

THE DEVIL'S PACKET

(Original.)
The pirates that infested the gulf of Mexico during the early years of the Spanish occupation of Central America disappeared gradually, reappeared occasionally and vanished, the last ship showing up in the early part of the nineteenth century. One moonlight night she sailed out of Puerto Cabello, in Honduras, where she had been lying at anchor during a storm, and made for open waters.

"What is that black bulk out there?" said the man at the wheel to the captain, "and how does she find anchorage in such deep water?"

"She's not anchored," said the captain. "She's lying to."

"No, she's moving. Her yards are squared toward us, but she has altered her course, and I can see her sails. How can those few patches of canvas move so large a vessel, I wonder?"

"All the better for us," replied the captain. "A hulk of a merchantman with such rags will be easily overhauled. Put her north by half north-east."

Whether the merchantman espied the pirate and proposed to get away from her or no, she turned and moved in the same direction as the latter. Notwithstanding her meager show of canvas, she did not seem to lose much interval.

"How does she keep that pace?" inquired the captain of one of his principal men who came up to ask about the stranger.

"She's a queer one," replied the other musingly.

The captain called the crew on deck and ordered them to prepare for action. The guns were run out, ammunition was brought up, and a reserve supply of cutlasses was dumped at the foot of the mainmast. Then the grappling irons were fixed in place, and the crew stood ready. So long as they were busy they kept their heads, but the moment they began to watch the strange vessel moving steadily on under sails incapable of giving their own little vessel a headway of half a dozen knots they began to look puzzled.

Presently it began to be apparent to the pirates that they were gaining on the vessel. Notwithstanding that she was under the same sail as before, she was scarcely moving. Then of a sudden her sails were furled, but, wonderful to relate, she resumed her former speed. The captain, the wheelman and half a dozen of the crew who had come up to ask questions about the singular craft all looked at one another in astonishment.

"That's no real ship!" exclaimed one with blanched cheeks. "She is a phantom!"

"Shut up!" cried the captain. "She's a ship, a real ship, and we'll be aboard of her within an hour. The first man who talks about a phantom will feel the edge of my cutlass!"

This quieted the crew temporarily, though several who had been born within the fold of the church secretly crossed themselves. They were of the lowest classes, and their captains was no more enlightened than themselves, though made of sterner stuff. The breeze freshened, and it was apparent to the pirates that with the difference of sail area they must soon catch the stranger, unless, indeed, she were a veritable phantom. Nevertheless at 2 o'clock in the morning, when the moon had passed the horizon, the pirate was as far astern as ever. The mysterious vessel moved on like a jack-o'-lantern, and the pirates began to believe that she was under the protection of a dark mist that hung over her. Several times this mist disappeared, and the pursuers always noticed that at such times the stranger's pace was either abated or she ceased to move entirely. After one of these changes of gait the pirates found themselves sailing half a mile behind her and on parallel lines a quarter of a mile apart.

"Send a shot," said the captain.

The gunners got a gun ready on the forecastle, but there seemed to be some delay. The captain went forward and found the men slithering beside the gun.

"What's the matter?" he thundered.

"May be she's under the protection of the blessed saluts," whispered one of the men. "It would be impious to fire. Look, there's something white in the water amidstships! She moves again. Santa Maria! The sea monsters are bearing her forward!"

Every man fell on his knees and made the sign of the cross.

Suddenly the vessel, notwithstanding the direction of the wind, sheered around and stood on a course that would take her directly across the pirate's bow. The captain still kept on his feet in the midst of his kneeling men and watched her with open mouth and staring eyes. On went his vessel and on went the stranger, passing his course an eighth of a mile ahead. Presently his fighting nature overcame his superstition, and, seizing an iron that was heating in a brazier, he applied it to the vent of the gun. The sailors covered their eyes with their hands as a flash, and the light of Tophet flared through a square opening in her side, glancing on the figure of Satan, who was thrusting a huge poker into the place from whence the light was emitted. Not only the crew, but the captain, fell on their faces on the deck, not daring to look up. When they did, the devil's packet, as they called the vessel, was slipping away from them, pointing a black cloud from a huge chimney amidstships.

The pirates steered for land, deserted their vessel and forever abandoned their nefarious calling.

The devil's packet was the first steamer ever sent in the gulf of Mexico. P. A. MITCHELL.

A RESURRECTION

(Original.)
New Guinea Swamp dwellers. Recently the British government published an interesting report on the apple swamp dwellers of New Guinea. This strange race of human beings has dwelt in the swamps from times which antedate the oldest native traditions, and it is evidently on the highroad to becoming a distinct variety of animal. The swamp dwellers have lost three inches in stature and, while retaining muscular arms and a robust trunk, have short and slender legs. Walking always in water or on moist ground, they have feet with long, fragile looking toes, which they place on the ground "like wooden feet." Walking on hard ground makes their feet bleed, and, unlike the ordinary natives, whose skin is everywhere tight and smooth, the outline of their loins is obscured by folds of skin. "More apelike than any human being that I have seen," is the concluding criticism of the British administrator. It is probable of course that this effort of nature to create a new species of amphibious human being with flat swimming and wading feet and degenerate physique will be defeated by civilizing agencies. Fifty years hence the last recognizable specimens of this queer race will perhaps have leached their paddle feet in boots. Perhaps their women will be wearing high heeled shoes. But the record of their existence is interesting.

The Ram Feast.
In Morocco the strange season of the Mohammedan new year, beginning March 9, is generally called "Ait-el-Hanwela," the ram feast. The people of Morocco pay more elaborate attention to the feast of sacrifice than any other Moslems. In every town a supreme offering of a ram or he goat takes place at the door of the principal mosque. Immediately after it is struck by the official imam in presence of the multitude it is flung on the shoulders of a stalwart Moor, who, exerting his utmost strength, runs like a deer through the narrow streets, pursued by a rabble. The poor animal is pelted with stones by boys and is jeered at with execrations from every house, as it is reputed to be carrying the sins of the people. The man rushes along with his burden till he reaches the door of the cad's palace. If the animal is still breathing, the angury is excellent, for good luck is to be expected all through the year. But if the ram is dead all sorts of evil prognostications are muttered.

The Charitable Americans.
The Americans are looked upon by the peoples of Europe as the most wasteful persons in the world, and they do spend their money with a freedom unknown elsewhere because they have the money to spend. But with all their apparent carelessness there is no country in the world nor is there record of any in which the people devote so much to the welfare of the unfortunate and the wretched. The practice has become a habit and is looked upon rightly enough as an obligation. No one can free himself from it. Every one has a neighbor somewhere, and he will not fulfill his obligation merely by denying himself of some luxury or pleasure unless the self denial benefits his unfortunate neighbor.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Happiness.
Happiness? Sooth to say, it does not exist, or, rather, destiny serves it out to us in fractions, in small doses, homeopathically. Happiness is made up of halts. In the rough road stage of life, so long and yet so short, there are furtive moments when we sit down by the wayside and would gladly stop there, go no farther, sleep a little on the good earth which will one day embrace us. And immediately the march, march, of Bossuet rings out and urges us on. A halt? Why? Up and on, quick; we must hark forward; life continues. We rise and take up our burden again. March! March!—Jules Claretie.

National Longevity.
Of European nations the Norwegian and Swedish are the longest lived, the Spaniards the shortest. According to a foreign statistical return recently issued the average duration of life is as follows: Sweden and Norway, 50 years; England 45 years and 3 months; Belgium, 44 years and 11 months; Switzerland, 44 years and 4 months; France 43 years and 6 months; Austria, 39 years and 8 months; Prussia and Italy, 39 years; Bavaria, 36 years, and Spain, 32 years and 4 months.

He Was Mad.
A German who recently landed in this city was attacked upon the street and bitten by a vicious dog. A few bystanders rushed to the man's assistance, who was apparently more frightened than injured, and asked if the dog was mad. The German exclaimed: "Vot! Der dog mad? Vy he be mad? The me vot is mad!"—Philadelphia Ledger.

The Belief Was Mutual.
"Young man," said the professor as he grabbed a frisky junior by the shoulder, "I believe Satan has got hold of you."

"I believe he has," was the quick reply.—Exchange.

His Credentials.
Employer—Yes, I advertised for a strong boy. Think you will fill the bill?
Applicant—Well, I just finished kicking nineteen other applicants out in de hall.—St. Louis Star.

Beck More Sensible.
"Jack, dear, when you are gone, I shall pine away."
"Don't pine away. Spruce up."—Life.

The first life insurance society was started in London in 1693 and another in 1706. Neither was successful.

A RESURRECTION

(Original.)
"My friend, I will trouble you for your clothes."
I was starting to cross a long railroad bridge on foot. There was only a single track, and the time was 10 o'clock at night. I knew the danger of crossing the bridge, but I had been absent for months, had just alighted at the station half a mile away and was in a hurry to reach my home.

"My clothes?" I exclaimed, astonished. "If you had asked for my valuables, I would not be surprised, but my clothes are an old suit I use for traveling."

"The age doesn't matter, and the valuables goes with 'em. Come, get 'em off."

The man was armed with a bludgeon, while I had nothing for defense.

"Oh, I see!" I said. "You are being hunted and want to evade your pursuers."

The fellow had a desperate look about him, and I began at once to divert myself of my garments. He hurried me, but I hoped to save some papers there were in my pocket and stopped to take them out.

"Let 'em alone," he said. "I want 'em for identification."

In a few minutes the man had on my clothes while I was obliged to put on his or go naked. I did leave off some of them, but he forced me to wear them, doubtless knowing that if they were found they would betray the exchange.

"Now," he said when we were dressed, "you go back to where the road crosses the railroad, go down the hill and cross the footbridge. When you get to the bridge, give me a whistle. I don't propose to let you get far enough to give me away before I can reach the other side of this thing, and it'll be slow walkin' for me."

I concluded that discretion was the better part of valor and did exactly as he directed. When I reached the footbridge, I saw his dark figure in silhouette against the sky standing where I had left him. I whistled, and he started over the bridge.

It was a mile farther to my home by the route I was forced to take, but I was relieved to get away from a desperate man and walked briskly, wondering what my wife would say to see me coming in in such wretched clothes. Suddenly I heard the sound of horses' hoofs behind me clattering over the narrow footbridge and knew the rider must be in a hurry to take such a risk. In fact, I surmised he was after the criminal, and I would have hidden to avoid trouble had there been any means of concealment. Since there was none I resolved to make a virtue of necessity, and as the horseman came up I called to him:

"If you are looking for an escaped villain, he's just crossed the railroad bridge above."

"I am looking for a criminal," he replied, covering me with a revolver, "and I reckon you're the man."

He was in police uniform, and with his revolver close to my face I made the best of the situation.

"I'll go with you. Do you know the man you're after?"

"I know that he wears a dirty yellow suit," he replied evasively, and, dismounting, he struck a match and examined my clothes.

"Not much risk about taking you in," he said. "Got any weapons?"

"No."

He searched me, finding nothing on me, then slipping a "bracelet" on my wrists, led his horse and walked me back to the station. There was a train due from the direction I wished to go, and one had recently passed going the other way. He grumbled at not having caught the latter train and when the other came along boarded it with me and took me to a town twenty miles distant and lodged me in jail.

I was kept waiting several days for a keeper to come from the prison from which the convict had escaped. Every hour I expected my liberty. When the man arrived and looked me over, he saw that there had been a mistake. I told him my story and was released. I was so delighted to get out of a bad

box that I refrained from abusing any one for my detention and, being furnished with a ticket, took a train for home. Reaching the station, I took advantage of my lesson that "haste makes waste" and instead of crossing the railroad bridge took a depot track and rode home.

Though it was 4 o'clock in the afternoon, my house was locked and every shutter closed. I supposed my wife would be at her mother's and drove there. There was a "shut up" look about the place, but I opened the front door and marched in. A servant was in the dining room, who as soon as she saw me dropped a platter she was carrying, and it broke into fragments, accompanied by wild shrieks as she ran into the kitchen. I followed her and she ran out the back door. Disdaining to pursue her farther, I resolved to look elsewhere for a solution of the mystery that was growing more and more astonishing. Going again into the street, I met a friend who stared at me in astonishment.

"For heaven's sake, Stivers, what does this mean?" I asked.

"Are you really alive?"

"Alive! Of course I am."

"You were buried yesterday. I know that, for I attended your funeral."

"Come, tell me all about it," I asked coningly.

"Why, the night you were expected home a man was killed on the railroad bridge, dressed in your clothes and having your papers in his pocket. He was mutilated beyond recognition."

I went home while Stivers went to bring my wife. He found her in the cemetery planting flowers on my grave and watering them with her tears.

PHILIP T. BAKER

Lycurgus' Proposition.
Lycurgus set about the reformation and alteration of the state of Sparta and was advised by one individual to reduce everything to an absolute popular equality. But Lycurgus astonished him by saying, "Sir, suppose you begin the reform in your own house?"

Chinese Goldfish.
One of the rarest and most expensive of Chinese goldfishes is the brush-tail, a pair of which sells for \$1,000. Probably there is no other living thing of its size and weight that is worth so much money.

Pens in the Seventh Century.
Pens were first used early in the seventh century. They were of coarse quills, and steel pens did not come into use until 1820, when the first gross of them sold wholesale for 27 1/2s. The quality of those pens was greatly inferior to that of those which now cost sixpence a gross.

An Inanimate Conversation.
Mr. Phonograph Album—Won't you play me a tune, Miss Phonograph?
Miss Phonograph (bashfully)—I am very sorry, but I cannot play without my records.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Expensive.
Husband—A penny for your thoughts.
Wife—It'll cost you more than that. I was thinking of a new gown.—New York Journal.

Possibly.
He tutter strangers—Haven't I met you somewhere before, sweet one?
She—Very likely. I'm a nurse at the insane asylum.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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In effect Sunday, Nov. 2, 1905, at 7:30 a. m.

WESTBOUND TRAINS.

No. 4 Passenger Daily	No. 6 Passenger Daily	No. 2 Freight-Daily	No. 10 Freight-Daily
A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.
11:05	8:30	8:30	4:35
10:30	7:55	7:55	4:10
10:15	7:47	7:47	3:55
9:45	7:17	7:17	3:15
9:30	7:00	7:00	1:15
9:30	6:50	6:50	1:45
9:30	6:30	6:30	1:10
9:30	6:30	6:30	1:10
9:30	6:30	6:30	1:10

EASTBOUND TRAINS.

No. 3 Passenger Daily	No. 5 Passenger Daily	No. 1 Freight-Daily	No. 9 Freight-Daily
P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.
7:30	8:00	8:00	6:00
7:30	8:30	8:30	6:30
7:30	9:00	9:00	7:00
7:30	9:30	9:30	7:30
7:30	10:00	10:00	8:00
7:30	10:30	10:30	8:30
7:30	11:00	11:00	9:00
7:30	11:30	11:30	9:30

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