

"A friend of mine, Ned Tarleton of Taunton, has come to stay with us," said Hugh abruptly.

Sir James stopped with his foot on the doorstep.

"Who?"

"Tarleton; he comes from Taunton."

"Ah!"

Sir James stepped into the hall. He took off his coat and hat, and placed them on a chair.

"Where is he?" he said.

Loveday heard her uncle's voice. She ran

from the parlour, and caught him by the arm with a merry trill of laughter.

"Uncle, I want to make you known to a Mr. Tarleton."

She drew him into the room. Hugh followed.

"This is my uncle, Sir James Macdonald," she said; "and this is Mr. Tarleton, uncle."

"Pleased to make your acquaintance," said Sir James, bending his white head.

"How do you do, Sir James Macdonald?"

Ned Tarleton stuck out an awkward hand, a grin upon his face.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.



PEOPLE WHO FACE DEATH: DIVERS.

BY A. E. BONSER, AUTHOR OF "NORTHWARD HO!" ETC.

"In the caverns deep of the ocean cold,
The diver is seeking a treasure of gold;
Risking his life for the spoil of a wreck,
Taking rich gems from the dead on her deck;
Fearful such sights to the diver must be,
Walking alone in the depths of the sea."



NE day in the year of grace one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, a cutter lay some four miles off Dover. It was a lovely afternoon, one of those "specimen" days, so to say, with which the clerk of the weather occasionally favours our humid islands. The eye, ranging from south-west northward, followed the white line of the bold chalk cliffs from Folkestone to the

Admiralty pier, above and beyond which picturesque Dover rose in terraces from the sea, guarded by its grand old castle. Then came the South Foreland, and far off, across the treacherous Goodwins, one caught a sight of the North Foreland.

Overhead all was blue, save for a few fleecy streamers, but along the eastern horizon a

light haze hung. Here and there on the watery waste a steamer, outward- or homeward-bound, cleft her busy way; here and there a sailing vessel, handicapped in the light air, was patiently beating down Channel; but none of these sights were noticed by the two men on board the cutter as she lazily rose and sank on the swell of the tide. Apparently they were lost in contemplation of the sea.

The one, a sailor, held a line in his hand, yet he was not fishing. The other, oddly dressed in the enormous trousers and breast-plate which betokened him a diver, had hold of the hoisting tackle.

Some eighty feet below them lay the barque *Mindora*, whereon another diver was busily at work; but he would have to come up directly as the tide was just on the turn. Soon there was a signal from below.

"Slack away the wreck rope!" said the signalman.

It was done, and the two men waited.

"What's he up to now?" said the diver meditatively.

"Why," replied the signalman, "he seems to have gone down into the hold again!"

"No, no," cried the other; "the line's too deep for the hold; there's something amiss."

And he began to haul up quickly.

But when the diver below was brought to

the surface, the men were terribly scared, for he was to all appearance dead.

Quickly unscrewing his helmet, they laid him all unconscious on the deck, forced some brandy between the blue lips, and did what else they could to restore animation. Their efforts were at last successful; but it was, indeed, a narrow escape.

The signalman had blundered by slacking the wreck rope when it should have been kept taut, in consequence of which the diver fell off the wreck some twenty feet down to the ground outside of her, thus completely cutting off the air-supply and rendering him insensible.

The accident, which had so nearly proved fatal in its results, happened to John Edward Pearce of Whitstable—one of the most experienced divers in England, and the moral which he deducts from it is this: that signalling should be in the hands of a *diver*; which sounds like good, practical, common sense.

Here is another of Mr. Pearce's adventures:

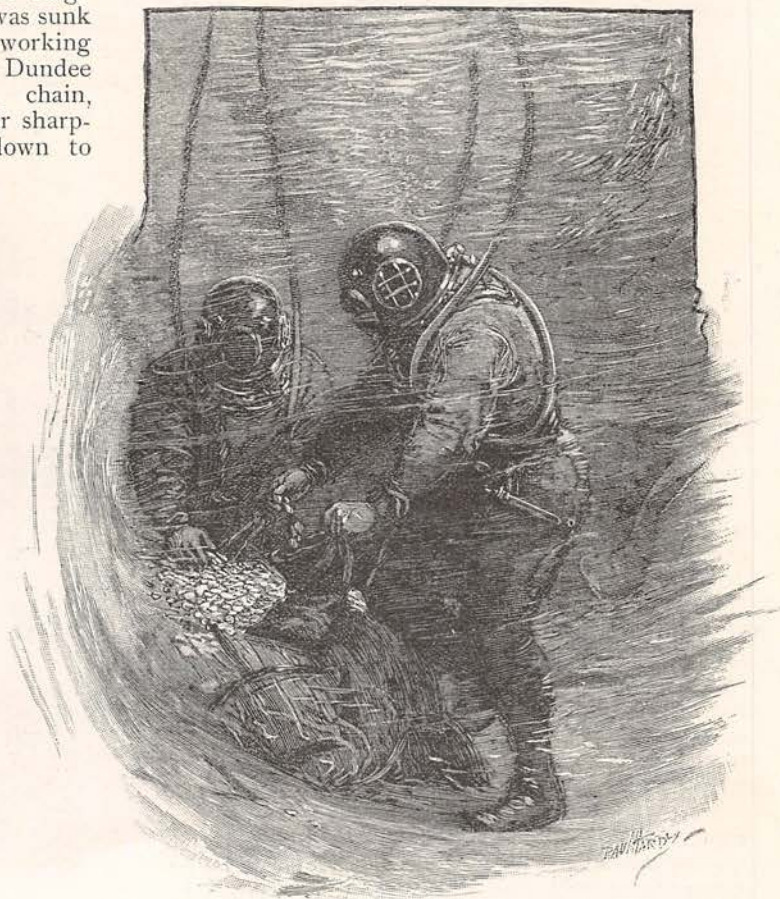
"In the year 1863," he said, "I was engaged in salving the cargo of the s.s. *London*, which was sunk in the river Tay. I was working from the lighter of The Dundee Shipping Company. A chain, having at the end of it four sharp-pointed hooks, was let down to me, and it was my business to fix the hooks in the bales of cotton yarn which formed the cargo. As this was done, the bales were hauled up. I should tell you that the water was so thick below, that all my work had to be done by feeling.

"Well, having just fixed the hooks in one of the bales, I signalled for those above to try if the strain would hold. Whilst I was feeling to see if the bale had started, the hooks, not being secured sufficiently to stand the strain, gave way, tore out of their grip through the packing, and one of them caught in the palm of my hand, and dragged me from the bottom of the hold to the upper deck, where I had some difficulty in getting it out.

"I at once gave the signal to be hauled up,

and in the daylight my hand looked an awful sight, for the whole of the palm had been completely torn open, and the hook had penetrated the third finger. It made me feel queer, I can tell you; and I despaired of ever being able to use my hand again. I was laid up for three months, and at the end of that time, to my great surprise, was able to be at my work as usual. As you may suppose, that hand has never been the same again since, and I always feel it a good deal in the cold weather."

On another occasion Mr. Pearce had a narrow escape. He was at work this time on board the wreck of the *Star of Ceylon*, a barque of some 500 tons, lying in thirteen fathoms of water off the South Foreland, when suddenly, without the slightest warning, a cask of gunshot fell from the deck into the hold, striking one of his feet. But a few inches more, and he would probably have been killed. In this case, as in that of the *London*, the water was so thick that the



TREASURE-TROVE.

work had to be done by feeling, which greatly increases the risk.

Another source of danger arises from the presence of marine monsters. The intrusive shark has sometimes to be cannily dodged, and the life-line may at any moment be snapped in two should the creature's voracity prompt it to such an action.

Then again, after the diver has descended,



"DRAGGED ME FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE HOLD TO THE UPPER DECK" (p. 667).

wherever he may wander he has to come back exactly the same way—a thing not so easy to do in semi-darkness, and when he is climbing about the hold of a wreck. The entanglement of the rope, the twisting of the life-line round the numerous impedimenta in his way, might, likely enough, prove fatal; indeed, cases have been known where the diver has become so involved that he has had to resort to the desperate device of cutting his life-line.

In one such instance, the man ascended too rapidly, and his massive helmet coming into violent contact with the keel of the vessel he was working from, caused such severe internal injuries that he died instantly.

Dangerous as the diver's calling doubtless

is, it is occasionally relieved by incidents of a romantic nature. A young lady had been on a visit to the training-ship *Mars* lying off Dundee, and in returning to land lost her engagement ring.

It was gold, set with three diamonds, and, no doubt for at least four very powerful reasons, she was most anxious to recover it. First, it was highly prized on account of the giver; second, what would the giver say? third, the mishap was very "unlucky"; and fourth, the trinket was valuable in itself.

A diver chanced to be at work in the river close to where the accident occurred, and to him the lady made known her loss, describing as accurately as she could the spot where she had dropped the ring.

Down went the diver, and, as much probably by luck as wit, recovered it from the mud near one of the Tay bridge piers, to the delight and gratitude of the owner.

The diver's suit is a very expensive item, costing as much as £140 and upwards.

The *open* dress was invented in 1829, and consists of a helmet and waterproof jacket, under which are close-fitting trousers, reaching to the armpits. The air is pumped in at the helmet, and from thence circulates downwards.

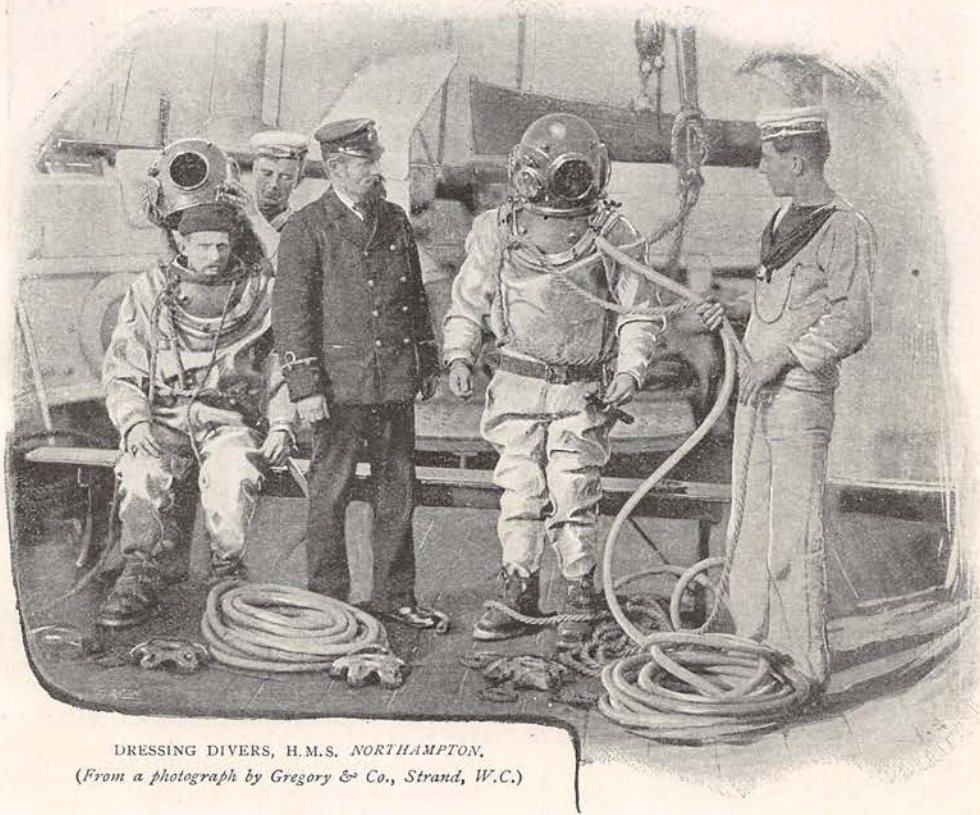


"THE DESPERATE DEVICE OF CUTTING HIS LIFE-LINE."

In the year 1837 the *closed* dress was introduced, and, being an improvement on the open, is now almost universally in use. It is made up of three chief parts—the helmet, breastplate, and dress. The latter is constructed of india-rubber, which is covered on both sides with tanned twill to protect it from injury. Close-fitting cuffs enable the hands to be freely

is sometimes very considerable. In the year 1805 the *Earl of Abergavenny*, East India-man, was lost in ten fathoms of water. Ten months went by, and then two divers—Messrs. J. and W. Braithwaite, recovered nearly the whole of her valuable cargo, and £75,000 in silver dollars to boot.

Another lucky diver was John Gann, who



DRESSING DIVERS, H.M.S. NORTHAMPTON.
(From a photograph by Gregory & Co., Strand, W.C.)

used, and india-rubber bands slipped over the wrists render the ends of the sleeves watertight.

The breastplate is made of tinned copper; to it are fastened the life-line and signal-line, and weights of about forty pounds each are attached to the back and front.

The helmet, too, is of tinned copper; it screws down on the collar of the breastplate; is furnished with three strong plate glass windows duly protected, and valves to let out the exhausted air.

Lastly, the boots are made of stout leather, with leaden soles, and weigh about twenty pounds each.

Three hundred such suits are said to be employed in the Mediterranean sponge fisheries alone.

The value of salvage obtained from wrecks

fished up £100,000 from a Spanish galleon sunk off the Irish coast. The treasure of specie had been contained in barrels, but the wooden exteriors having long ago rotted away, the coins were gathered in lumps like figs. A part of the proceeds built a row of houses at Whitstable, which still bears the name of Dollar Row.

Again the *Malabar* was wrecked in 1860, and from her hull was saved the treasure she carried, amounting to not less than £280,000.

Often a wreck is sold for what it will fetch, and the purchaser gets what he can as a speculation.

Thus the sunken *Royal Charter* was disposed of for £1,000, and among the salvage were a bar of pure gold weighing nine pounds and a half and a box containing £3,000.



AT CLOSE QUARTERS.

Though the diving *dress* is more commonly used for diving purposes, the diving *bell* is also extremely useful, especially in the laying of masonry under water. It is a large vessel full of air, but open at the bottom, fresh air being pumped into it by air-pumps. It is furnished with seats, and a chain passes through the centre, by which weights can be raised or lowered.

A steamer which had been built for the purpose of running the American blockade, and contained—as may be supposed—some very costly machinery, was sunk in 1865 off Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel. An engineer named McDuff went down in a diving-bell a depth of forty-two feet, and succeeded in bringing up the whole of the machinery piece by piece.

The diving-bell has this advantage over the dress, that several men can work in company; on the other hand, should an accident happen, more lives are involved.

Not many years ago the chain of a diving-bell which was being employed at the Admiralty Pier, Dover, got fouled in some way, and the occupants found themselves in a most alarming predicament. However, a diver named William Wharlow, donning his suit, descended crowbar in hand, and after some hours of hard work succeeded in freeing

the chain, when the diving-bell was hauled up in safety.

There are four signals used by the diver: one pull on the rope signifies "all right"; four pulls, "haul up"; one pull on the life-line, "less air"; four pulls, "more air."

Only strong men can become divers; no one is any good who suffers from headache, deafness, palpitation of the heart, intemperance, or a languid circulation.

During the building of the St. Louis Bridge over the Mississippi, out of 352 men employed, 30 were severely affected, and 12 died. The work was carried on 110 feet below the surface of the water, under an air pressure of 50 to 51 lbs. to the square inch.

The pressure of the atmosphere increases the lower one descends, until a point is reached where life could not be maintained. The greatest depth perhaps ever reached was 201 feet, with an atmospheric pressure of 87 lbs. to the square inch. Even for 30 or 40 feet—a moderate depth—considerable practice and nerve are requisite. The lower the depth, the more acutely pains are felt in the ears and above the eyes, and symptoms of paralysis become more pronounced.

But the adaptability of man to his environment is extraordinary, and long continued practical experience blunts the susceptibility.