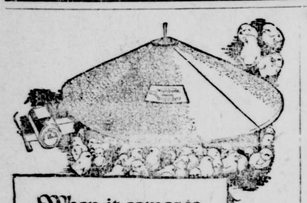

When it comes to BROODERS Oil undoubtedly is best for heat

BUT

My! what a lot of trouble comes from valves—strainers—and thermostats! ugh!

The Wishbone Blue Flame-Oil Burning BROODER is the Chicks' Best Friend

NO valves to stick
NO strainer to clog
NO thermostat to go wrong

Simple-Efficient New & Different

WY-HAR FARM
DENTON - - Maryland

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertisements under this heading, 10 cents per line, each insertion. No advertisement less than three lines.

FARMERS Bring your wheat to Federalsburg for highest market prices. W. T. EDDINGTON & SON.

FOUND
Germantown Wools
12½c an ounce
Silken Wools Shetland Floss
Direct from Mill
Think of the saving. Postal brings samples. OLD COLONY MILLS,
5-4 Manayunk, Phila.

HELP WANTED

FOR SALE—A good low truck wagon with hay rack, cheap; good horse cart low body on it, cheap for cash.
tf J. VIRGIL MOORE, Denton

LOST—On Monday, gold friendship circle. Return to American Union office and receive reward.

MONEY TO LOAN on mortgages Fred R. Owens, Attorney-at-Law Denton, Md.,

CORRESPONDENTS WANTED — The American Union desires correspondents in all sections of Caroline County. Write for further information. tf

CLEAN RAGS WANTED—The American Union wants 20 pounds of clean rags of fair size. 2c per pound.

CORRECT ENGLISH
HOW TO USE IT
JOSEPHINE TURCK BAKER, Editor

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

$2.50 THE YEAR

Send 10 Cents for Sample Copy
to
Correct English Publishing Co.
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

FLOWERS for WEDDINGS and FUNERALS
BENEDICT florist 1817
Telephone Lexington 2420 A. H. Benedict

The MAULE SEED BOOK FREE
This wonderful 176-page book gives you the benefit of over 60 years of experience as seedsmen, gardeners and farmers. Send a postal for it today.
WM. HENRY MAULE, Inc. 2109 Arch St. Phila., Pa.

DR. W. A. SMITH
DENTIST
DENTON, MARYLAND
Open Daily from 8 a. m. to 6 p. m.

Appointments by mail or telephone
Telephone No. 82

FREE SEEDS

Congressman T. Alan Goldsborough has sent a quantity of free vegetable and flower seeds to this office for distribution. Any person desiring seeds may have them by calling at this office. (None will be given to children)

CHAPTER XIX.

'Twixt Cup and Lip.

Next morning an event occurred sufficiently astonishing to divert our thoughts from even the all-important topic of the Island Queen. Cookie, who had been on the high land of the point gathering firewood, came rushing back to announce that a steamer had appeared in the offing. All the party dropped their occupations and ran to look. That the Rufus Smith had returned at an unexpectedly early date was of course the natural explanation of the appearance of a vessel in these lonely seas. But through the glass the new arrival turned out to be not the tubby freighter, but a stranger of clean-cut, rakish build, lying low in the water and designed for speed rather than carrying capacity.

A mile offshore she lay to, and a boat left her side. Wondering and disquieted, we returned to the beach to await her coming. Was it another pirate? What possible errand could bring a steamer to this remote, unvisited, all but forgotten little island?

As the oarsmen drove the boat upon the beach the man in the stern sprang agilely ashore. Dugald Shaw stepped forward, and the stranger approached, doffing his helmet courteously.

"You are the American and English party who landed here some weeks ago from the Rufus Smith?"

His English was easy and correct, though spoken with a pronounced Spanish accent. His dark high-featured face was the face of a Spaniard. And his grace was the grace of a Spaniard, as he bowed sweepingly and handed Mr. Shaw a card.

"Senor Don Enrique Gonzales," said Dugald, bowing in his stiff-necked fashion, "I am happy to see you. But as you represent his excellency the president of the republic of Santa Marina I suppose you come on business, Senor Gonzales?"

"Precisely. I am enchanted that you apprehend the fact without the tiresomeness of explanations. For business is a cold, usually a disagreeable affair, is it not so? That being the case, let us get it over."

"First do us the honor to be seated, Senor Gonzales."

Comfortably bestowed in a camp-chair in the shade, the Spaniard resumed:

"My friend, this island belongs, as of course you are aware, to the republic, of which I have the honor to be a citizen. All rights and privileges, such as harvesting the copra crop, are strictly conserved by the republic. All persons desiring such are required to negotiate with the minister of state of the republic. And how much more, when it is a question of treasure—of a very large treasure, senor?"

The Scotchman's face was dark.

"I had understood," he replied, without looking in the direction of Miss Higglesby-Browne, who seemed in the last few moments to have undergone some mysterious shrinking process, "that negotiations in the proper quarter had been undertaken and brought to a successful conclusion—that in short we were here with the express permission of the government of Santa Marina."

This was a challenge which Miss Browne could not but meet.

"I had," she said hoarsely, "I had the assurance of a—a person high in the financial circles of the United States, that through his—his influence with the government of Santa Marina it would not be necessary—in short, that he could fix the president—I employ his own term—for a considerable sum, which I—which my friend Miss Harding gave him."

"And the name of this influential person?" inquired the Santa Marinan, suavely.

"Hamilton H. Tubbs," croaked Miss Browne.

Senor Gonzales smiled.

"I remember the name well, madam. It is that of the pretended holder of a concession from our government, who a few years ago induced a number of American school teachers and clergymen and other financially innocent persons to invest in imaginary coffee plantations. He had in some doubtful fashion become possessed of a little entirely worthless land, which formed the basis of his transactions. His frauds were discovered while he was in our country, and he was obliged to leave between two days, according to your so picturesque idiom. Needless to say his application for permission to visit Leeward island for any purpose would instantly have been refused, but as a matter of fact it was never made."

In a benumbed silence we met the blow. The riches that had seemed within our grasp would never be ours. We had no claim upon them, for all our toil and peril; no right even to be here upon the island. Suddenly I began to laugh; faces wearing various shades of shocked surprise were turned on me. Still I laughed.

"Don't you see," I cried, "how ridiculous it all is? All the time it is we who have been pirates!"

The Spaniard gave me a smile made brilliant by the gleam of smoldering black eyes and the shine of white teeth.

"Senorita, with all regret, I must agree."

"What's in a name?" remarked Dugald Shaw, shrugging. "We were after other people's property, anyway. I am very sorry about it, Senor Gonzales, but I would like to ask, if you don't mind telling, how you happened to learn of our being here, so long as it was not through the authentic channels. On general principles, I tried to keep the matter quiet."

"We learned in a manner somewhat—what do you say?—curious," returned the Spaniard, who, having presented the men with cigars and by permission lighted one himself, was making himself extremely at home and appeared to have no immediate intention of haling us away to captivity in Santa Marinan dungeons. "But before I go further, kindly tell me whether you have had any—ah—visitors during your stay on the island?"

"We have," Mr. Shaw replied, "very troublesome ones."

The Spaniard smiled.

"Then answer your own question. These men, while unloading a contraband cargo in a port of Mexico, near the southern border, grew too merry in a wineshop, and let it be known where they were bound when again they put to sea. The news, after some delay, found its way to our capital. At once the navy of the republic was dispatched to investigate the matter.

"On the way here I put in at Panama, where certain inquiries were satisfactorily answered. There were those in that port who had made a shrewd guess at the destination of the party which had shipped on the Rufus Smith. I then pursued my course to Leeward. But admit, my friends, that I have not by my arrival, caused you any material loss. Except that I have unfortunately been compelled to present you to yourselves in the character of—as says the young lady—pirates—madam, I speak under correction—I have done you no injury, eh? And that for the simple reason that you have not discovered what you sought, hence cannot be required to surrender it."

We looked at one another doubtfully. The ambiguous words of the Spaniard, the something humorous and mocking which lay behind his courtly manner, put us quite in the dark.

"Senor Gonzales," replied the Scotchman, after a moment's hesitation, "it is true that so far only a negligible amount of what we came to find has rewarded us. But I cannot in honesty conceal from you that we know where to look for the rest of it, and that we had certainly expected to leave the island with it in our possession."

The dark indolent eyes of our visitor grew suddenly keen. Half-veiled by the heavy lashes, they searched the face of Dugald Shaw. It seemed that what they found in that bold and open countenance satisfied them. His own face cleared again.

"I think we speak at cross-purposes, Mr. Shaw," he said courteously, "and that we may better understand each other, I am going to tell you a little story. At about this season, two years ago, the navy of Santa Marina, the same which now lies off the island, was making a voyage of inspection along the coast of the republic. It was decided to include Leeward in the cruise, as it had been unvisited for a considerable time. I hold no naval rank—indeed, we are not a seafaring people, and the captain of La Golondrina is a person from Massachusetts, Jeremiah Bowles by name, but as the representative of his excellency I accompanied La Golondrina. On our arrival at Leeward I came ashore in the boat, and found to my surprise a small sloop at anchor in the cove. About the clearing were the signs of recent habitation, yet I knew that the old German who had had the copra concession here had been gone for some time. No one responded to our shouts and calls.

"I turned my attention to the sloop. In the cabin, besides a few clothes, I found something that interested me very much—a large brass-bound chest, of an antique type such as is common enough in my own country.

"Of course I had heard of the many legends of treasure buried on Leeward island. Consequently I was somewhat prepared to find in the chest, what in fact I did find there, over a million dollars in old Spanish coins.

"These coins, which were packed in strong canvas bags, were, as you may fancy, very quickly transferred to the cutter. We did not trouble ourselves with the unwieldy chest, and it remains, I suppose, in the cabin of the sloop, which I observed as we crossed the cove to have been washed up upon the rocks."

"This is a very interesting story, Senor Gonzales," said Dugald Shaw, quietly, "and as you say, your visit here deprives us of nothing, but merely saves us further unprofitable labor. We are grateful to you."

The Spaniard bowed.

"You do me too much honor. But, as you remark, the story is interesting. It has also the element of mystery. For there remains the question of what became of the owner of the sloop. His final preparations for leaving the island had evidently been made, his possessions removed from the hut, provisions for the voyage brought on board the sloop—and then he had vanished. What had befallen him? Did the gold carry with it some deadly influence? One plays, as it were, with this idea, imagining the so melancholy and bloody history of these old doubloons. How, in the first place, had he found them? Through chance—by following some authentic clue? And then, in the moment of success, he disappears—pouf!" And Senor Gonzales disposed of the unknown by blowing him airily from the tips of his fingers.

"However, we have the treasure—the main point, is it not? But I have often wondered—"

"If you would like to hear the rest of the story," said Mr. Shaw, "we are in a position to enlighten you. That we are so, is due entirely to this young lady, Miss Virginia Harding."

The Spaniard rose and made obeisance profoundly. He resumed his seat, prepared to listen—no longer the government official, but the cordial and interested guest and friend.

The story, of course, was a long one. Everybody took a hand in the telling, even Cookie, who was summoned from his retirement in the kitchen to receive the glory due him as a successful strategist. The journal of Peter was produced, and the bags of doubloons handed over to the representative of the little republic. I even offered to resign the silver shoe-buckle which I had found in the secret locker on the Island Queen, but this excess of honesty received its due reward.

"The doubloons being now in the possession of the Santa Marinan nation, I beg that you will consider as your own the Island Queen and all it may contain," said Don Enrique to me with as magnificent an air as though the sand-filled hulk of a wrecked sloop were really a choice gift to bestow on a young woman.

Plans were discussed for transferring the pirates from the cave to the cutter, for they were to be taken to Santa Marina to meet whatever punishment was thought fit for their rather indefinite ill-doing. They had not murdered us, they had robbed us of nothing but the provisions they had eaten; they had, after all, as much right on the island as ourselves. Yet there remained their high-handed conduct in invading our camp and treating us as prisoners, with the threat of darker possibilities. I fancy that Santa Marinan justice works mainly by rule of thumb, and that the courts do not embarrass themselves much with precedents. Only I hope they did not shoot the picturesque Tony against a wall.*

The power-schooner, manned by a crew from the cutter, was to be taken to Santa Marina also. Senor Gonzales remained with us for the day as our guest, and on the next the boats from the cutter took off the pirates from the cave. We did not see them again. Through the convenient elasticity of Santa Marinan procedure, Mr. Tubbs was herded along with the rest, although he might plausibly, if hypocritically, have pleaded that he had complied with the will of the invaders under duress. Aunt Jane wept very much, and handed me Paeans of Passion with the request that she might never see it again.

We parted from Senor Gonzales not without regrets. It was an impressive leave-taking—indeed, Senor Gonzales in his least word and gesture was impressive. Also, he managed subtly and respectfully to impart to me the knowledge that he shared Titian's tastes in the matter of hair. On his departure he made a pretty little speech, full of compliments and floral specimens, and bestowed upon me—as being mine by right, he earnestly protested—the two bags of Spanish doubloons.

*Since the above was written, Mr. Shaw has run across Tony on the San Francisco water-front. Tony tells him that they got off with three months' imprisonment. The American consul interested himself and the schooner was restored to her owners, who were Tony's relations and hence did not prosecute. Before the discharged prisoners left the republic Captain Magnus was stabbed over a card game by a native. Mr. Tubbs married a wealthy half-caste woman, the owner of a fine plantation, but a perfectly genuine Mrs. Tubbs from Peoria turned up later, and the too much married H. H. was obliged to achieve one of his over-night flittings.

CHAPTER XX.

The Bishop's Chest.

We waited nine days for the coming of the Rufus Smith. During that time an episode occurred as a result of which I sat one morning by myself on the rocks beside the sloop, on which such ardent hopes had been centered, only like the derelict itself to be wrecked at last. It was a lonely spot and I wanted to be alone. I felt abused, and sad, and sore. I realized that I was destined to do nothing but harm in the world, and to hurt people I was fond of, and be misunderstood by everyone, and to live on—if I wasn't lucky enough to meet with a premature and sudden end—into a sour, lonely, crabbed old age, when I would wish to goodness I had married anybody, and might even finish by applying to a Matrimonial Agency.

As I sat nursing these melancholy thoughts I heard a footstep. I did not look up—for I knew the footstep. I should have known it if it had trodden over my grave.

"I take it you are not wanting company, you have come so far out of the way of it," said Dugald Shaw.

Still I did not look up.

"Nobody seemed to want me," I remarked sulkily, after a pause. He made no reply, but seated himself upon the rocks. For a little there was silence.

"Virginia," he said abruptly, "I'm thinking you have hurt the lad."

"Oh," I burst out, "that is all you think of—the lad, the lad! How about me? Don't you suppose it hurt me, too?"

"There, lassie, there, don't cry!" he said gently. "The boy didn't speak of it, of course. But I knew how it must be. It has hit him hard, I am afraid."

"I suppose," I wept, "you would have had me marry him whether I wanted to or not, just to keep from hurting him?"

"No," he answered quickly. "I did not say that—I did not say that I would have had you marry him. No, lass, I did not say that."

"Then why are you scolding me?" I asked in a choked whisper.

"Scolding you? I was not. It was only that—that I love the lad—and I wish you both so well—I thought perhaps there was some mistake, and—it would not matter about me, if I could see you both happy."

"There is a mistake," I said clearly. "It is a great mistake, Dugald Shaw, that you should come to me and court me—for some one else."

There was silence for a while, the kind of silence when you hear your heartbeats.

When he spoke his voice was unsteady.

"But the boy has everything to offer you—his ancient name, his splendid unstained youth, a heart that is all loyalty. He is strong and brave and beautiful. Virginia, why couldn't you love him?"

"I could not love him," I replied, very low, "because my love was not mine any more to give. It belongs to——some one else. Is his name ancient? I don't know. It is his, and he ennobles it. Cuthbert has youth, but youth is only promise. In the man I love I find fulfillment. And he is loyal and brave and honest—I am afraid he isn't beautiful, but I love him the better for his scars—"

After that I sat quite still, and I knew it depended on the next half minute whether I went all the days of

Dugald Shaw Took Me in His Arms.

my life crowned and glorious with happiness, or buried my shame and heartbreak under the waters of the cove.

And then Dugald Shaw took me in his arms.

By and by he said huskily:

"Beloved, I had no right to ask you to share such a life as mine must be—the life of a poor sailor."

At this I raised my head from its nestling-place and laughed.

"Ask me? Silly, I asked you! Of course you could have refused me, but I depended on your not having the courage."

"And indeed that is a charge I'll not allow—that I am so little of a man as to let my courting be done for me. No, no, it was my love compelling you that made you speak the words you did—the love of a selfish man who should have thought only of shielding you from the hardships of such a wandering, homeless life as mine."

"Well, Heaven reward you for your selfishness," I said earnestly. "I am thankful you were not so noble as to let me throw myself at your head in vain. I have been doing it for ever so long, in fact, but it is such a thick Scotch head that I dare say I made no impression."

"Sweet imp! You'll pay for that—oh, Virginia, if I had only something to offer you!"

"You can offer me something that I want very much, if you will, and at no cost but your strong right arm."

"It is an arm which is at your service for life—but what am I to do with it now? And indeed I think it is very well employed at this moment."

"But it must be employed much more strenuously," I remarked, moving a little away, "if you are to get me what I want. Before you came, I was meditating possible ways of getting it for myself. I wanted it for a melancholy relic—a sort of mausoleum in which all my hopes were buried. Now its purpose is quite different; it is to be my bride's chest and hold the dowry which I shall bring to one Dugald Shaw."

"You mean the chest—the chest that held the Spanish doubloons—that lies under the sand in the sloop?"

"Exactly. And now I shall know whether you are the true prince or not, because he always succeeds in the tasks he undertakes to win the princess."

It was low tide, such a tide as had all but lured me to my death in the cave. One could go and come from the beach along the rocks, without climbing the steep path up the cliff. It was not long before Dugald was back again with spade and pick. He tore off the shrunken, sun-dried boards from the cabin roof, and fell to work.

It was not, after all, a labor of Hercules. The cabin was small and the chest large. I watched with the pride of proprietorship the swift ease with which the steel-sinewed arms of the Scot made the caked sand fly. Then the spade struck something which sent back a dull metallic sound through the muffling sand.

I gave a little shriek of excitement. Hardly could I have been more thrilled if I had believed the chest still to contain the treasure of which it had been ravished. It was filled to its brass-bound lid with romance, if not with gold.

At length, kneeling before it, I raised with an effort the heavy lid.

"Empty, of course—no more brown bags. But oh, Dugald, had ever a girl such a wonderful bride's chest as this? O—oh!"

"What's wrong?"

"Nothing, only there is a crack in the bottom, running all the way along where it joins the side."

"Warped a bit, I suppose. No matter, it can be easily repaired—crack? I say, lassie, look here!"

Under the pressure of Dugald's fingers the floor of the chest was swinging upward on an invisible hinge. Between it and the true bottom was a space of about three inches in depth. It seemed to be filled with a layer of yellowed cotton-wool.

For a long moment we held our breath, gazing at each other with eyes which asked the same question. Then Dugald lifted a corner of the sheet of cotton and plucked it away.

At once all the hues of the rainbow seemed to be flashing and sparkling before us. Rubies were there like great drops of the blood that the chest and its treasure had wrung from the hearts of men; sapphires, mirroring the blue of the tropic sky; emeralds, green as the island verdure; pearls, white as the milk of the coconuts and softly luminous as the phosphorescent foam which broke on the beach in the darkness. And there were diamonds that caught gleams of all the others' beauty, and then mocked them with a matchless splendor.

There were nine heavy bracelets, all jewel-set; twenty-three rings, eight of them for the hand of a man. Some of these rings contained the finest of the diamonds, except for three splendid unset stones. There were numbers of elaborate old-fashioned earrings, two rope-like chains of gold adorned with jewels at intervals, and several jeweled lockets. There was a solid gold snuff-box, engraved with a coat of arms and ornamented with seventeen fine emeralds. There were, besides the three diamonds, eighty-two unset stones, among them, wrapped by itself in cotton, a ruby of extraordinary size and luster. And there was a sort of coronet or tiara, sown all over with clear white brilliants.

Ours? Yes, for whether or not there were an infection of piracy in the very air of the island, so that to seize with the high hand, to hold with the iron grasp, seemed the law of life, we decided without a qualm against the surrender of our treasure-trove to its technical owners. Technical only; for one felt that, in essence, all talk of ownership by this man or that had long ago become idle. Fate had held the treasure in fee to give or to withhold. Senor Gonzales had had his chance at the chest, and he had missed the secret of the hidden hoard, had left it to lie forgotten under the sand until in some tropic storm it should be engulfed by the waters of the cove. More than this, had he not most specifically made over to me the Island Queen and all that it contained? This was a title clear enough to satisfy the most exacting formalist. And we were not formalists, nor inclined in any quibbling spirit to question the decrees of Fortune. As treasure-hunters, we had been her devotees too long.

So after all it was not my scornful skepticism but the high faith of Miss Higglesby-Browne which was justified by the event, and the Harding-Browne expedition left the island well repaid for its toils and perils. Plus the two bags of doubloons, which were added to the spoils, the treasure brought us a sum so goodly that I dare not name it, for fear of the apparition of Senor Gonzales and the Santa Marinan navy looming up to demand restitution. Like true comrades, we divided share and share alike, and be sure that no one grudged Cookie the percentage which each was taxed for his benefit.

And now I come to the purpose of this story—for though well concealed it has had one from the beginning. It is to let Helen, whoever and wherever she may be, if still of this world, know of the fate of Peter, and to tell her that when she asks for them she is to have my most cherished relics of the island, Peter's journal and the silver shoe-buckle which he found in the sand of the treasure-cave and was taking home to her.

Only, she must let me keep Crusoe, please.

[THE END.]

©Maryland State Archives, msa_sc2929_scm3545-0080.jpg