SPANISH DOUBLOONS

By CAMILLA KENYON

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Jane Harding, respectable and conservative old spinster—but never too old to think of marriage—with more money than brains, is inveigled by a strong-minded spinster, Miss Higglesby-Browne, into financing an expedition to hunt for buried treasure on Leeward island. Her niece, Virginia Harding, undertaking to stop her, gets on the vessel engaged for the hunt, and in the confusion is unwillingly carried along.

CHAPTER II.—By no means concealing her distaste for the expedition and her contempt for its members, Virginia makes the acquaintance of the Honorable Cuthbert Vane, and is somewhat impressed.

CHAPTER III.—Talking with Dugald Shaw, the leader of the expedition, Virginia very frankly expresses her views, practically accusing Shaw and the other members of the party, including a somewhat uncertain personage, Captain Magnus, and a shady "financier," Hamilton H. Tubbs, of being in a conspiracy to defraud Miss Jane Harding. Their relations, naturally, are somewhat strained.

HILLSBORO

Mrs. R. M. Peacock who has been a guest of her mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Evans, has returned to her home in Mount Airy, Md.

Misses Virginia and Ethel Holt entertained the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain over Sunday. The Rev. Mr. Chamberlaine is missionary superintendent of the Easton Diocese.

Miss Emma Stevens is spending the week in Philadelphia, the guest of Mrs. George B. Shaffer.

Miss Belle Conley of Easton and Miss Annabelle Moore of Baltimore have been guests of Mrs. Harry Fleming.

Mr. and Mrs. G. T. Foulk and children of Western Maryland are guests of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Baker.

Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Stevens and little daughter Margaret of Sudlersville were guests of Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Sparks part of last week.

Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Fisher were guests of Easton friends on Sunday.

Mr. Kemp Stewart has returned to Maryland University after a visit with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Stewart.

ORPHANS COURT

At the regular session of the Court on Tuesday there were present their Honors, Judges West, Harper and Shawn, and the following business was transacted.

In the absence of the Court; the Register of Wills, on application granted letters of administration on the personal estate of Elizabeth Shilcutt, deceased. Bond filed and approved, and L. I. Jones and M. M. Ginn were named as appraisers.

Elizabeth P. Bradley, guardian of James T. Moore, minor, filed her first guardian account which was approved by the Court.

In the matter of the guardianship of Lawrence Paul Greenlee, minor, on petition and order of the court, Edith Greenlee, guardian, was authorized and empowered to invest a certain portion of said minor's fund in a first mortgage.

In the matter of the sale of the real estate of Frank Holland, deceased, Charles B. Harrison, trustee, filed a printer's certificate and an order of ratification nisi was passed.

The last will and testament of Vianna Detwiler, deceased, was filed in this court by Edna M. Detwiler, the custodian. The Register of Wills was ordered to notify the next of kin that the said will will stand for probate on Tuesday, November 22d, at 11 a. m.

A FEW THOUGHTS FOR THE HUNTERS

Last week saw the opening of the hunting season, and from all reports game abounds all through the forested sections of the state. The past summer seems to have been especially favorable for the development of broods of young quail.

Good sport is promised for all devotees of the gun. To the true sportsman, however, there are certain obligations that go with the sport. Of prime significance is the necessity of care with fire in the woods. A little camp fire left unextinguished, a careless match or cigarette butt thrown among dry leaves may start a forest fire that will sweep over vast areas and besides doing great damage to the young timber, will kill the very game that the forest shelters.

There are six lookout towers, sixteen forest patrolmen, and over two hundred forest wardens in Maryland all working together to protect Maryland's forests from fire.

Let every hunter as he takes out his license, solemnly pledge himself to help make Maryland's forests safe from fire.

FARMERS SAY PICRIC ACID DOES VERY EFFICIENT WORK

Many favorable reports are being received by the Bureau of Public Roads of the United States Department of Agriculture from farmers using the picric acid which was received from the War Department as surplus war material and distributed by the department for land-clearing purposes, the only charge being the acual cost of drying, packing and freight. The following are a few of the comments:

"It is the best stuff on pine stumps that I have ever seen;" "A boon to farmers of limited means who are struggling to clear up land."

There still remain 676,000 pounds of picric acid at Sparta, Wis., and 8,500,000 pounds at Fort Wingate, N. Mex., to be distributed. Where possible, distribution is made through some co-operating agency in each state. Shipments are made in carload lots to groups of farmers.

The man who didn't take a vacation last summer in order that he might have money to buy coal for winter, is now wondering where the money for coal is that he didn't spend on his vacation.



CHAPTER IV.

The Isle of Fortune.

I dropped my book and ran on deck. Everyone else was already there. The great gleaming orb of the tropic moon was blinding as the sun. Away to the faint translucent line of the horizon rolled an infinity of shining sea.

Straight ahead rose a dark conical mass. It was the mountainous shape of Leeward island.

Everybody was craning to get a clearer view. "Hail, isle of Fortune!" exclaimed Miss Browne. I think my aunt would not have been surprised if it had begun to rain doubloons upon the deck.

"I bet we don't put it over some on them original Argonaut fellers, I ey?" cried Mr. Tubbs.

Higher and higher across the skyline cut the dark crest of the island as the freighter steamed valiantly ahead. Sheer and formidable from the sea rose a line of black cliffs, and above them a single peak threw its shadow far across the water. Faintly we made out the white line of the breakers foaming at the foot of the cliffs.

We coasted slowly along, looking for the mouth of the little bay. Meanwhile we had collected our belongings, and stood grouped about the deck, ready for the first thrilling plunge into adventure. My aunt and Miss Browne had tied huge green veils over their cork helmets, and were clumping about in tremendous hobnailed boots. All the luggage I was allowed to take was in a traveling bag and a gunny-sack, obligingly donated by the cook. Speaking of cooks, I found we had one of our own, a coal-black negro with grizzled wool, an unctuous voice and the manners of an old-school family retainer. So far as I know his name was Cookie. I suppose he had received another once from his sponsors in baptism, but if so, it was buried in oblivion.

Now a narrow gleaming gap appeared in the wall of cliffs, and the freighter whistled and lay to. There began a bustle at the davits, and shouts of "Lower away!" and for the first time it swept over me that we were to be put ashore in boats. Aunt Jane burst out in lamentation. She would not, could not go in a boat. She had heard all her life that small boats were most unsafe. Why didn't the captain sail right up to the island as she had expected and put us ashore? Even at Panama with only a little way to go she had felt it suicidal—here it was not to be thought of.

But the preparations for this desperate step went on apace, and no one heeded Aunt Jane but Mr. Tubbs, who had hastened to succor beauty in distress.

Then Aunt Jane clutched at Mr. Shaw's coat lapel as he went by, and he stopped long enough to explain patiently that vessels of the freighter's size could not enter the bay, and that there really was no danger, and that Aunt Jane might wait if she liked till the last boat, as it would take several trips to transfer us and our baggage. I supposed of course that this would include me, and stood leaning on the rail, watching the first boat fade to a dark speck on the water, when Mr. Vane appeared at my elbow.

"Ready, Miss Harding? You are to go in the next boat with me. I asked especially."

"Oh, thanks!" I cried fervently. He would be much nicer than Mr. Tubbs to cling to as I went down—indeed, he was so tall that if it were at all a shallow place I might use him as a stepping-stone and survive. I hoped drowning men didn't gurgle very much—meanwhile Mr. Vane had disappeared over the side, and a sailor was lifting me and setting my reluctant feet on the strands of the ladder.

"Good-by, auntie!" I cried, as I began the descent. "Don't blame yourself too much. Everybody has got to go some time, you know, and they say drowning's easy."

With a stifled cry Aunt Jane forsook Mr. Tubbs and flew to the rail. I was already out of reach.

"Oh, Virginia!" she wailed. "Oh, my dear child! If it should be the last parting!"

"Give my jewelry and things to Bess' baby!" I found strength to call back. Then the arms of the Honorable Mr. Vane received me. The strong rowers bent their backs and the boat shot out over the mile or two of bright water between us and the island. Great slow swells lifted us. We dipped with a soothing, cradle-like motion. I forgot to be afraid, in the delight of the warm wind that fanned our cheeks, of the moonbeams that on the crest of every ripple were splintered to a thousand dancing lights. I forgot fear, forgot Miss Higglesby-Browne, forgot the harshness of the Scotch character.

"Oh, glorious, glorious!" I cried to Cuthbert Vane.

"Not so dusty, eh?" he came back in their ridiculous English slang. Now an American would have said: "Some little old moon that!" We certainly have our points of superiority.

All around the island white charging lines of breakers foamed on ragged half-seen reefs. Now our boat felt the lift of the great shoreward rollers, and sprang forward like a living thing. The other boat, empty of all but the rowers and returning from the island to the ship, passed us with a hail. We were in the little bay under the shadow of the frowning cliffs.

At the head of the bay, a quarter of a mile away, lay a broad white beach shining under the moon. At the edge of dark woods beyond a fire burned redly. It threw into relief the black moving shapes of men upon the sand.

Straight for the sand the sailors drove the boat. She struck it with a jar, grinding forward heavily. The men sprang overboard, wading halfway to the waist. And the arms of the Honorable Cuthbert Vane had snatched me up and were bearing me safe and dry to shore.

Mr. Shaw approached and the two men greeted each other in their off-hand British way. As we couldn't well, under the circumstances, maintain a fiction of mutual invisibility, Mr. Shaw, with a certain obvious hesitation, turned to me.

"Only lady passenger, eh? Hope you're not wet through. Cookie's making coffee over yonder."

"I say, Shaw," cried the beautiful youth enthusiastically, "Miss Harding's the most ripping sport, you know! Not the least nervous about the trip, I assure you."

"I was," I announced, moved to defiance by the neighborhood of Mr. Shaw. "Before we started I was so afraid that if you had listened you might have heard my teeth chattering. But I had at least the comforting



Bearing Me Safe and Dry to Shore.

thought that if I did go to my end it would not be simply in pursuit of sordid gain!"

"And indeed that was almost a waste of noble sentiment under the circumstances," answered the dour Scot, with the fleeting shadow of an enraging smile.

I promised myself, as I went with Mr. Vane toward the fire, that some day I would find the weapon that would penetrate the Scotchman's armor—and would use it mercilessly.

Cookie received us with unctuous warmth.

"Well, now, 'clar to goodness if it aint the li'le lady! How come you git ashore all dry lak you is? Yes, sah, Cookie'll git you-all some'n hot immejusly." He wafted me with stately gestures to a seat on an overturned iron kettle, and served my coffee with an air appropriate to mahogany and plate. It was something to see him wait on Cuthbert Vane. As Cookie told me later, in the course of our rapidly developing friendship, "dat young gemmun am sure one ob de quality." To indicate the certainty of Cookie's instinct, Miss Higglesby-Browne was never more to him than "dat pusson."

On the beach Mr. Shaw, Captain Magnus and the sailors were toiling, unloading and piling up stores. Rather laggingly, Apollo joined them. I was glad, for a heavy fatigue was stealing over me. Cookie, taking note of my sagging head, brought me somebody's dunnage bag for a pillow. I felt him drawing a tarpaulin over me as I sank into bottomless depths of sleep.

I opened my eyes to the dying stars. The moon had set. I heard men shouting, "Here she comes!" "Stand by to lend a hand!" In haste I scrambled up and tore for the beach. I must witness the landing of Aunt Jane.

Through the dawn-twilight that lay upon the cove the boat drew near that bore Mr. Tubbs and his fair charges. I saw the three cork helmets grouped together in the stern. Then the foaming fringe of wavelets caught the boat, hurled it forward, seemed all but to engulf it. Out leaped the sailors. Out leaped Mr. Tubbs, and disappeared at once beneath the waves. Shrill and prolonged rose the shrieks of my aunt and Miss Higglesby-Browne. Valiantly Mr. Shaw and Cuthbert Vane had rushed into the deep. Each now appeared staggering up the steep, foam-swept strand under a struggling burden. Even after they were safely deposited on the sand, Miss Browne and my aunt continued to shriek.

"Save, save Mr. Tubbs!" implored Aunt Jane.

But Mr. Tubbs, overlooked by all but this thoughtful friend, had cannily saved himself. He advanced upon us dripping.

"A close call!" he sang out cheerfully. "Thought one time old Nep had got a strangle-hold all right. Thinks I, I guess there'll be something doing when Wall Street gets this news—that old H. H. is food for the finny denizens of the deep!"

"It would have been most—most shocking!" quavered poor Aunt Jane with feeling. She was piteously striving to extricate herself from the folds of the green veil.

I came to her assistance. The poor plump little woman was trembling from head to foot.

"It was a most—unusual experience," she told me as I unwound her. "Probably extremely—unifying to the soul-forces and all that, as Miss Browne says, but for the moment—unsettling. Is my helmet on straight, dear? I think it is a little severe for my type of face, don't you? There was a sweet little hat in a Fifth avenue shop—simple and yet so chic. I thought it just the thing, but Miss Browne said no, helmets were always worn—Coffee? Oh, my dear child, how thankful I shall be!"

And Aunt Jane clung to me as of yore as I led her up the beach.

CHAPTER V.

The Captain's Legacy.

When in my tender years I was taken to the matinee, usually the most thrilling feature of the spectacle to me was the scene depicted on the drop-curtain. Directly I was seated—in the body—and had had my hat taken off and been told not to wriggle, I vaulted airily over the unconscious audience, over an orchestra engaged in tuning up, and was lost in the marvelous landscape of the drop-curtain. The adventures which I had there put to shame any which the raising of the curtain permitted to be seen upon the stage.

I had never hoped to recover in this prosaic world my long-lost paradise of the drop-curtain, but morning revealed it to me here on Leeward Island. Here was the feathery foliage, the gushing springs, the gorgeous flowers of that enchanted land. And here were the soft and intoxicating perfumes that I had imagined in my curtain landscape.

Leeward island measures roughly four miles across from east to west by three from north to south. The core of the island is the peak, rising to a height of nearly three thousand feet. At its base on three sides lies a plateau, its edges gnawed away by the sea to the underlying rocky skeleton. On the southeastern quarter the peak drops by a series of great precipices straight into the sea.

All the plateau and much of the peak are clothed with woods, a beautiful bright green against the sapphire of sea and sky. High above all other growth wave the feathery tops of the cocoa-palms, which flourish here luxuriantly.

The palms were nowhere more abundant than in the hollow by the cove where our camp was made, and their size and the regularity of their order spoke of cultivation. Guavas, oranges and lemons grew here, too, and many beautiful banana-palms.

At the side of the clearing toward the stream stood a hut, built of cocoa-palm logs. Its roof of palm-thatch had been scattered by storms. Nearer the stream on a bench were an old decaying washtub and a board. A broken frying-pan and a rusty axhead lay in the grass.

In the hut itself were a rude bedstead, a small table and a cupboard made of boxes. I was excited at first, and fancied we had come upon the dwelling of a marooned pirate. Without taking the trouble to combat this opinion, Mr. Shaw explained to Cuthbert Vane that a copra gatherer had once lived here, and that the place must have yielded such a profit that he was only surprised to find it deserted now. Behind this cool, emphatic speech I sensed an ironic zest in the destruction of my pirate.

After their thrilling experience of being ferried from the Rufus Smith to the island, my aunt and Miss Browne had been easily persuaded to dispose themselves for naps.

The boats of the Rufus Smith had departed from the island, and our relations with humanity were severed. The thought of our isolation awed and fascinated me as I sat meditatively upon a keg of nails watching the miracle of the tropic dawn. The men were hard at work with bales and boxes, except Mr. Tubbs, who gave advice. It must have been valuable advice, for he assured everybody that a word from his lips had invariably been enough to make Wall Street sit up and take notice. But it is a far cry from Wall Street to Leeward Island. Mr. Tubbs, ignored, sought refuge with me at last, and pointed out the beauties of Aroarer as she rose from the embrace of Neptune.

"Aroarer Borealis, to be accurate," he explained, "but they didn't use parties' surnames much in classic times."

The glad cry of breakfast put an end to Mr. Tubbs' exposition of mythology.

So does dull reality clog the feet of dreams that it proved impossible to begin the day by digging up the treasure. Camp had to be arranged, for folk must eat and sleep even with the wealth of the Indies to be had for the turning of a sod. The cabin was reroofed and set apart as the bower of Aunt Jane and Miss Browne. I declined to make a third in this sanctuary. You could tell by looking at her that Violet was the sort of person who would inevitably sleep out loud.

"Hang me up in a tree or anywhere," I insisted, and it ended by my having a tarpaulin shelter rigged up in a group of cocoa-palms.

(To Be Continued.)

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©BY M.C.MERKER.

"GOODNESS JACK, WHERE DID YOU GET THAT RIG? YOU MUST BE GOING TO A MASQUERADE."
"I KNOW. IT ISN'T WHAT IT WAS PICTURED. BUT HEREAFTER I WILL DO MY SHOPPING AT HOME."

ONE BORN EVERY MINUTE

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