THE DIVER'S PARTNER.

[CONTINUED.]

"Are you a diver, my man?" said Turton.

"I believe you—John Hurst is one of the best and most skillful divers we have," said the captain, who then called for another hand to take the wheel in my place.

When the voyage was ended, at the request of Mr. Turton, I sent in what I estimated as neccessary for the attempt of securing the treasure. I proposed to begin in as economical a manner as possible, and with a small staff. A couple of divers would be sufficient to examine the reef, and see what truth there was in the report, and if it proved true, to calculate what amount of money could be got out of the vessels. It would then be easy to send as many additional hands as necessary.

I only discovered one drawback in the affair. It turned out that my partner was a diver of the name of Bleggs—a quarrelsome, ill-conditioned fellow, with not the best of characters. I felt it my duty to tell Mr. Turton thus much, but he said it couldn't be helped, for Bleggs' patron was one of the largest and most influential share-holders, and that he wanted Bleggs appointed to the post I had; and Bleggs would have had it but for Mr. Turton's tact and energy, and the respect the other adventurers felt for him.

Bleggs knew this; for, the first time we met, he said something about my luck in having friends at court to get me above the heads of better men. "Well," he continued, gruffly, "it's no odds. We shall see soon who does best for the company, skipper or man."

In due time the island was reached and our work began. We explored the ocean bed carefully. I meant to examine the hulk first, but in a weak moment allowed myself to be dissuaded by Bleggs, who urged that as what he wanted was to learn as quickly as possible if there was gold, we had better examine the ships which the sea had broken up for us and so save ourselves the trouble of breaking up the hulk.

The work was exhausting and fatiguing, and I found to my chagrin that Bleggs surpassed me in strength and endurance. My illness had shaken my constitution, and I suffered very severely from pain in the leg that had been fractured; but I made up my mind to persevere and do my best.

So far our search had been unsuccessful. At last I observed something that made me suspect that Bleggs was playing me tricks. Happening to make my descent after him somewhat more rapidly than usual, I found him emerging from the hulk. He assured me afterwards that he had only gone there for mussels, of which he was very fond, and which were very fine on the hulk.

A day or two afterward—Bleggs having meantime obtained leave to "go ashore," as we called visiting the mainland—I observed that a man was constantly hanging about the reef fishing in an open boat. It was not a very good fishing ground, and it was some distance from the shore for an open boat. But I noticed that this stranger always remained at his moorings till after dark. He was not very communicative—indeed, he growled at our manœuvers, saying that we drove the fish away. At the same time I discovered he was not a native, for he did not speak the local dialect, but what, for want of better definition, I may call London-English.

My suspicions were aroused at last, when turning round suddenly one day while preparing to descend, I saw Bleggs signaling to the solitary fisherman. I said nothing, but determined to investigate without delay.

All that night I lay awake thinking over this matter. I rose in the morning with a matured plan. When Bleggs and I had finished our midday meal, which was cooked upon the boat, I ordered him to take off his diving-dress, and go to the main-land and get some paper, under the pretense that I had none in store, and must write my report to Mr. Turton that night. Bleggs did not seem to like the idea, but he was obliged to go. I sent one of the crew with him in one of our small punts; and as soon as I saw him disappear behind the island I jumped overboard to prosecute my search.

And I made my way to the hulk and entered it. A very short survey sufficed to show me that its hold had been visited, and that its contents had been recently disturbed. Making my way down, I was speedily engaged in clearing the sand and weed, beneath which I soon came upon some large wooden cases, so rotten and decayed that a very few blows of my ax shivered the lid of one, and revealed the contents.

There lay masses of what, in spite of being so oxidized and, as it were, fused together by the action of salt-water, I could see were gold and silver coins. The sight at first surprised me; and then came a thought of rage at the treachery of Bleggs, who had, it is clear, concealed the treasure from me, and was evidently helping himself to the contents of the chest—somehow, though how I knew not.

I began to search the hold narrowly for some trace of the manner in which he removed the coin. In a remote corner I came on a bundle of raw hide, and several coils of thin but strong line. Beside these lay a knife which I identified as his, and therefore took possession of as a bit of evidence against him. Then I ascended to the deck again, and looked about me. I could see a place where the bulwarks had evidently been cut away quite lately, and beyond it in the sand, which had drifted up almost level with the deck, I could see a trail as if heavy bodies had been dragged along. I followed it, and was guided to a nook in the upright wall of a rock, wherein I found two large packages, consisting of raw hide, and evidently full of coins. A line was attached to them. I followed it with my eye as it went up — up toward the surface of the water as far as I could see. I was just about to pull it, in order to discover whether it was attached to some fishing buoy, when I made out through the green haze of heaving water a dark object, which I immediately guessed was the boat of the uncommunicative fisherman.

To be continued.

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*4 00 p m	7.00 a m	San Fran	8 30 p m	†12 20 p m
4.35 "	7 35 "	Oakland.	8.00 "	1.50 "
4 10 "	7.50 "	San Jose	8 30 "	2.10 "
5.35 "	8 35 "	...Niles...	7.05 "	12.45 "
8.25 "	11.28 "	Lathrop	4.41 "	9.45 "
8.48 "	11.50 "	Stockt'n	4.07 "	9.07 "
10.45 p m	1.45 p m	Sacra'to	2.20 p m	7.15 a m
Arrive from the West			Leave oin West	

Sacramento, Colfax, Reno & Ogden.

Leave going East		Arrive from East
2 00 p m	Sacra'to.	2.00 p m
5.40 "	..Colfax..	10.20 a m
1.00 a m	...Reno...	2.10 "
9.10 "	Win'mcs	4.15 p m
12 00 m	Battle M	1.25 "
4.40 p m	..Elko...	8.45 a m
6 20 a m	"Ogden..	5.20 p m
Arrive from West		Leave going West

Explanation.

For trains running from San Francisco, take the left hand columns and read downwards. For trains running towards San Francisco, take the right hand columns and read upwards.

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