claim by one-half. Doubtless, if only in a spirit of emulation, you will attempt to match this conduct by canceling our present agreement and consenting to another crediting you with the former sixteenth share of Mr. Tubbs."

"Don't do it, Shaw—hold the fort, old boy!" broke in Cuthbert Vane. "I say, Miss Browne, this is a bally shame!"

Miss Browne had always treated the prospective Lord Grasmere with distinguished politeness. Even now her air was mild, though lofty.

"Mr. Vane," she replied, "as a member of the British aristocracy, it is not to be supposed that you would view financial matters with the same eye as those of us of the Middle Classes, who, unhappily perhaps for our finer feelings, have been obliged to experience the harsh contacts of common life. Your devotion to Mr. Shaw has a romantic ardor which I cannot but admire. But permit us also our enthusiasm for the perspicacity of Mr. Tubbs, to which we owe the wealth now within our grasp."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## FATHER OF MODERN NOVELIST

Minstrel, Centuries Ago, Held Audiences Very Much as Does the Writer of Today.

The old tale tellers, the minstrels, the palmers, the friars, the pedlars, were the remote ancestors of the novelist of today. The minstrel supplied a social need in his day. He was a circulating library when, as yet, there was no circle of readers, and besides being the medieval novelist, he was the medieval publisher. As he drew his bow across his viol or swept the strings of his harp, and prayed audience for some romance of chivalry, the boastings and bickerings of the common hall were silenced, and the rude roar of the market place was hushed.

By the end of the Eleventh century something more was wanted, and the literary craftsman of the Twelfth, Thirteenth and Fourteenth centuries wove his romances of chivalry to meet the needs of society. These romances violated every canon of literary art, but it was not as literature that he looked at them—rather as a gorgeous tapestry set in the framework of chivalry. The influence these stories exercised on the national life of England and was prodigious, and of the three groups into which they fell—the matter of Britain and the matter of Rome the Great—the most popular belonged to the second. Dealing with the story of King Arthur and the Round Table, Lord Erle once said it was probably partly patriotism and partly religion which made Sir Thomas Malory choose this group of the medieval romances of chivalry. Partly, also, it was a true instinct of literary genius, for this was the one group which had in it the enduring elements of vitality. That group alone gave us the inward and spiritual meanings, the capacity for allegorical interpretation, the mystical symbolisms which were living, lasting influences, because successive generations could appropriate them to their own needs and circumstances.—London Telegraph.

## How Camel Got His Harelip.

In "The Women of Egypt" Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper, the author, says that when she decided to ride a camel and he was brought to the door she tried to make friends with him, and continues:

"I walked around him and examined him closely. He smiled at me with his harelip, which, if tales are true, he obtained legitimately. When Allah created the first camel he was lonely and went around moaning and groaning over his fate. It was then that the sour, dissatisfied look came to his face that is a distinguishing mark of all camels. Allah became sorry for him, seeing what a fine disposition was being ruined, so he sent a genie to tell him that a spouse was being created for him. The news delighted the lonely camel so intensely that he smiled and smiled until he split his lip, and it has remained thus ever since."

## English Poetry and Prose.

If there is anything in literature as wonderful as English poetry it is English prose. Like the twin pillars of a mighty temple stand those two great books, the Bible of 1611, the Shakespeare of 1623, and no other country can show their equal.—George Sampson

## WHY THAT BAD BACK?

Does spring find you miserable with an aching back? Do you feel lame, stiff, tired, nervous and depressed? Isn't it time then, you found out why you are unable to enjoy these fine spring days? Likely your kidneys have weakened. Winter is hard on the kidneys. Colds and chills and a heavier diet with less exercise tax them heavily. It's little wonder spring finds you with backache, rheumatic pains, headaches, dizziness and bladder irregularities. But don't be discouraged. Use Doan's Kidney Pills. Doan's have helped thousands and should help you. Ask your neighbor!

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