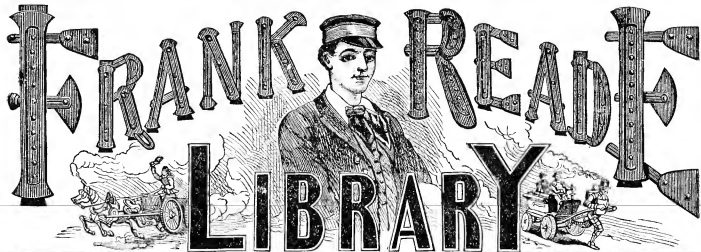


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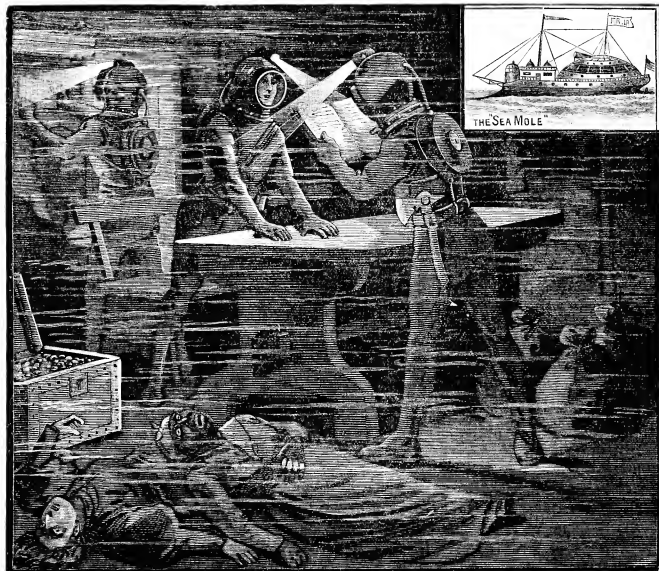
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Six Sunken Pirates; or, Frank Reade, Jr.'s Marvelous Adventures in the Deep Sea.

By "NONAME."



In the cabin the bodies of two women, one a negress, and a child, were found. Search was made for valuables, and a startling discovery made. This was an entry in her log made in clear, readable Spanish, which the professor interpreted at the great risk of the leaves melting in the water.

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SIX SUNKEN PIRATES

OR,

Frank Reade, Jr.'s Marvelous Adventures in the Deep Sea.

A WONDERFUL STORY OF A SUBMARINE VOYAGE.

By "NONAME,"

Author of "Astray in the Selvas; or, The Wild Experiences of Frank Reade, Jr., Barney and Pomp, in South America with the Electric Cab," "Under the Indian Ocean with Frank Reade, Jr.," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

A STRANGE STORY OF THE DEEP SEA.

"I BELIEVE that the Golden City of Katunda was no myth. Morgan, Blackbeard, and such fellows as we read of in the ordinary historical volume, were by no means the only pirates of fame and fortune who made a rendezvous in the reef bound cays of the Caribbean Sea."

The speaker was a white bearded, staidous looking old man, who wore gold bowed glasses, and had a most distinguished and scholarly air.

He was Prof. Pentlow of the American Society of Exploration. In fact, he was president of this society.

At the moment he stood in the lobby of the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York City.

The gentlemen to whom he addressed the above surprising remarks was young and handsome, wealthy, and what was more, a genius.

He was Frank Reade, Jr., perhaps the most famous inventor of the world ever saw.

The young inventor was instantly interested in the statement of Prof. Pentlow.

"I am much of your opinion myself, Prof. Pentlow," he said—"at least, so far as the pirates are concerned. The Caribbean Sea furnished a splendid retreat for freebooters, and the cays, as you say, were a fine rendezvous."

"History will vouch for all that," declared the learned man, "but many consider the story of Katunda as a fable or a legend."

"Then you believe it true?"

"I cannot see why it should be doubted," declared the professor. "The evidence of Captain Bunce, who was a reliable man, ought not to be set entirely aside."

"I am not exactly familiar with the story," began Frank.

"Oh, you are not? Would you like to have it in its entirety, and backed by such evidence as I have been able to procure?"

"Indeed I should," replied Frank, "if it will not be too great a task for you to recite it."

"It will be a pleasure!" cried the professor, rubbing his hands eagerly. "Perhaps I can interest you in the scheme of my life."

"Ah, indeed!"

"But we are in too noisy a place here. Will you not come to my room where we may be retired?"

"With pleasure."

A moment later they were in the elevator and on their way to the professor's room.

This was on the Twenty-third street side of the hotel, and far enough up to be aloof from the noise of the busy street.

The professor proceeded to extract from a desk a pile of mostly time-stained papers.

Some were maps and some were plainly enough ancient records.

These he spread upon a large table and then seated himself opposite Frank.

"To begin," he said briskly, "here are the valuable records of the affair, and they came into my hands legitimately and have been carefully preserved by me. They were the property of a very aged man who claimed to be a descendant of Captain Bunce, and who upon his death bed sent for me, having no living relative, and made me his heir in consideration of some kindness I had done him. The heritage was only these ancient documents, but I took my chances and buried the poor old gentleman at my own expense, which act I would in all charity have performed anyway."

"That was true philanthropy," said Frank. "No doubt your reward will come."

"It has come already, even if no further benefit is derived from these ancient documents. But now to the story: It is told by Captain Bunce of the English frigate *Oprey*, in the form of a narrative with sworn affidavits of members of his crew.

"It is very voluminous, and to read it in its rambling verbose form, would require too much time, so I will narrate the story in my own manner, and as taken from his narrative.

"The *Oprey* had been commissioned to cruise in the Gulf of Mexico, and to sink every pirate vessel which it could find. No quarter was to be given to crew or vessel.

"These were the king's orders, and the *Oprey* was well equipped for the purpose. But the freebooters of these seas were too wily to be easily caught.

"Their light-winged rakish vessels would slip away from the clumsy frigate with ease. However, the doughty Bunce chased six of the light-winged craft into the Bay of Honduras, and "rounded them up," so to speak, not far from the present locality of Belize.

"These six pirate vessels were a fleet, and unlike the usual custom, kept together. The man-of-war could have vanquished them all in a fair fight, but they did not give her any chance.

"This irritated Bunce and he made every effort to close with them.

But in spite of all his efforts they slipped by him in a gale one dark night and vanished out to sea.

"The next morning, however, a small boat was observed riding the waves cut far distant. It had a single occupant. The boat was without oars, and it and its occupant were wholly at the mercy of wind and wave.

"The spyer's long boat was sent out to pick up the castaway. He proved to be a Spaniard, Alfonso Castanella, and one of the crew of the pirate fleet.

"He had been punished by his captain and sentenced to be hung at the yard-arm for mutiny. But at night, just before the time of execution, he succeeded in escaping from the hold, and lowering one of the boats, set himself adrift.

"Alfonso did not hesitate to tell all he knew about his brother freebooters, and the tale he told was indeed a strange one.

"The six pirate vessels he declared were the Don, the Mariel, the Isabella, the Maria, the Veneta, and the Castello. The six captains were all powerful black-headed men of ferocious temper, and were brothers.

"Their names were Don Miguel, Don Alfo, Colombo, Varian, Fernando and Martin. They came of the family De Medina, exiles of Spain, and under royal ban. They were freebooters not only by nature or from choice, but necessity as well.

"For ten years they had ravaged the western seas and they had made a terrible name. They had come into the Caribbean Sea, as Alfonso Castanella declared, to win the prize which hundreds of freebooters before them had tried in vain for.

"In the Medusa Cays was an isle upon which dwelt a very intelligent and powerful tribe of natives. They were probably kin of that mighty race which founded and built the tremendous city of Palenque and others.

"Upon this Cay in the limpid waters of the Caribbean they had founded a city called Katunda. It was truly a city of gold.

"As repute had it, even the honours were washed with gold, and jewels were set in the doors of the dwellings. The Katunda people were immensely wealthy, as the isle itself was a literal gold mine.

"The cupidity of the bold six brothers De Medina was of course aroused. It became their one great aim to conquer the city of Katunda.

"The barbaric natives, however, were good fighters, and thus far all freebooters had been repelled. But Don Alfo and his brother swore by their hearts' blood to conquer Katunda or leave their bones at its door.

"Learning all this, Captain Bunce of course set sail for the Cay of Katunda. His purpose was of course to render the natives all the help in his power.

"The Cay lay sailed due eastward. For a day and a night she kept on. The Cay of Katunda should be in sight; but it was not.

"An object in the distance caught the gaze of the lookout. As the ship drew nearer a man was seen clinging to a beam of wreckage. Alfonso Castanella was intensely excited and leaning over the rail, shouted:

"It is my brother Hario. Saints preserve us, what has happened now?"

The drifting man was taken aboard and proceeded to give an astounding narrative.

"He said that as the six pirate vessels came into the harbor of Katunda and opened fire upon the town, there was a tremendous shock and the whole island and city sank into the sea. The six ships, embraced in the whirlpool, all foundered and went down. So far as he knew he was the only survivor, and how he had escaped he knew not, but regarded it as a miracle attributable to the grace of the Holy Mother of Madrid."

Professor Pentlow paused a moment to readjust some of his papers, then resumed:

"This is the whole story, Frank. I leave it to you to draw all conclusions. The six sunken pirates and the city of Katunda are fathoms deep in the Caribbean, but their exact location is not known to living man."

Frank drew a deep breath.

"Then you really place credence in this chronicle?" he asked.

"Of course I do!" replied Pentlow, with some asperity.

"It is a wonderful narrative," said Frank. "And if the sunken vessels could be found—"

"An immense fortune could be reaped," declared the professor, with glittering eyeballs.

"Have you thought of any plan by which to recover the treasure?" asked Frank.

"I?" exclaimed the professor. "It is not in my power. There is but one man in this country who can recover that treasure."

"And he—"

"Is yourself!"

"Indeed?"

"It is true. You are the inventor and owner of a submarine boat. With that and in no other way can the lost city of Katunda and its treasures be found."

CHAPTER II.

THE NEW SUBMARINE BOAT.

PENTLOW was very much in earnest, as could be seen. His words were extremely forcible.

"That is a pretty strong statement to make, professor. Could not the owner and inventor of the submarine boat."

"To him might be accredited the honor of having solved the problem of submarine navigation. This was surely no light achievement.

Frank was a cool and matter of fact as he said:

"That is a very strong statement to make, professor. Could not the sunken tale be reached by means of divers?"

"Possibly, but the main problem is to find it. This could be made a certainty with the submarine boat."

The professor, after a moment's reflection, continued:

"I would not have you misunderstand me. This is not a subterfuge of mine to enlist your services in my enterprise. The idea has never until this moment suggested itself to me."

"That statement is unnecessary," said Frank. "I do not suspect you of such a motive. To tell the truth, professor, I am very much interested in your story. In fact, I incline to your belief that the sunken isle could be found with the assistance of the submarine boat."

"Just so!" cried the professor, eagerly. Then he checked himself.

Frank read his mind.

He had not the moral or physical courage to ask for that which was the greatest desire of his life. The young inventor smiled.

"Pentlow, he said, quietly, "I know what you are thinking of."

"Eh?" ejaculated the explorer.

"Now I'll tell you what to do. You have never seen my submarine wonder, have you?"

"Never?"

"Then run out to Radestown Thursday, this week, and I will gladly show it to you. We will then—have a little talk."

Pentlow reached over and grasped Frank's hand eagerly.

"I'll do it," he cried; "of course I will. And we will have a talk."

"Yes."

The subject was not mentioned again. A few casual remarks upon other subjects were made and then Frank took his leave.

After the way home to Radestown Frank sat in the corner of the Pullman car buried in the deepest of study.

When home was reached he was quickly at his post in the great machine works where all his wonderful inventions were perfected.

As he entered his private draughting-room a comical little negro dodged in front of him with a scrape and a bow.

"Hi howdy, Marsa Frank! Drefin' glad to see yo' back. Hopes yo' fink eberyfing all right here, sah!"

"Pomp," said Frank suddenly, "go over to the geographical room and bring me a chart of the Caribbean Sea."

"All right, sah. But, sah—"

"Well?"

"Does yo' fink we is gwino fo' a v'yage on de Sea Mole afo' long? I jee' loike to know, sah, fo' I made a lilly bet wif dat fishman Barney O'Shea dat—"

"Arrah, an' the more fool me fer the doin' av it, for if ye lose it ye zwid niver pay it, bad cess to ye!"

It was a rich brogue which interrupted the darkey, and a sturdy son of the Emerald Isle appeared on the scene, with a comical mug and a shock of red hair.

He bowed before Frank.

"Top av the day to ye, Mister Frank. It's glad I am to see yoz home."

"The same to you, Barney," replied the young inventor. "As to your wager, I will say the Sea Mole will likely be very quietly put in commission. Now, Pomp, the chart, lively!"

"Arrah, now, an' phwat did I tell ye, yaagur!" roared Barney, making a bluff at the darkey. "Shure, yez kin pay that bet now or take a foine battin'!"

"Huh! don' yo' loo yo'se'f, chile," scoffed Pomp, as he made off on his errand. "Dar ain't no nuttin' in it, fo' de Sea Mole ain't gone yet!"

"That's lotke yez, an' a foine way to crawl out av the scrape," roared Barney, then scraping to Frank, "shure, I'm at your service, sor."

"Barney," said Frank, impressively, "circulate no reports, but go quietly at work to get the Sea Mole ready for a voyage. Do you see?"

The Celt ducked his head.

"That's phwat I was give me two eyes for, sor," he replied. "I'll do jist phwat yez tell me."

And with this he vanished.

Barney and Pomp were Frank's two most trusted employees. Indeed he would have been lost without them.

The days until Thursday came were occupied with certain secret and mysterious work in the big yard of the machine works.

Great vans loaded with provisions drove through the gates. A few of the town gossip tried to find out what was going on.

But they were unable to.

And all the while the work went on. Thursday came and with the noon train a distinguished looking man alighted.

It was Dean Pentlow, the famous traveler, explorer and scientist.

He jumped into a carriage in waiting and was driven at once to the machine works.

As the carriage passed through the big gate Frank met the professor, and a moment later they were in the private office having an animated discussion.

"I have hardly dared hope that you would decide favorably," began Pentlow. But Frank said bluntly:

"I have made up my mind; in fact, I made it up then."

"Ah!"

"We will go."

Pentlow gave a little leap in the air and a cry of joy.

"Hurrah!" he shouted, "it will be the biggest undertaking of the decade!"

"That is saying a good deal," laughed Frank.

"I don't care if it is; only think of it! Under the Caribbean Sea to find Six Sunken Pirates and the Golden City of Katandul! Why, it is a marvelous achievement."

"It will do if we can only find the sunken city," said Frank.

"We shall surely succeed," said Pentlow, confidently.

"I am glad that you have so much faith."

"We shall see!"

"But—would you not like to take a look at the submarine boat?"

"Delighted, I assure you."

"Come this way."

Frank led the way across the yard to a big gate. He opened this and they passed into a yard beyond.

In the center of this yard there was a large basin or tank of water. In this floated the wonderful craft, known as the submarine boat.

In its lines the Sea Mole appeared to be unlike any ordinary sailing craft.

It approached more nearly the character of some torpedo boats owned by the Government. It was of steel so far as the hull went, and had a long pointed ram.

Frank led the way on board.

The deck was occupied almost entirely by the cabins and a huge dome supplied with windows of thickest plate glass, protected by wire screens.

Two masts rose from the deck, though they were not designed to carry sails, but, as Frank declared, to steady the boat.

Forward over the ram was the pilot house.

A searchlight of enormous power occupied a position in the forward part of the big dome.

Frank and his visitor walked around the deck, which was protected by a guard rail of polished brass.

The forward cabins adjoined the pilot house, and were entered by means of a door and a vestibule.

"Now we will enter the cabin," said Frank. "You will see that I have spared no expense in making it comfortable."

"I should say not," agreed Pentlow. "It is beautifully furnished."

Indeed, the appointments of the Sea Mole's cabin were fit for a king, and exceeded all efforts of the imagination.

There were elegant couches and window seats, the walls were padded with richest satin, and there were bric-a-brac and book cases set in the walls, and in fact, every design for comfort and convenience.

Beneath the skylight of the big dome there was a large dining table set with the choicest of silver and cut glass.

Pomp was a number one cook, and presided over the galley near by in his first class style.

Then there were the sleeping banks and the smoking room, and the gun room or armory, where were kept all sorts of weapons and ammunition.

"We could not use rifles under water," said Frank, "but we might go ashore somewhere, you know."

"Surely," agreed Pentlow, "they are necessary adjuncts."

"So I thought."

They now passed under the pilot house to the engine room.

Here were the storage batteries upon a system of economy in space which was a secret of Frank's.

The delicate but powerful electrical machinery was a wonderful thing to inspect.

This furnished motive power to the boat, and also was distributed over the craft for various purposes, such as lighting and the automatic closing of the big tank which regulated the depression and elevation of the boat.

This was a skillfully arranged invention. The big tank was connected with the sea by means of great tubes. By a system of expansion the water could be brought into the tank in any quantity and almost instantly.

This would cause the boat to sink slow or fast, or to any required depth. To raise the boat, the pressure of a button brought electrical pressure to bear and the water was expelled.

In the pilot-house, was a key board. By means of this the boat could be guided or propelled, or otherwise regulated.

All these things Pentlow looked keenly and with commendation. Then a sudden thought struck him.

"By the way!" he exclaimed, "what do you do for air while you are under water?"

"We never lack for air," replied Frank, "because we manufacture it."

"Manufacture it?"

"Certainly."

"How can you do that?"

"Easy enough! Have you not seen my new patent diving suit

with which a diver can dispense with a life line?"

"No!"

"Well, the principle is, that of generating the purest of oxygen by means of chemicals. These are placed in a receptacle on the back of a diver and the oxygen as manufactured by the chemicals passes into the reservoir and thence into the helmet. There is a constant circulation as another chemical converts the bad air and gases into oxygen again."

"By Jupiter!" exclaimed Pentlow, "that is ingenious. And you have such a generator aboard this craft?"

"We have many of them. Pipes extend all along the hull and oxygen is kept in constant circulation."

"I am satisfied," cried Pentlow hoarsely; "let us lose no time in making the start."

"Are you ready?"

"I will go this minute just as I am if you say so."

"Let us wait until to-morrow morning and then we can get everything ready in the meanwhile."

"It is agreed!" cried the professor; "and I hope heaven will smile upon our undertaking."

CHAPTER III.

UNDER THE SEA.

The next morning the submarine boat was cleared of all landing planks, and floated in the center of the basin ready for a start.

It is needless to say that Pentlow was one of the first on hand. He unnoiced himself in readiness for the start.

We will not dwell upon the details of this.

Suffice it to say that the submarine boat was propelled down to the river through a connecting canal and a lock.

Then it made its way down the river to the sea.

All along the river banks there were great crowds of enthusiastic spectators. It was a complete ovation all the way to the sea.

When the Sea Mole finally left the delta of the river and glided into salt water, the voyagers were all upon the *qui vive*, especially Pentlow.

The submarine boat raced along over the bounding waves for some distance. She looked for all the world like a naval torpedo boat.

All vessels which sighted her made signals which indicated that they believed her in government service. This caused a general laugh.

"We might masquerade quite effectively if we chose," declared Frank, "but as this is the first time that the Sea Mole has dipped her bows in salt water, let us see how she will behave in the deep sea."

"Good!" cried the professor. "We are then to have a glimpse of the bed of the ocean."

"That will be an old story before we return," said Frank; "look out for yourselves now."

The voyagers were all on the outer deck at the moment. It became necessary to get into the cabin in quick order.

This was done and then a pressure upon an electric button mechanically sealed the doors and windows.

Frank was at the key board and with a quick movement he suddenly moved a lever to one side. This caused the reservoir valve to open and instantly the boat began to sink.

Down she settled, and with a plunge went under the surface.

There was brief darkness.

Then Frank pressed a button, and instantly a brilliant flood of electric light pervaded the cabin of the boat.

The search light also flashed forth, and made a long vista of radiance down through the water. Down sank the boat.

Down she went with a peculiar jolting and jarring motion, which Frank described as due to the resistance of the water.

It seemed as if this would never cease. Frank glanced at the gauge, and said:

"We are now at a depth of six hundred feet."

"Great Cicero!" exclaimed the professor; "she stands the pressure well!"

"Surely," agreed Frank. "That is what I built her for. We can go very much deeper without fear of harm."

Presently the gauge recorded a thousand feet. Frank now began to look for the bottom.

"We are a fifth of a mile under the surface," he said, "which is a good comfortable distance. I hope we will not have to descend much further."

"Just as we finished, a great cry escaped the professor's lips.

"Hurrah!" he shouted, "the bottom is at last."

Barney rushed to the window and Pomp came up out of the galley; the sight which the voyagers beheld was a curious one.

The bed of the ocean presented a strange and wild appearance.

There were immense jungles of sea-weed, stretches of sand, reefs of coral and rock, and great varieties of shellfish and finny denizens.

These were of every description and size. They were not at all frightened either, but came shoaling about the boat, bumping their curious noses against the windows as if they longed to gain entrance to the cabin.

The professor was right in his element.

He devoted his time assiduously to classifying and studying them. But the multiplicity of the new species completely appalled him.

Frank did not permit the boat to touch the bottom, but kept it at an elevation of twenty or thirty feet. In this manner the submarine voyagers sailed on.

For many miles under the sea the submarine boat kept on in this way.

To describe all the wonderful scenes witnessed would require a volume.

The first incident of a thrilling sort occurred just as the Sea Mole was sailing over a long reef.

Then from a cavity in the coral formation there darted forth a strange looking monster, half fish and half crab.

It was extraordinarily swift and agile, and made a powerful rush for the submarine boat.

So gigantic was it and so strong that its claws, wrapped about the steel ram of the Sea Mole, actually brought it to the bottom of the sea.

It was anchored effectually, while the strange sea monster began to crawl over the bow preparatory to making an attack upon the pilot-house.

Frank was not especially alarmed, for he could see no special harm that the monster could do the boat. But it was a hindrance.

The weight of the sea crab was so immense that the boat was completely anchored on the coral reef. Indeed the ram had caught in a section of the reef and was wedged quite fast.

The crab gained the forward deck of the boat, and began dealing the pilot-house savage blows with its long arms.

It showed no disposition to abandon the attack, and kept constantly hammering away. Frank could see no speedy way of getting rid of the monster.

"What an odd species of the crustacean!" cried the professor, "he is not catalogued or recorded, I know. He is a powerful chap. How will you get rid of him, Frank?"

"There is but one way," said Frank, thoughtfully, "and that is to kill him."

"That don't look to be very easy. How can you reach him?"

"Easy enough. Barney and I will put on diving suits and go out and attack him."

"I'm wid yer, Mither Frank!" cried the Celt.

But Pentlow looked serious.

"Stop and reflect, Frank," he said; "I would not go if I were you. That is a dangerous creature to attack."

But Frank laughed.

"He must be got rid of," he said. "Why, he has almost made prisoners of us."

"Beljebra! It's had cost to him whin Mither Frank an meself gits after him," boasted Barney.

The diving suits were quickly brought. These were an invention of Frank's and differed from the ordinary diver's outfit in that no life line was required, for there was a storage tank for the chemical manufacture and circulation of pure oxygen which the diver carried upon his back.

In a very few moments Frank and Barney were ready to leave the submarine boat. The sea crab was still raining its blows upon the pilot-house.

The two divers were equipped with heavy axes and long sharp tipped lances. They stepped into the vestibule and closed the cabin door.

Then Frank touched a valve which instantly filled the vestibule with water. This made it an easy matter to open the deck door and walk out.

Frank understood well the risk of their undertaking.

He knew that there was no slight amount of danger in venturing to attack the sea crab in his own element.

Therefore he was disposed to proceed with caution.

It was well that he did this.

The monster seemed to spy them almost instantly. It rolled its greenish eyes fearfully and sent one long arm along the deck.

Barney made a blow at it with his axe. The blade penetrated for a moment the thin shell but did not sever the arm.

The Celt wrenched the weapon free and then made another blow at the monster's claw. But this time the crab was too quick and gave Barney a sweeping blow under the arm.

The Celt went off the deck of the Sea Mole as a puppet.

His fall to the sands below, however, did not hurt him at all, for a fall under water is always a gentle one.

He regained himself as quickly as he could, and clambered up over the rail again.

Then a thrilling sight rewarded his gaze.

"Mither ay Moses!" he gasped. "Mither Frank is done for."

Indeed it seemed so.

In some manner the crab had gotten a grip on Frank, and was drawing him actually into his capacious maw.

It was a horrible fate—and Barney threw fear and caution away and rushed blindly to his master's aid.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPANIARDS.

Trace in the cabin of the submarine boat could see the affair as well, and they were in a fearful state of excitement.

"My soul!" gasped Pentlow; "that is the end of Frank!"

"Golly, why don't dat fishman git up dar an'— Hi, hi I done tell yo' he will do it."

Pomp's excited exclamation was caused by Barney's plucky rush upon the monster.

Straight into the creature's embrace the daring Celt rushed.

He had but one thought, and that was to save Frank Reade, Jr. He knew that there was but one chance, and that all depended on him. Barney hurled his sharp pointed lance full into the crab's maw; then he made a savage blow at its eye with the ax.

One of the claws of the crab diverted this blow, and Barney got a stunning crack upon the skull.

But he was gaining a very great end. He had caused the crab to relax its grip partly on Frank Reade, Jr.

This gave Frank a chance to put in some work.

And he did so.

The young inventor freed his right arm and drove his ax full into the crab's jaw.

It nearly severed a section of them, and caused the monster to squirm with agony.

What followed was afterwards but a confused remembrance to Frank and Barney.

They knew that they were in a terrific rough and tumble battle; that they rained blow after blow upon the foe.

A number of times Frank feared the worst, but fortune favored the brave, and they were victors.

A lucky stroke by Barney reached the creature's brain, and at once terminated its career.

The two divers pulled themselves together.

Frank put his helmet close to Barney's and shouted:

"Are you hurt?"

"Divl a bit!" retorted the Celt.

"Then I think we had better get back to the submarine boat."

"I'm wid yer, sor!"

So they disengaged themselves from the crab's embrace, and made their way back to the Sea Mole.

All this while Pomp and Pentlow had been watching the affair from the cabin of the Sea Mole with varying emotions.

Pomp had all he could do to keep from disobeying orders and going out in a diving suit himself.

The two victorious divers were quickly in the vestibule.

Closing the deck door, Frank applied the pneumatic pressure, and expelled the water from the vestibule. Then he opened the door into the cabin.

They removed their helmets to be greeted with congratulations.

"Golly, Marra Frank, I've done glad fo' to see yo' back all safe!" cried Pomp. "Shure I done fo' one while dat you wouldn't git back all!"

"By Jupiter, that is right," cried Pentlow. "It really looked as if the crab would best you both."

"Begorra, we settled him," cried Barney. "Shure, that's phwnt we wint out to do."

"'Yon did well," agreed Pentlow, "but can you afford to take those risks often?"

"No," replied Frank, decidedly, "hereafter in sailing near the bottom of the ocean we must look for such attacks. The creature might have wrecked us before it got through."

This terminated the episode. But Frank's orders to keep a little safe distance from the bottom were obeyed.

The submarine boat for some days now sailed on without further mishap or incident.

By this time they were well into the Gulf of Mexico, and Frank went to the surface to get his bearings.

The submarine boat came to the surface in a sudden and surprising manner.

Not only were the submarine voyagers astonished at what they beheld, but they were the means of astonishing others.

The shores of a tropical country were seen to the southward and distant not a mile. But not twenty yards to the northward was a rakish-looking man-of-war.

Astonished, the submarine voyagers gazed at her blankly a moment.

She flew the flag of Spain. Instantly Frank comprehended the truth.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed. "She is a Spanish cruiser and is guarding yonder shore, which is the Isle of Cuba!"

"That is the truth," cried Pentlow, "but see what she is doing."

Those on the deck of the Spanish cruiser had evidently recovered from their surprise quicker than our friends.

Out from one of her ports ran a long steel gun and a hall in Spanish came from her quarter deck.

"Lay to, senors, or we'll blow you out of the water. Lay to in the name of the Spanish government!"

Frank's hand was upon the lever to slack the Sea Mole.

But he paused and wisely. He saw the glitter of the gunner's eye on the sights and knew that the shell would strike the Sea Mole ere she could sink.

This would mean death for all, and sober reflection taught Frank the wiser course.

"Look out!" gasped Pentlow; "don't let her fire at us!"

"What?" exclaimed Frank, contemptuously; "what right has she to trouble us? We are not at war with Spain. I will show her who we are!"

Frank touched a button and instantly a little hall ran up the mast-head.

At the peak it burst and out fluttered the stars and stripes.

What effect this had upon those on board the man-of-war could not be seen at the moment. But presently there came a hail.

"Torpedo boat, aboy!"

It was in English.

Frank let down the pilot house seat, and replied:

"Aho!"
 "You fly the American flag?"
 "You can see," replied Frank.
 "What does the American Government with a torpedo boat in these waters?" came the stern query.
 "With your kind permission," said Frank, ironically, "I will state that this is not a torpedo boat."
 "Not a torpedo boat?"
 "No, sir."
 "What then is she?" incredulously.
 "She is a submarine boat."
 "Ah, a new form of craft; it is all the same."
 "But you are dead wrong," said Frank, testily, "this boat is the property of a private citizen and not of the government. She carries no guns or armament and her mission is a peaceful one."
 "It was evident that this statement was not accepted on board the Spanish vessel.
 They were not satisfied.

"Your story may be true, senor," came back from the cruiser. "but there are discrepancies. Your vessel has all the appearance of bearing torpedoes. How will you prove that you did not come up under us for the purpose of blowing us up? You may be Americans, but we believe that you are in league with the Cuban insurgents."
 "You may believe what you choose," retorted Frank, angrily. "We did not know that you or another craft were in this vicinity when we came to the surface."
 "Do you mean to say that that boat sails under water?"
 "Certainly I do!"
 "How far have you come under water?"
 "Fully two thousand miles!"
 "And you say that you did not know of our presence here until you came to the surface?"

"I have said so once."
 "Senior Captains, we shall owe you an apology if we have made a mistake. But you will understand our position. Our nation is at war. We must regard with suspicion all craft of the character of yours. Have you any objection to receiving our deck officer?"
 "Not in the least," replied Frank. "Let him come along!"

"Thank you, senor."
 "It is the best way out of it," said Frank to Pentlow. "These Spaniards are hot-headed and not well informed. If we tried to run away they might really blow us out of the water. But if we prove to them our true character they will not dare molest us."
 "I quite agree with you," declared Pentlow, earnestly. "We can not afford to be rash."

The boarding crew of the cruiser were now rowing toward the submarine boat.
 The voyagers went out on deck, and the gangway was thrown out. In a very short time the Spanish boat was alongside, and the officer of the deck came on board.

He was a scrupulously neat and dapper little martinet, and saluted gracefully.
 Frank took him over the submarine boat in its entirety. The little lieutenant bowed servilely and said:

"So sorry, Senior Capitaine, to annoy you. We shall salute your flag as a mark of regret and apology."
 And the Spanish cruiser fired a salute of six guns, as promised. Our voyagers were amply satisfied.

Frank waved the American flag, and then sent the Sea Mole a trifle further out to sea.

He had no intention of landing upon the Cuban isle, or in any way interfering with its people. It was not necessary to take bearings, for he knew where he was.

"Due west," he said, "will bring us to the coast of Yucatan. Once in sight of that we will drive southerly and easterly into the Caribbean Sea."

"It looks to me," said the professor, "as if we were going to have a storm."

"Be jabbers, that's what I think too," cried Barney. "Share there's ivery indication a't it."

"Well, let it come," said Frank, "it cannot harm us."

"Why—" began the professor.

"It is safe enough to see. All we have got to do is to go down a few hundred feet under the surface and we can laugh at the storm."

So the voyagers watched the oncoming of the hurricane with equanimity. It was coming up very rapidly from the southwest.

But as they watched, Pentlow caught sight of a sail on the western horizon. He watched it a moment very intently and then cried:

"As I live I believe that vessel is showing a flag of distress. She is surely in trouble."

CHAPTER V.

A REMARKABLE DISCOVERY.

FRANK READE, JR., heard Pentlow's words and came forward.
 "In distress?" he exclaimed; "as I live, I believe you are right, Pentlow. Pomp, bring me my best glass from the forward cabin."
 "A'right, sah!"
 The darky very promptly returned with the glass, and Frank studied the cut and build of the distant craft.

"It is a coasting schooner," Le said, "and I actually believe she does fly a signal of distress."
 "What shall we do?" asked Pentlow, anxiously.

"Why—if she needs assistance we would be worse than criminals not to aid her," said Frank.

"You are right."
 "Barney, hold the Sea Mole down for that vessel. Send up a signal that we are coming to help her."

"All right, sor."
 Barney obeyed the command, and ran a signal up on the Sea Mole's forward mast. It was evidently seen by the crew of the schooner.

But Pentlow, who had been watching the schooner with deepest interest, now gave a sharp cry:

"We shall have to hurry, Frank! As I live, I believe she is sinking fast!"

"Pat on all speed, Barney," said the young inventor in a low, tense voice. "Don't spare any effort."

The Sea Mole literally flew over the water. She was a fast sailer, and rapidly cut down the distance.

But before she could cover even half the distance there was seen a long running line of white on the horizon.

It was the hurricane, and it was coming with the speed of the wind.

Frank rushed into the pilot house and took the wheel from Barney.

"Bejabbers, Mister Frank, I'm afraid we'll never get there in toime," declared Barney.

"No," said Frank tensely. "God help the poor souls on that schooner!"

"Mercy! Can we do nothing to save them?" cried Pentlow frantically. "I tell you they are lost if we do not!"

Frank crowded on all speed. But he could readily see that it was all of no avail.

The gale creaked the struggling schooner. She was instantly lost to sight. Then it struck the submarine boat.

For a moment all was confusion. The voyagers had taken the precaution to retreat to the cabin and Frank closed the windows and doors hermetically.

Then he saw that the storm was going to tax the strength of the boat greatly. There was nothing now that could be done for the schooner.

Great waves ran over the Sea Mole completely engulfing her at times. Had she been other than a submarine boat she must have succumbed to the storm many times.

Frank finally decided that the schooner was past any aid which he could render her. So he pressed the tank valve.

Instantly the submarine boat went down under the surface. The water here was not at a great depth so that the bottom very soon came to view.

Frank sent the search-light's rays ahead, and for some while the submarine boat kept on under the sea.

There was much discussion as to the probable fate of the schooner.

"I don't see how she could possibly outride the storm," said Pentlow. "It is terrible to think of the fate of her crew, and we unable to help them."

"The best of the ocean is strewn with unfortunate wrecks," said Frank. "On my word, I believe there is one now. What! Does not that look very much like the schooner?"

Sure enough, right in the search-light's pathway there lay a sunken vessel.

She was a schooner. Both masts had gone by the board, and she certainly had not been in her present position for long.

"That is the vessel!" cried Pentlow, eagerly. "How awful of course, her crew went down with her."

The words had barely left his lips, when a great cry of horror went up. It was at an awful spectacle which they beheld.

Down through the water there sank a man's form. Even now he was beating wildly with his arms.

Doubtless he was one of the crew who had leaped overboard with a life buoy or some support and in hopes of saving his life.

Frank Reade, Jr., acted with marvelous quickness.

The submarine boat shot down like a flash to the spot where the drowning man lay.

Then Frank quickly pulled from its case a diving helmet and chemical reservoir. He donned it and Barney donned another.

In a moment more both were in the vestibule. It was flooded and then they rushed out on deck.

All this was done with great dispatch. But in a case of drowning infinitesimal fractions of a second are most vital.

In a few moments the two divers reached the side of the drowning man. They picked him up and rushed for the vestibule. Into it they leaped and shut the door.

The water was instantly expelled and Frank held the limp form of the victim of the sea over his arm.

"Begorra, it's too late, Mister Frank," cried Barney. "Share the poor soul is dead."

"On my word, I fear that is true," said Frank. "However, we will not give up yet."

Nor did they.

Every effort was made to resuscitate the unfortunate man. Several times it seemed as if he would rally. But each time he suffered a relapse.

Time was precious. Vigorously the rescuers worked.

But in vain.

They had been just too late. The man was dead. He was a man of intelligent features and evidently a Cuban. The submarine voyagers gave up the attempt with regret.

"It is too bad," said Pentlow, "if we could only have had one minute to spare."

"A minute is a great lapse of time under water," said Frank; "it may mean life or death."

The question now arose as to what should be done with the body. It was decided to sew it up, as is done on shipboard, in a blanket and give it deep sea burial.

This was done.

The unfortunate man was placed in a grave in the sand, Pentlow assisting Frank and Barney.

Pomp remained on board.

Curiosity prompted the three divers to pay a bit of a visit to the sunken schooner.

It was seen that she was a Cuban vessel, probably used for trade between Jamaica and Havana, and the others of the West India islands.

To her deck were lashed several of the crew. They had died manfully at their posts.

In the cabin the bodies of two women, one a negress, and a child, were found. Search was made for valuables, and a startling discovery made.

The craft had been fishing for pearls in the Caribbean Sea, and several thousand dollars' worth of the beautiful gems were found aboard. Also a more important find was made.

This was an entry in her log made in clear, readable Spanish, which the professor interpreted at the great risk of the leaves moulting in the water.

Thus the entry read:

"June the 25th, 18--.

"This day, Carlo Pedrozco, one of our best long-distance divers, came to the surface with a queer story.

"He described the street of a sunken city which lay beneath us. It was beautifully incrustured with coral. The depth was too great for Carlo to reach the street, but he was able to get a good view of it.

"The sunken street was in about 75 deg. 20 min. west longitude, and 13 deg. 17 min. north latitude. Carlo had no doubt but that it was the Golden City. If so, then we shall all make our fortunes, for with American diving-suits we can certainly visit the sunken city and recover the treasure.

"We start now for Key West. One of us will go to New York for diving-suits and a few months may see us wealthy and happy. Jeau preserves us."

Pentlow led the way back to the Sea Mole excitedly. Here the log of the pearl schooner, Isabella, was laid upon a table and its leaves dried. Then the wonderful narrative was gone over again.

Perhaps the most excited one of all was Barney. The Celt turned a flip-flop and growled with delight.

"Begorra, we air the people!" he cried. "Shure there's no huntin' after the sunken city at all!"

"That is true," said Pentlow, in subdued tones. "Frank, fate has put this in our way."

"That is not to be denied," said Frank, "but at what a dreadful cost."

"Oh, there is the pity," said Pentlow. "I am sorry for those poor souls! They were doomed! However, we could not save them, and there is certainly no reason why we should not avail ourselves of this information so strangely given to us."

"We will certainly make use of it," said Frank. "I am not in the least superstitious on this score."

"There is no reason to be," declared Pentlow. "Now that we have the exact bearings, why not go ahead at full speed, Frank?"

"We will certainly do so," agreed the young inventor.

So the Sea Mole was taxed to her utmost speed and fairly flew through the water. It was not yet deemed safe to go to the surface. Whether the storm yet raged or not it was not easy to say. But the Sea Mole kept on under the water.

Five after mile sped by. All that the voyagers could think or talk about now was getting into the Caribbean the quickest way.

And such good progress was made that after twenty-four hours of deep sea sailing, Frank said:

"We are in the Caribbean Sea."

"Hurrah! Now for the sunken city of Katunda!" cried Pentlow.

But the words had barely left his lips when a thrilling thing occurred. There was an awful crash and it seemed as if the boat was coming to pieces.

CHAPTER VI.

A DEEP SEA TRAP.

SOMETHING had struck the Sea Mole, and with terrific force also. In fact, the professor was knocked down, while Frank was hurled violently across the pilot house.

In a moment Frank looked out through the plate glass windows for the cause of the shock.

It was almost instantly seen.

Distant, perhaps fifty yards from the boat was a huge fish of the torped-

It was posing as if getting another line on the Sea Mole, which was moving rapidly toward it.

"Look out!" yelled Pentlow. "It is coming for us again!"

Frank saw that this was true.

The huge torpedo was coming full speed straight for the Sea Mole, head on.

If the young inventor could have reached the key board at that moment he would have tried to dodge the encounter.

But he was not able to, and the collision came.

Now if that torpedo fish had reckoned upon the character of the obstacle in its path, it would no doubt have used more discretion.

The submarine had a long and powerful steel ram. It was also going with terrific speed.

The torpedo would weigh tons, but of course was not so heavy as the submarine boat. As a result when they struck there was a sensation.

The ram struck the fish full in its head. There was a shock, a crushing sensation, and the pilot house windows were fairly plastered with blubber.

The Sea Mole staggered, came to a stop and sack to the bed of the ocean.

The weight of the obstacle upon its ram had overcome the buoyancy of its tank.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Frank, "we have literally cut our way half through that fish. It is absolutely pinned upon the ram."

This was true.

The keen steel ram had passed literally half through the torpedo from head to tail. It was a terrific course.

Of course the fish was dead. Also the submarine boat was anchored by its weight.

Until this was removed, they must certainly remain where they were. This was a moral certainty.

As soon as the voyagers recovered their wits, a consultation was held.

"Golly!" cried Pomp, "I done fink dat de Sea Mole am quite a good success at spearin' ob fish!"

"You are right, Pomp," said Frank, "and it is now a question as to how we shall get rid of our prize."

Indeed, this proved to be quite a problem.

Frank tried backing the engines and dragging the carcass of the fish over the rough ground.

But this was not successful.

Finally, he said:

"There is but one way, and that is to put on the diving suits and cut it away with axes. It will take time, but we can do nothing else."

The professor agreed with Frank on this score. So it was decided.

It did not take long for Barney and Pomp to put on helmets and go out to cut away the incumbrance. Frank did not go, nor did Pentlow.

The two servants entered the vestibule and soon had filled it with water. Then they opened the outer door and went out on deck.

They were well equipped with axes and knives.

Barney led the way over the rail and Pomp followed. They made their way along the hull to the point where the ram penetrated the fish's carcass.

Thea Barney placed his helmet close to Pomp's, and shouted:

"Begorra, if yes will begin worrak on this solids, I'll begin on the other. Is it a bargain?"

"It am, sah!" replied Pomp. "Jes' yo' go right ahead an' I'll be der wif yo'!"

"All right!"

So Barney clambered over the bow of the boat and at once work began. They latched away at the fish vigorously.

Great slices of the monster's blubber were cut away, and then the bones were reached. To disintegrate these was no easy task.

But steady labor soon cleared the ram of the main part of the blubber. Then Frank gave the signal, two flashes of the search-light, for them to come aboard.

Barney and Pomp hastened to obey the command.

A moment later they were in the vestibule, and soon after in the cabin once more.

"It is all right," cried Frank, "the small part of the fish left on the ram will be dispelled easily enough in the water."

"All right, Mither Frank," said Barney, "is it ahead we will be after good, so?"

"Yes," replied Frank. "Now, barring mishaps, we ought to make our desired locality in a day at least."

"Hurrah!" cried Pentlow. "I can hardly wait for the time to come."

"Have patience," laughed Frank. "We shall soon pass over that brief space of time."

"Oh, yes," agreed the professor, "a day counts for nothing at the bottom of the sea."

So the Sea Mole went on its way with increased speed. The flesh and bones of the fish, as Frank said, were dispelled from the ram by the swift action of the water.

Pentlow continually maintained his post at the window of the pilot house.

He kept a constant lookout, although he knew well that they were far from the locality of the sunken city as yet.

The submarine boat was now run at a good rate of speed, for the bottom of the sea here was very level and sandy.

But once the voyagers came upon a queer confirmation. Great

walls of coral reef rose upon either side of them to an enormous height.

There seemed but one passage through, and that was directly ahead. The Sea Mole was kept in this passage.

As the boat ran on it seemed as if these walls narrowed strangely, and an intense darkness rose in a wall ahead.

Frank at first attached no significance to it. He was looking for a break beyond and as emerging into clear water.

But this did not come.

The coral walls narrowed more and more, until Frank was obliged to suddenly shut off the electric current and stop the engines.

The Sea Mole came to a stop between walls which were hardly twenty feet apart, and narrower at a visible point ahead.

"We have run into a sort of trap!" cried Pentlow. "Can't we run up over this canyon, Frank?"

"That is what I will have to do," replied Frank; "but I imagine these walls are very high."

"They cannot reach the surface!"

"I am not so sure."

"At any rate, there is no other way but to go up."

"No."

So Frank pressed the tank valve, and the boat went up. Up it went, and Frank was impressed with a sudden startling fact.

The higher the boat went the more the walls contracted. In a rise of one hundred feet the sides of the boat began to scrape the walls of the passage.

"Look out, Frank!" cried Pentlow; "we shall get wedged in here if we are not careful!"

Frank instantly hastened to shut off the tank and hold the Sea Mole suspended.

"That is queer," he cried. "What in the dickens kind of a place have we got into?"

The professor looked anxious, and said:

"I am afraid we are in a bad place, Frank. We have evidently run into some sort of very narrow defile. I see no way to get out but to go back the way we came."

"I dislike to do that," said Frank, reluctantly, "before we make any further move, let us see what kind of a place this is we have got into."

Accordingly he turned the rays of the search light upward. Through the glass dome of the cabin it was easy to see. And what the voyagers saw startled them.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Frank, "we are in a deep sea cave. That is the roof above us!"

"You are right," cried Pentlow, in amazement.

Here was a situation.

How far they had run into the cavern it was not easy to guess, but here they were beyond a doubt.

"Well, I like that," said Frank. "There is nothing stupid in it, is there? A very bright move on my part."

Then all laughed.

But Frank reversed the engines, and the boat moved backward.

For full an hour it ran on before the mouth of the cavern was reached.

Then Frank sent the boat up until it surmounted the coral walls. It was then seen that the water was extremely shallow, and Frank cried:

"We shall have to go to the surface!"

And the next moment the Sea Mole leaped up into the upper air. A startling scene was revealed to the voyagers.

Directly in front of them was land. The shores of a tropical isle rose up in rare beauty.

The truth was seen at once. They had run into a subterranean passage under one of these curious Carribean Cays, not dreaming of its real character. Then emerging they had followed the upward course of the rising submarine mountain, the summit of which made an isle in the sea.

What particular isle it was they did not know nor did they take the pains to ascertain.

They did not see any sign of human life anywhere, though for all that it might be inhabited by Caribs or Spaniards gringos or penit fishers.

There was but one thing to do now and this was to go around the isle and continue the journey.

But before doing this Frank was decided to take his bearings.

So he brought his instruments on deck and proceeded to make a reckoning. The result was destined to be a most astounding revelation.

CHAPTER VII.

A KEEN DISAPPOINTMENT.

FRANK took great pains to be extremely accurate in his computation. When he finished his task the result amazed him.

Pentlow had been waiting anxiously for the verdict. He now made query:

"Well, Frank, where are we?"

"In the Carribean Sea."

"Yes, but how far from the latitude sunken city of Katunda?"

"We are in latitude 15 degrees, 17 minutes, north, and longitude 75 degrees 20 seconds west."

"What?" gasped Pentlow, "why that is the locality of the sunken isle."

"Of course it is."

For a moment the professor was dumb. He gazed at Frank, at the figures, at the tropical isle, and then at the sky."

"W—what does it mean?" he said finally; "has—has there been a miracle? Has Katunda come to the surface?"

"That is the question," said Frank in a mystified way. "Can you see any logical explanation?"

"Why—this is the exact spot? You are sure of your reckoning?"

"Absolutely!"

"Well—then this must be the sunken isle come to the surface again."

Frank shook his head.

"Impossible!" he said.

"Why?" exclaimed the scientist, in amazement. "How else do you explain it?"

"Can you not see the absurdity of such a hypothesis? The pearl divers saw the city of Katunda at the bottom of the sea, not but a few days ago!"

"Yes."

"Well, how could it rise from the sea in that brief space of time and assume such an extensive growth of tropical foliage and life? Why that isle has been there for at least a hundred years, I'll take my oath."

The professor saw the logic of Frank's remarks.

"Why, of course!" he said. "Why did I not think of it? But—what does it all mean then? Where is the sunken city of Katunda? Have we made a mistake of any kind?"

"No," said Frank, decidedly; "we are not the ones who have made the mistake."

"Ah!" exclaimed Pentlow; "you think then that the crew of the schooner are the ones in error?"

"It must be so. In taking the bearings of Katunda they made an error. They would undoubtedly have come to this spot themselves, but they would not have found Katunda."

Pentlow drew a deep breath, and sank down upon a permanent bench against the boat's rail. He drew his fingers through his long hair several times.

"Well, I'll be hanged!" he finally ejaculated; "it seems as if the hand of fate was guiding us. We are no better off than at any time for positive knowledge of the location of Katunda."

"Not in the least," agreed Frank.

It was not a little disconcerting to realize that this was a fact. For some time silence reigned.

To search for Katunda now they must go on again at random. Certainly there was no other logical explanation of the curious phenomenon.

Pentlow looked at the isle.

It was absolutely ridiculous to assume for a moment that this could be the real and again risen to the surface.

The idea was at once dispelled as most highly improbable. It was certain that the captain of the schooner had made a tremendous mistake in reckoning.

It was but natural that the submarine voyagers should be somewhat disheartened by this disappointment.

But Frank said finally:

"There is no use in repining. We are no worse off than before. We found the schooner's log giving the exact bearings of Katunda. We had no better one than that we have now."

"That is so!" agreed Pentlow. "Well, let us be sensible and make the best of it. As the true bearings are lost to us, let us see how we can best proceed."

"That is the way to talk," cried Frank. "Cheer up, friends. Perhaps we may be able to deduce something of value yet from these bearings. Let us see! How would the schooner's captain be apt to make such an error. Some of the figures may have become transposed."

The sheet or page from the log bearing the record was again subjected to a close examination. However, there was not much to be deduced from it.

The best and only course apparently was to proceed at random and trust to chance.

"There is no doubt but that we will find it in time," declared Frank; "so here goes."

The Sea Mole was started ahead.

Frank ran along the west shore of the isle out of curiosity to see how large it really was.

He found that it was fully a dozen square miles, and like all the Carribean Cays, completely reef bonnd.

It was, in fact, not a little risky in keeping so close to the shores, but yet no mishap befell.

Finally, after satisfying himself, Frank headed for the open sea.

When the boat was but a speck on the horizon he pressed the key which closed the doors and windows of the boat.

Then the Sea Mole once more went to the bottom, and again the submarine search was begun.

Professor Pentlow was really the most disappointed one of the crew.

But yet he kept vigilant watch at the pilot-house window.

"What do you think?" asked Frank, once. "Will we find the ships of the six sunken pirates intact? They have been under sea a good many years, you know."

"I am aware of that," replied the explorer, "but there is a good chance that we shall find them quite well preserved."

"But the treasure—"

"Oh, that will be all right. The salt water has no effect on gold that is destructive. Silver and the other metals may rust, corrode or crumble, but I do not fear for the precious metal."

"Then you think we will find treasure aboard the pirate vessels?"

"Yes, and why not in the sunken city? I am sure we shall find that well preserved."

"I hope so!" said Frank, with interest.

Barney and Pomp had little thought of the treasure. Neither were smitten with a love of filthy lucre, and cared much more for adventure and excitement.

Now that the submarine boat was once more under way, and matters had settled down to a species of routine, the two jokers began to beguile the time with playing pranks upon each other.

Barney was in the custom of indulging in a glass of toddy upon rearing at night. Generally he mixed this up early in the day in a half pint bottle and left it under his pillow so that it would be all ready when he should retire.

Pomp, with true mischievous spirit, substituted a bottle containing a condiment which emulsified all the spices and pungent liquids he could lay hands upon.

The result was that Barney swallowed a surprise, so much of a surprise, in fact, that he did not recover from a gagging and coughing fit for nearly an hour.

Of course the Celt knew who had laid the joke for him and was determined to retaliate.

Pomp had carefully sifted a huge quantity of flour in a bread trough, and left it on the shelf in the guley. He intended to manufacture some toothsome cakes with it.

Barney leisurely sauntered into the place, while Pomp was momentarily called away, and dropped a small white object into the flour. Then he whisked in Harry Owen, and was innocently toasting his feet on the electric cooker, when Pomp came in.

"How 'yo' be, culier?" enquired the darkey. "Done fink yo' pny me a visit, eh?"

"Begorra, it's a foine place yez have down here, nnygr?"

"Sho's yo' ho'n: it am de bes' place on ho'd," averred Pomp.

"Naber feel homsack down hyah, yo' kio bet!"

"Shure, as long as yez kin ate sich foine cakes as yez make, naygur, it's the best place for a hungry man."

Pomp chuckled.

"Kain't take dat hint fo' a cent, I'ish," he said, "fo' I ain' got a cake made up yit."

"I reckon yez will be afther makin' some atwixt an' atween now an' dinnar time."

"Shoo!" exclaimed Pomp, glancing at the flour in the trough. "I jes' clean nigh fo'got about dat flour. Hol' yo' hosses, I'ish, an' I jes' mix 'yo' ap some lily hit ob a cake now."

"Be jabbers! It's me best frind yez are," cried the Celt. "I'll do as much for yez, naygur. Shure that's funny lookin' flour yez have there."

"It am de bes' yo' kin bny fo' money," declared the darkey. "Maree Frank he wor' hab none but de bes'."

So Pomp donned a long wooden spoon into the flour to give it a shaking up.

What followed was astonishing.

There was a sharp explosion and—whiff! the fine flour went in a cloud over the whole room. Barney turned a back somersault out of the place.

Then he crunched down in a perfect paroxysm of laughter at the spectacle before him.

Pomp was a sight to behold.

He never would have been taken for a colored man. The fine flour was literally driven into the pores of his black skin.

Face and hair were full of it. Eyes, ears, mouth and nose were full, and the air was one white cloud about him.

He was powerless for a minute or more to speak or act, and could barely get his breath.

Then he fell to digging out his eyes and ears. The first thing he saw—the first thing he heard—was the Celt in a roaring fit of laughter.

So sudden had been the explosion that Pomp had not been able to realize what had happened for a time.

Then he saw his reflection in a glass opposite. He could hardly believe his senses.

From head to foot—skin, garments and all—he was as white as driven snow.

He gasped in amazement.

"Fo' de lan's sake!" he muttered. "Whoebber frowned dat flour into mah face like o' dat!"

Then his gaze lit upon Barney. An instant suspicion crossed his mind that the Celt was at the bottom of it all, and he was instantly angry—in fact, more angry than words can tell.

CHAPTER VIII.

KATUNDA AT LAST.

CONVINCED that Barney was the actual cause of his mishap Pomp made a dash for him.

The Celt bolted for the forward hold. He reached the steel door of the magazine. But before he could dodge through it Pomp was upon him.

"Huh! Yo' fink yo' berry amnd, don' yo', yo' no 'count I'ishmann? I jes' 'ix yo' fo' dat, yo' kin jes' bet!"

"Murder!" roared Barney. "I have go av me hair, yez black ape!" But Pomp was not letting go just then. A tremendous scuffle followed.

In the course of it Barney got a liberal dose of the flour, thereby being made to take some of his own medicine as it were.

While the equal conflict was being waged there came a startling ring from the main deck.

This meant that the presence of all was required in the pilot-house at once.

The two jokers at once made a dash up the stairs. They presented a very strange appearance when they presented themselves to Frank.

But the young inventor and Pentlow as well were too excited to notice much about his Frank cried sharply.

"Stand by the wheel! Barney. We have found the city of Katunda at last!"

A glance was sufficient to verify the fact that Frank spoke the truth. Instantly all was excitement.

Instantly less than three hundred yards through the water was the sunken city. Its gates and walls were plainly to be seen.

Katunda was found.

That it might be any other sunken city was hardly likely. This no doubt was the Golden City whose fate was narrated so thrillingly in the M. S. owned by Pentlow.

The professor was the first to contain himself.

As the Sea Mole bore down for the gates of the sunken city, he danced and shouted in wildest glee like a child with a new toy.

"This is indeed a triumph," he cried, "why, we shall make ourselves famous. It is wonderful."

Frank's heart beat high for the search-light fell across the sunken city.

Its buildings were seen to be of a strange style of architecture, unlike that ever seen by the explorers. It was half between the Greek and the Egyptian.

As the Sea Mole sailed up to the walls of the city, it could be seen that they were half buried in white and gleaming sand.

This was the result of the action of deep sea currents for many scores of years.

The city gates were open, and the boat without any difficulty passed through and up the main street of the place.

Upon either side rose the buildings of stone, but deeply increased with coral. It was a weird and strange spectacle.

In the white glare of the search-light it looked like a ghastly city of the dead. Indeed this was what it really was, for the inhabitants had all perished in its streets when the island sank.

Nothing was, of course, left of their remains. They were long since ashes and dispersed by the action of the water and its organisms.

No articles of any sort were left in any of the buildings. The treasures of the open bazaars were empty; the stalls where once goods had been exhibited held not a vestige of them.

But everywhere sand and silt had gathered, and enormous fish and sea animals played in and about the empty buildings.

Frank noted all this as the submarine boat sailed on, and could not help but say with conviction:

"Professor, I am afraid that your golden treasure has been dispersed, even as these other articles which must have existed in these buildings. It must be that there are other articles as imperious to time and the action of the water as gold.

But Pentlow was confident.

"Have patience," he said; "we shall see."

"But where will we look for the treasure?" persisted Frank.

At that moment they emerged upon a great plaza, with a fanned fountain in the center, of carved stone. Directly opposite this, there was no enormous building, with great columns and a mighty dome.

"There is the palace of the ruler, as do not," cried Pentlow. "I feel sure that we shall find treasure there. Of course, it will be found in some chamber underground, securely locked and barred. There is where we must look for it."

"All right," agreed Frank.

He brought the Sea Mole to a stop right at the entrance to the palace. The boat rested upon the sandy bottom.

Then preparations were made for leaving the boat.

It was arranged that Pentlow and Barney should pursue the quest for the treasure chamber, upon the presumption that such existed.

Frank and Pomp were to remain aboard and keep a lookout for any strange sea monster which might essay to enter the place.

In a few moments Barney and Pentlow, equipped in their diving suits, were on the outer deck. They descended over the rail, and then plunging through the yielding hook of sand, ascended the coral-encrusted steps.

They passed through the great entrance and stood in a mighty hall.

The light from the submarine boat pervaded this to a great extent and made all quite plain.

Pentlow led the way through this. Beyond was another arched door and an immense courtyard, which must once have looked like Eden when it was gay with its tropical plants and trickling fountains.

Across this the two explorers made their way.

This brought them into the main body of the palace. Here were chambers to the number of fully one hundred.

From one to another the explorers hurriedly passed, Pentlow leading the way.

Everyone was barren and empty. But there were some indications

that rich furnishings had once been there. These were now but dust and rubble, and merged into the sands of the sea.

The extreme loneliness of the place, and the realization that death had long since swept all life from this once prosperous city, had a more or less depressing effect upon the explorers.

But they kept on, and not until he had visited all the chambers did Pentlow turn his footsteps in another direction.

Some broad stairs led down into dark depths.

Pentlow placed his helmet close to Barney's and shouted:

"I believe we shall find the treasure down there!"

"All right, sor!"

"Now if you are reluctant to take the risk of following me you may wait here until I return!"

"Begorra, I'll go wid ye!" replied Barney. "I'm not afeard!"

"Come on, then!"

Down the slippery steps they slowly made their way.

The lights upon their helmets showed objects almost quite plainly.

At the foot of the stairs was a long passage.

From this doors opened into rooms similar to those above. These

rooms had no appearance of being treasure chambers.

But at the end of the passage was another flight of stairs. At the

foot of these was a blank wall.

"Ah," thought Pentlow. "Now we are coming to something."

"Begorra, do ye think we can go any further?" asked Barney.

"Of course," replied the treasure hunter, "there is something beyond

this wall; these stairs were never made for nothing, be sure of that."

Pentlow searched the wall in every way for a sign of a secret spring

or the outlines of a door.

None such existed.

The wall was tight and closely plastered in the chinks. There was

no doubt of this.

A sudden thought struck Pentlow.

He knelt down and scraped away some of the sand upon the floor.

His fingers were suddenly thrust into an aperture.

He pulled strongly and lifted a square slab of rock, revealing a dark

opening below.

He experienced a thrill of surprise and delight.

"Hurrah!" he cried. "Now we have found the way!"

He bent over and tried to look down into the place. His helmet

light enabled him to see a square chamber below.

Instantly he lowered himself into the place.

Barney followed.

The sight which was now revealed to the two explorers was indeed

a wonderful one. They stood in a square crypt or vault, devoid of

windows or any other opening.

One part of the chamber was half walled up. In the compartment

instantly he was a heap of what looked like dull bits of stone.

Barney eagerly leaned over and picked up some of these. His ex-

citement was most intense.

"The treasure," he cried, "look, they are ingots of gold. These

people did not know the manufacture of coin. They dealt in slugs

and ingots."

This seemed true. Barney was quite stupefied.

"Do ye reckon that this is all gold?" he asked.

"Why of course!" cried Pentlow, "don't you see that the action of

the water and time has destroyed everything above this crypt? The

destroying influence could not get down here, for it was tightly sealed

up."

"Begorra, there's heaps av it," averred the Celt.

"More than a ton!" cried Pentlow. "Only think of it, enough to

buy a whole State in America. Why, we are all ten times million-

aires."

This was rather an extravagant statement, but Pentlow was excited.

He picked up the yellow slugs and ingots and began to fill a re-

ceptacle he carried. Barney did the same.

"We will take these to the Sea Mole," declared Pentlow, "then

we will devise a plan to remove the treasure to the boat."

And the two divers, with all they could stagger under of the metal,

started to return to the Sea Mole.

CHAPTER IX.

ALL A SHAM.

PENTLOW was tremendously excited. It was the crowning hour of his life.

He reached the rail of the submarine boat and clambered over it, followed by Barney.

He entered the vestibule, and at that moment Frank and Pomp caught sight of him.

The water was exhausted from the vestibule, and then the two divers entered the cabin.

"Well," cried Frank in astonishment, "you have found something!"

"Found it?" cried the professor, wildly, as he flung his burden down. "We are millionaires, I tell you—rich as rich can be!"

The sack burst open, and the yellow slugs rolled out. Pomp gave a great cry.

"Golly fo' glory!" he shouted, "dat am de bee' fng ye! It am gold fo' suah—it am gold!"

Barney also deposited his burden, and removing his helmet, gasped:

"Begorra, I should say it was gold or somethin' powerful heave. Me back is nigh broke wid it."

Frank looked at Pentlow.

"You have found the treasure of Katunda?" he asked.

"Yes!" cried Pentlow wildly; "and Fate led me right to it. Nothing could have been more wonderful!"

Then he narrated his experience and Frank listened with interest.

"How much do you think there is of the stuff?" he asked.

"I don't know. Certainly more than a ton."

"Wonderful! We will arrange a plan to bring it aboard the boat at once."

"That is the talk."

It was quickly decided that Barney and Pomp should use heavy sacks and make regular trips back and forth until the treasure vault should be empty.

Accordingly they donned their helmets and began to work.

But steadily they worked at it, bringing the metal aboard until hundreds of pounds of it cumbered the cabin floor.

Pentlow was almost delirious with delight. He could not restrain his exuberant feelings.

"You cannot blame me!" he cried. "It is a great lift for me. Do you know what I shall do? I intend to carry out the fondest dream of my life and erect the biggest observatory in the world upon the highest peak in the Rocky Mountains."

"That is a praiseworthy resolve," said Frank. "I only hope that all this metal is gold."

"Gold! Why of course it is. No other metal could have escaped corrosion in this length of time."

"Ah, you forget! This treasure has been carefully sealed up in a crypt where there could be little of the corroding influence felt."

"Eh?" exclaimed Pentlow, with sudden lengthening of the face, "there could be no mistake. Of course it is gold. I'll guarantee it to stand test—"

"Ah!" cried Frank, "that is the idea. It will do no harm to give it a test."

"Do so!"

Frank picked up one of the slugs and went into the chemical room. Here he was met by a strong glare of light.

He experienced a peculiar chill as he glanced at the metal in this light. It looked too white for gold.

He applied a file to the corroded surface and filed away the rust. It seemed to him that for gold the metal was intensely hard and brittle.

However he said nothing.

Pentlow watched the experiment.

When he had exposed the metal from its coating of rust, Frank applied the chemical. The test was instantly made.

"Then Pentlow gave a groan and sank into a chair.

"Great Heavens!" he gasped. "We are duped—sold! It is not gold!"

"No," replied Frank, steadily; "the natives of Katunda probably knew nothing of gold. This is a queer alloy somewhat akin to brass."

It was some while before Pentlow recovered his spirits. The disappointment was keen.

Frank commanded Barney and Pomp to desist in bringing the spurious metal aboard. Then a discussion was held.

"The treasure of Katunda may not have been a fable, anyway," said Pentlow, with a sudden revival of hope. "You know there may be other treasure chambers."

"That is possible," agreed Frank, "but not altogether likely. However, if you wish to resume the search, by all means do so."

"I believe I will," declared the scientist.

So accordingly he went forth again with Barney. The Katunda palace was again most thoroughly explored.

Another treasure vault was found, and in it various other articles of the same kind of metal, among them being a crown studded with pearls and other jewels.

This had some value, and was the only article found worth preserving.

Not yet satisfied, Pentlow explored other buildings. But all was to no purpose.

He finally returned to the cabin of the Sea Mole.

"Well!" asked Frank, cheerily, "how did you make out?"

"I am satisfied," said Pentlow wearily, "the treasure of Katunda was a sham. The gold which they were reputed to have in such quantity was not gold at all."

"Quite right."

"We have explored the treasure vaults of what must have been the royal palace, and we have found what were undoubtedly the crown jewels. They are only cheap pearls and rubies. It is all a sham."

"Just so," agreed Frank. "I suppose you are much disappointed!"

"More than I can tell you."

"Well, I am not."

Pentlow looked astonished.

"You are not?"

"No."

"Why?"

"I did not expect to find any gold in Katunda."

"Then where did you expect we would find it?"

"Why, in the most logical place, and that is aboard the ships of the Six Sunken Pirates."

Pentlow started up with a sharp, gasping cry:

"Eh?" he exclaimed. "Why, I never thought of that."

"I thought not. Well, it was worth thinking of, for, no doubt, each one of those vessels carried gold and silver both. You see they preyed upon the commerce of the seas as well as upon these small native towns."

"Why, of course. But do you think we can find those ships now? Have they not long since crumbled away to dust?"

"No doubt they are badly rotted away!" replied Frank, "but it is a fact that timbers sunken in sea sand are preserved for many hundreds of years. At least we ought to find the spot where they sank, for it was in sight of this lake. If there was any gold aboard, no matter if the ships have passed into dust, we can dig for it and find it in the remains of the ships."

"Right!" cried Pentlow, excitedly. "Frank, you are ten times more sensible than I am. I should never have thought of that."

"It was in my mind from the first," said Frank, "in fact, I had no idea you would find gold in Katunda. The uses of gold contrary to popular belief and history was known to but very few of the American natives. The Aztecs, it is true, valued the metal. But many of these island tribes would have esteemed iron far more valuable."

"Well," cried Pentlow, eagerly, "why not go looking for these sunken ships at once?"

"We will do so," replied Frank.

So the Sea Mole was lifted from her sandy bed and sailed out of the sunken city.

A circular course was taken about the sunken island gradually diverging at each circle. A day was spent thus in the search.

But it was found to be rewarded.

Suddenly the voyagers spied an object in the path of the search light which caused a great shout to go up.

"There is one of them!" cried Pentlow. "Steer for it, Barney!"

As the submarine boat drew nearer, the ribs and rotting keel of a vessel were seen imbedded in the sands. It was a thrilling moment.

There was no doubt but that this was one of the six sunken pirates.

The Sea Mole turned obliquely to the left, and there, not one hundred yards distant, another hulk was seen.

One fourth of a mile from here two more were found close together. These were quite well preserved. The other two vessels had rotted even with the bed of the ocean, and were found with difficulty.

"Now," said Frank, "let us begin work with these two first ships. Get out the helmets, Barney."

"Yes, sir!"

In a few moments Frank and Barney and the professor were walking on the bottom of the sea.

They approached the two sunken hulks with somewhat queer sensations.

The decks of both ships had fallen in, and the timbers of the hull were extremely rotten and flimsy.

But Frank crawled through an aperture into the hold of one of the ships. Here he saw a heap of stuff in one corner, which had fallen through the rotten timbers of the cabin deck above.

He dashed his helmet light upon it, and then touched it with his foot.

What had apparently been an iron chest fell in rusty particles about his feet. A heap of round and dim-looking coins fell out.

Frank poked one of them up and struck the corrosion from it with his knife handle.

It gleamed yellow and strong. There was no doubt of its character.

It was gold.

Frank turned and pressed his helmet close to Pentlow's.

"Here is some of the pirates' treasure!" he cried. "There is no doubt of its quality, for they are Spanish doubloons."

The scientist was intensely excited. He knelt down and began to gather up the coins.

But at that moment a heavy timber fell and struck his helmet, cutting a hole completely through the metal. In a moment he was drowning.

CHAPTER X.

A VERY NARROW ESCAPE.

THE moment that the beam fell and struck Pentlow, Frank foresaw the awful consequences. He knew that it would crush the helmet, and that the scientist was likely to drown. He acted with instant rapidity.

Forgetful of the treasure—forgetful of all else—he instantly caught Pentlow by the shoulders. Barney, quick to act, seized him by the heels.

It was only a question of time.

All depended upon reaching the Sea Mole at once. Toward the boat the two divers rushed.

Pomp saw them coming, and placed a finger upon the vestibule valve. Into the vestibule dashed Frank and Barney with their load. Pomp pressed the valve.

The next moment Frank held the rigid form of the professor over his arm. Water gushed from the dying man's nose, ears and mouth.

He was of course insensible, but the work of resuscitation was at once begun. There was no time to lose.

Gradually there came signs of returning life.

"We did save him!" cried Frank. "Heaven be praised!"

Right valiantly did they work over the scientist. Such persistent efforts triumphed, and he came to.

"Harrah!" cried Frank. "We've pulled you through, Pentlow, though it was a close rub."

Gradually the Professor recovered himself. It was some hours, however, before he was himself again.

Then his first thought was of the treasure.

"The gold," he muttered, "did you bring it aboard?"

"Indeed, no," laughed Frank. "We thought you of more consequence than the gold."

Pentlow saw the absurdity of the question and laughed also.

"I shall be all right soon," he said confidently, "then we will return for the gold."

It was some hours, however, before it was deemed safe for Pentlow to venture out again. Then preparations were once more made.

In a short while they were once more at the wreck of the pirate vessel. The gold was conveyed in two strong sacks to the cabin of the Sea Mole.

The search was extended further, but no more could be found in the wreck of that ship.

It was of course impossible to tell just what vessel this was. No trace of the crew or any other of their belongings remained.

The second vessel was now invaded. This was in a little better state of preservation than the other.

Not so much gold was found in this ship. Frank computed all when they got back to the Sea Mole.

There is about forty thousand dollars worth of gold in this lot!" he said.

"Humph! a mere pittance!" said the professor disappointedly; "those pirates must have carried more than that!"

"I don't know," said Frank dubiously; "I have always found that the tales of pirates' treasures are always gross exaggerations! Again a great many pirates buried or hid their fortunes on shore. This may account for it."

"True enough!" agreed the professor.

"But there are four more wrecks to search."

"Yes."

"Perhaps when we get through with them there will be a respectable sum."

"I shall hope so. You see the treasure of Katunda proving such a sham has completely discouraged me."

"I am sorry!"

Pentlow saw the folly of his course and took matters more philosophically; from that time he abandoned discouragement.

All were now exhausted and it was proposed to retire to rest before venturing out to search the four remaining wrecks.

So Pomp being left on guard, all hands turned in.

They slept soundly for eight hours; then they were astir again.

The spirits of all were high when after a hearty meal the quest for gold was resumed.

There was something exciting and exhilarating about the quest. All entered into it with great zest.

The Sea Mole was now run alongside the third one of the sunken pirates.

Of this ship, little was left above the sands, save some rotting ribs. However, work was begun with spades and scoops.

The sand was thrown aside rapidly, and the keel was reached. The search was prosecuted thoroughly and for hours.

The only result was the unearthing of a few hundred doubloons, all in rather a bad state.

That there must have been more treasure aboard was a moral certainty. But to find it seemed a physical impossibility.

So, after a time, work was discontinued, and the fourth sunken ship was visited.

This was well sunk in the sand, and but little was left of the timbers. Barney put his spade into the sand and turned up some of it.

The result surprised all, for out from the sand there rolled a human skull.

It was in a remarkable state of preservation, due no doubt to the fact that it had not been exposed to the action of the water.

Frank took the skull up and examined it critically.

He saw that it was of unusual size and must have belonged to one of the largest of the pirate crew. There was a seam along one side, as though the owner had at some time or other suffered a fracture.

Barney turned up more sand but no more bones were found. However, his spade struck a hard substance.

Digging around it a while, the divers were astonished to see revealed a specimen of old-fashioned cannon.

It was so intensely heated that a blow of the spade easily broke large sections out of it.

But the divers were looking for gold and passed over these trifling discoveries.

However, Frank preserved the skull, keeping it for a relic.

Gradually the lower timbers of the vessel were uncovered. Then they began to find gold.

The metal was mostly found in the shape of coins, but at times small rings or ingots were unearthed.

The search was prosecuted upon a system. Barney and Frank dug the sand out, while Pentlow carefully sifted it.

Thus the quest went on.

Quite an amount of the yellow metal was taken from the wreck of the vessel.

But two more remained to be searched. These were zealously dug over, but they yielded hardly five thousand dollars worth of gold.

This ended the treasure hunt.

Back to the submarine boat they went. In the cabin the total of the treasure recovered was reckoned.

It amounted in round figures to about seventy thousand dollars.

This to many might have seemed a tidy sum. But it was not at all up to Pentlow's expectations.

He had looked for fully a round million.

"On my word," he declared, "those fellows must have disposed of their treasure in some other way, or else they were dreadfully poor." "Seventy thousand dollars in those times was a large fortune," said Frank, "that was nearly twelve thousand to each ship."

"Why, it would hardly pay to recover except in the way in which we have done it. By ordinary methods it would have cost as much as the gold was worth to recover it."

"That is largely true," said Frank, "but the seventy thousand is yours, and will make you a comfortable fortune."

"Mine?" exclaimed the scientist.

"Yes!"

"It is no more mine than yours. There must be an equal division."

"For myself I want no division," replied Frank, decisively. "I am wealthy enough for all purposes. If you choose to give Barney and Pomp five thousand apiece you can do so."

"Why, I will divide it equally with them."

"Ye z needn't thrubble yerself to do that," cried Barney. "Shure, I've enough for all me needs now. It's not money I'm after wantin'."

Pomp expressed himself likewise.

Pentlow was quite overcome.

"Well," he declared, "I must say that it is more than kind of you. I can carry out a few of my cherished schemes with that amount."

"We wish you success," said Frank. "We would gladly have recovered the million for you if it had been possible."

"Indeed, I cannot tell you how much I owe you," said the professor, with feeling. "But for you I might not have recovered anything."

So the matter was settled.

"Well," said Frank, "now that we have recovered the treasure of the six sunken pirates, and also that of the Golden City of Katunda, I don't see but that we have accomplished our mission."

"True," agreed Pentlow, "and yet I am loath to leave this spot."

"Indeed!" said Frank, in some surprise. "Why should we stay longer?"

"There is no good reason unless—unless—"

"Well!"

"We might feel disposed to pursue our quest further in the city of Katunda."

Frank gave a start.

"Why—yes, of course," he said; "that is, if you desire."

"Would it be too dear a request?" asked Pentlow.

"Certainly not."

"I thank you."

"But—may I ask, do you expect to find any more treasure there?"

"Not altogether," replied the professor. "I am, in one sense, done with gold hunting. This time my errand will be purely a scientific one."

"Ah! Well, it shall be so. Barney, steer us over to Katunda."

"All right, sir."

The Celt sent the submarine boat ahead at a lively rate. It was but a very short time ere the gate of Katunda was at hand.

Once more the Sea Mole sailed through this and up the streets of the sunken city.

Thrilling events were in store.

CHAPTER XI.

BARNEY'S GREAT PERIL.

The submarine boat once more sailed into the great plaza of the sunken city and the voyagers were in sight of the Royal Palace from which Pentlow had abstracted the sham treasure.

In fact the spurious metal was scattered over the sands where it had been cast out.

Pentlow heaved a sigh as he gazed at it.

"Do you want to stop here?" asked Frank.

The professor shook his head.

"No," he said, "let us go on up the street and see the rest of the city."

So the Sea Mole kept on.

It was fully a quarter of a mile up the street, but then the expanse of another plaza larger than the first was seen.

Here also were buildings having the appearance of being palaces.

This was not a little surprising.

"How does this happen?" exclaimed Frank. "Was not that the royal palace we explored before?"

"Beyond a doubt," replied Pentlow.

"But here are buildings to beat it!"

"That is true. They may, however, belong to different branches of the government service. It is hard to believe that these people were not in an advanced state of civilization."

"They certainly were for barbarians. Let us stop here, Frank. I have a desire to look through that building yonder."

"All right!"

The boat came to a stop. It settled down once more in the sand, and again Pentlow donned his diving helmet.

This time only Barney accompanied him. Frank and Pomp remained aboard the Sea Mole.

Leaving the boat the two divers approached the largest of the buildings. They entered it by means of a large portico.

They found themselves at once in an immense high-arched structure. It was constructed entirely of stone with mighty arches and columns.

Here, for the first time, Pentlow got an inkling of the character of the ancient inhabitants. There were a number of statues in the place.

They were crudely carved out of stone, and the action of time and the water, had somewhat destroyed their outline.

Yet it could be seen that the subjects were powerful framed men, half clad in the Indian style. Most of the statues were of warriors, and carried heavy battle axes.

Pentlow examined them attentively. Upon the pedestals he found some inscriptions, which, however, he was quite unable to decipher.

Meanwhile, Barney had been doing a little exploring on his own account.

The Celt had found a flight of stairs leading down into a region below.

He ventured to descend while Pentlow was examining the statues. He found himself at once in a long, low-ceiled room.

Through the center of this there extended a long stone table. Also stone benches were ranged beside it.

Nothing was left of the dishes which might once have rested upon it, or of the bones of the feasters who might have occupied the benches.

But there was good reason to believe that a feast had been in progress there at the time that the island had sunk into the sea.

"Be me sowl!" thought Barney, "this must 'ave been some kold as a big hotel I'm ather thinkin'." Shure there's no other way av inklin' at it."

With which sagacious conclusion the Celt passed on into a chamber beyond.

This might have been the great kitchen of the "hotel," for there was a huge stone fireplace and other evidences of the sort.

The Celt now returned to the stairs. He climbed these and looked for the professor.

Pentlow was here among the statues, but he was not there now. Nor was he in sight.

Barney hastened to make a search for the scientist. He passed on through the main part of the building and into an inner courtyard.

"Bogorra, that's quare enough," he muttered; "pwere cud he have gone?"

Through the courtyard the Celt went and into another part of the huge building. From room to room he went, but not once did he catch sight of the professor.

He was completely nonplused.

"On me word, he must be ather being about here somewhere," he thought, "but pwerever can that be? Shure he's niver gone back to the boat."

So Barney kept on with his quest. For fully an hour he wandered through the palace but not once did he get a glimpse of Pentlow. Then he began to get really alarmed.

"It's very funny," he muttered; "I'll niver think he'd go back to the boat widout me. Shure, mebbe some big fish has got the likes av him."

Barney decided to first return to the submarine boat and find out the truth. If any mishap had really befallen the scientist they would be the most likely ones to know it.

At least it was proper that Frank should know of it at once. The Celt lost no further time.

He set out at once through the courtyard. He passed through the hall where the statues were and a sudden chill struck him.

The glare of the Sea Mole's search-light was not visible. What did it mean?

He rushed on through the portico. All was darkness beyond. He ran down the steps and into the street.

Then a thrill of horror overcame the Celt. The submarine boat was gone.

What had happened?

What did it mean?

Where had the Sea Mole gone, and what was the meaning of her departure? There was certainly some good reason for it.

So the Celt reflected. In his excitement he wandered on down the street of the sunken city.

While he had been in the banquet room of the palace, some unusual thing had happened to take the professor and the submarine boat also out of the way.

He was well satisfied of this. But what was that unusual happening?

He was utterly unable to solve the riddle. Moreover, he was physically quite overcome, and finally sank down upon the steps of one of the houses.

His head ached violently, his ideas were confused, his senses benumbed, and a stupor came over him. He was intensely sleepy, and tried in vain to throw it off. Finally he succumbed to it.

And right there upon the stone steps he slept. How long he slept he never knew. But he came to with a peculiar shock.

He experienced a sudden keen thrill, as if a hundred needles were pricking him.

He opened his eyes to see that a snake like form was wound about his leg.

It required only a glance for Barney to see that it was an eel.

It was also one of the electric variety, and this explained the stinging sensation he had experienced. With a snort of anger he essayed to kick the creature off.

But it clung to him tenaciously, and he was finally obliged to grip the creature with both hands and pull it from its grip. This gave him a double shock.

Having disposed of the eel, Barney was now wide awake.

He recalled his predicament, and strained his gaze in all directions for a glimpse of the Sea Mole.

"Begorra, that bites the Duteb!" he muttered. "Phwere iver end that boat have gone? Shure it was foinn work laving me here loike this!"

His helmet light was all that kept him from being shrouded in the deepest gloom.

The eternal loneliness and possible hopelessness of his position was appalling to Barney.

He did not fear suffocation.

He knew that the chemical generator would last for many weeks; but he even now felt the pangs of hunger.

And of course it would be impossible for him to feed himself with the helmet on. This was out of the question.

Starvation, then, would be his ultimate fate, unless his friends should return to his rescue. That they would, if in their power, Barney well knew.

"Shure," he muttered with something like resignation, "I can only make the best at it an' wait fer thim. They'll be comin' some time I'm shure!"

So the courageous fellow settled himself down in a corner of a portico of one of the buildings and waited.

Curious little happenings came up to claim his attention and thus while away the time.

Numberless little fish hovered in schools over him.

A curious looking crab tried to fasten upon his leaden diving shoes. But Barney repelled it with a vigorous kick.

Then a sizable dog-fish thrust its snout up against his helmet glass and gave him a start.

Once a number of slimy eels came wriggling like snakes about him and it was with extreme difficulty that he fought them off.

"Begorra, this is the devil's own place," muttered the Celt. "Shure, it's not a bit at peace they give ye, but they're deturmed to ate me up. Bad cess to the little devils!"

"Hoover, those tormentors were as fles as flies to a new foe which suddenly appeared on the scene.

This was in the shape of a bnge shark, whose greedy eyes spied the Celt.

The monster made a shoveling attempt to turn on its back and pick the Celt out of his corner. But his nose was too broad and Barney gave it a terrific blow with his ax.

The water was instantly colored with blood, and the shark churned it madly in his fury.

Again he made a rush at the Celt and his sharp teeth actually grazed Barney's leg. But the Irishman this time dealt it a blow with the keen ax which literally disemboweled it.

This ended the conflict.

With a breath of relief Barney drew back in his corner, while the shark's body drifted away in the water. No more monsters of the deep ventured to disturb the Celt, and for a while he was left to his own devices.

CHAPTER XII.

BARNEY'S RESCUE—THE END.

But what had become of the submarine boat and its crew? Where had the professor gone, and what was his reason for so unceremoniously abandoning? This was a problem.

After Barney's separation from him the scientist had spent some time in examining the statues.

Then he was about to turn his attention to the inner courtyard when a thrilling thing occurred.

Down over the great portico there came an immense long slinky coil. It looked like the folds of a mighty serpent, and Pentlow thought at that moment instinctively of the fabled sea serpent.

"Great Owee!" he muttered, "it is not safe to meet that monster. Where is Barney?"

He looked about and saw that the Celt had vanished.

It was perhaps not so very strange at that moment that the professor should accept it as a fact that the Celt had also seen the sea monster and had fled to the Sea Mole to escape it.

At any rate, this was Pentlow's conclusion, and naturally he began to plan for his own safety.

The body of the sea serpent or eel, whatever it was, partly blocked

the portico, and it was, therefore, not safe to attempt to escape in that direction.

There was a window near, and Pentlow rushed through this.

He was conscious of a vision of fearful jaws and a frightful head, and then swam rather than leaped over the Sea Mole's rail.

In an instant he was in the vestibule, and pressing the electric key, had expelled the water from it.

"Saved!" he muttered. "By the shades of Plato, that was a close call!"

He threw off his helmet and sprang into the cabin. As he did so, he met Frank Reade, Jr.

The young inventor's face was pale, as he cried: "You are safe, Pentlow?"

"Yes, but it was a close shave!"

"Where is Barney?"

"Barney!" Pentlow gasped the name. Then he turned deadly pale.

"Great Jupiter!" he exclaimed, "is he not aboard?"

"We have not seen him!"

"Why—he disappeared—I saw nothing more of him—I supposed, of course, that he was safe aboard before me."

"He is not!"

"Then he must be in the palca."

"It is likely. But if we can distract the monster's attention he may be safe. We will at least try it."

"Good!"

A warning cry came from Pomp in the pilot-house. It was very evidently not at all necessary to attempt to attract the sea monster's attention.

It had already spotted the submarine boat. The result was curious.

For a moment it reared its powerful head and glared at the boat. Then it was seen that its form was not altogether that of a sea serpent.

Its tail was serpentine, but its body was more like that of an alligator, save that it had many claws and short arms, surely a score in all.

This gave it the appearance of a strange sort of dragon, and this was terrifying enough.

"Mercy on us!" cried Frank. "Who ever saw the equal of that chapp? Is he not a terrible beast?"

"Indeed, that is true," agreed the professor. "Do you suppose it means to attack the boat?"

"Beyond a doubt. Look out! Throw the lever out, Pomp—quick, or it will hit us!"

But the command was by far too late.

The sea dragon, if such it might be called, made a lightning-like dart forward and struck the Sea Mole with terrific force.

The boat quivered and careened upon its side. Then up it shot like a rocket.

Up and up through the water it rushed with furious speed, and tore its way quickly to the surface.

As it leaped up into daylight all were for a moment blinded by the light of the sun. Then it was seen that naught was about them but the rolling waves of the Caribbean.

"By Jove!" cried the professor, "do you think we are safe? Will not the creature come to the surface after us?"

"I think not," cried Frank; "at any rate we will take a little run away from the vicinity."

So the Sea Mole was given headway and ran some miles on the surface before it was deemed a sure thing that they were not pursued by the dragon.

And all this while they knew that Barney was somewhere at the bottom of the sea and consequently in awful peril.

It was Frank's purpose to at once return and affect the Celt's rescue. But first he realized that it was best to see what particular damage the boat had suffered.

He rushed to that side of it which had been struck by the dragon and went out on deck.

There was the spot beyond a doubt where the monster had struck the vessel. He noted with something like a chill that the plates were started.

But there was no leakage. If the damage was no worse than this all was well.

He returned to the cabin, and Pomp cried:

"Who am we gwine to do about dat 'Irishman, Marss Frank?"

"We are going back after him at once!" replied Frank, "there shall be no time lost!"

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It seemed as age before the young inventor returned. When he came in his face was very pale and his manner dejected. It was hardly necessary for Peatlow to ask:

"Well, Frank, how is it?"

"The worst has happened!" said Frank, with a shudder.

"Ah, what is that?"

"The reservoir valve is broken, and the steel doors and tubes are crushed, so that the Sea Mole cannot go to the bottom of the sea again."

"Great heavens!"

"It is true."

But Peatlow would not yield hope.

"Repair it," he said.

"Impossible! It would have to be taken to Readstown. It would cost for some months the voyagers were quite stanned with this resolution. Then after a time Peatlow ventured to say:

"What is to become of Barney?"

Frank shook his head.

"His position is a serious one."

"But—surely we cannot leave him there, while we go all the way back to Readstown? He would never be found alive!"

"I do not intend to return to Readstown and leave him there," said Frank.

"Ah!"

"I have another plan for his rescue. It will involve daring and risk, but it must be taken."

"What is it?"

"One of us must go down into the depths after him."

For a moment there was silence. Then Pomp said:

"Golly, Marce Frank, 'Ise jes' do chile to do dat!"

"Do you want to assume the risk?" asked the young inventor.

"Yes, sah!"

"Then it is settled. We will go back as near as we can judge, to the spot where we came to the surface. Then I shall put a cord about your shoulders and lower you. I do not think it is more than six hundred fathoms deep."

"I've all ready, sah!"

It was certainly a plucky thing for the darky to undertake, for the risk was most tremendous.

There were say a number of sharks and surface fish which he must run the risk of encountering.

An encounter with one of these might mean death.

But no time was lost.

The Sea Mole made its way back to the spot where it had emerged from the depths. As it dived round proved it was the exact spot.

Pomp was quickly equipped.

He was clad in a diving suit, and armed with ax and knife. He also carried an extra coil of rope for Barney's use.

He was to give a signal by being pulled up in case of extreme danger, such as might arise from meeting the dragon and so forth.

Thus equipped he was lowered over the rail and disappeared from sight.

Down he went beneath the waves. It was really a period of suspense and a awful doubt to Frank and the professor.

Down and down went the line. It seemed an interminable length of time before Peatlow drew a deep breath and said:

"The line is slack, Frank!"

"He is on the bottom!"

"Yes!"

"Now look out for signals!"

"We must!"

And thus the two men leaned over the Sea Mole's rail and waited with intense interest and suspense.

Barney, at the bottom of the sea had seen nothing of the dragon. It had got out of the way immediately after its encounter with the Sea Mole.

After his little tussle with the shark he was not again molested by any of the denizens of the deep.

He sat for hours as it seemed to him in the little corner of the portico. In reality it was but a short while.

He wondered if this was to be his end, if he was to die in this manner at the bottom of the sea.

While he was pining itself and not afraid of death, yet a species of cold horror came over him.

It was dreadful to think that he was never to emerge from those awful depths. That he was aever to see the sunlight of the world again.

He thought of Readstown and of his home and friends there. Would they miss him? Would he aever see them again?

Then wild fancies came to him.

He tried to calculate the nearest way to land. The impulse was upon him to try and walk thither.

Then he remembered that this would be a risky proceeding.

After all his best and safest method was to wait for the possible return of the Sea Mole.

He could not believe but that his fellow voyagers would return for him. At least he knew that they certainly would if it was within their power.

Thus reasoning and pondering time passed by quite rapidly. A sort of despondency had settled down upon the Celt when the change came.

Suddenly looking up through the dark waters, he espied something which gave him a thrill.

It was a star of light.

It came wavering and quivering down towards him. He started up and watched it intently.

Then down within the radius of his own helmet light there shot a human form. One glance was enough for Barney, and no explanations were needed to tell him all.

It was Pomp.

And now, dear reader, draws our story near to its end. Of course Barney and Pomp were safely drawn to the surface.

The project of further exploration of the depths of the Caribbean Sea was perforce abandoned, for the submarine boat was crippled beyond repair.

There was nothing for it but to return to Readstown, and this was done at once. It was a long journey, but was safely made.

The Sea Mole was laid by for repairs. Barney and Pomp resumed their duties about the shops.

Frank at once began work upon a new project, for he was not one of the kind to remain idle.

The professor returned to Washington. His trip in quest of Katunda and the treasure of the Six Sunken Pirates had netted him quite a snug fortune, and he was well pleased.

"After all," he said to himself, "if that ton of Katunda money had really been gold, it could not have done me much more real good. I am satisfied."

And this brings to a close our story of Frank Reade, Jr.'s, Submarine Boat and the Six Sunken Pirates.

[THE END.]

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