

Treasure of Carthage

Charles Hamilton

The Rivals.

BUNNY listened to a steady, uninterrupted stream of words from his companion in darkness and misfortune. Gaston Latour was expressing himself very decidedly.

It seemed to afford Gaston some relief, for he kept it up for quite a long time. Bunny, wiser, saved his breath. He was trying to think of a way out of this awful scrape. He had to admit that he could not think of a way

They stood waist-deep in muddy water, their feet in thick, oozy mud at the bottom of it; round them space and blackness and foul smells.

The Bunny, ever since he had set foot in Tunis, had been keen to explore the ruins of ancient Carthage. He was exploring and now with a vengeance!

Had they tumbled into any of the old cisterns revealed by modern excavations, and known to guides and tourists, there would have been good hope of rescuing when morning dawned.

But the old Punic cistern in which they were now engulfed was quite on and on and undiscovered. It was the hidden Cistern that Gaston Latour had been searching for, guided by the clue on the old sheepskin. And Gaston and Bunny were the discoverers. Nobody else knew that an old Carthaginian secret was hidden on it that spot, in the midst of the tract of thorny bush.

And

“Chuck it, you know ! I’m getting tired of listening to you !“

“Bah ! Head of the pudding !” snapped Latour. This seemed to be his favourite expression for Bunny.

“That’s all very well,” said Bunny argumentatively. “I couldn’t help falling into this blessed place, as I stepped into the hole without seeing it! But you ought to have looked round before you came down, and made sure all was safe. It’s you that’s the pudding head, if you ask me

“Bah!” how shall I know that that Marizelos man is about ?” growled

Latour.” “Did I not leave him stunned in the olive grove miles away? How shall I know that he track us here?”

Gaston gripped his revolver and stared up savagely at the moonlit opening.

“If he would but show his head !” he muttered. “Sapristi the ! Gladly I can blow him out the brains“

“If he has any, he won’t let you blow them out!” said Bunny.

The Greek, if he was still there, was careful not to show his head over the opening. P was well aware that a bullet from below was ready for him.

“Ma foi !” said Gaston, calming down a little at last. “We are lost,’ mon ami. We are in a scratch, as you say in English.”

“A scrape !” murmured Bunny. “We find the cistern, as it is marked on the sheepskin!” muttered Gaston. “We find the place where is hidden the treasure of Carthage Here, mon ami, is the secret place where Mago buried the gold two thousand years ago to save it from the Romans! Our feet tread on great riches. There is spondulics, as you say in English. But these spondulics— what shall they serve as an it we perish in this dismal place ?” “ and if the jolly old treasure’s here, I’d give it all for a twelve-foot ladder!” said Bunny.

The silence was broken by a voice calling from above. It was the metallic and voice of the Greek. Marizelos was not gone!

“Gaston Latour ! You hear me?”

“I hear you, pig!” answered Gaston.

A shadow fell across the opening above. Gaston gripped his revolver hard. But the Greek did not show himself.

“Your lives are in my hand— yours and the boy’s !” came the voice of Marizelo. “ will you ransom them with the sheepskin?”

“Never !”

“ Fool ! Of what use is the sheepskin to you now ?” snarled the Greek.

“ Listen! If I leave you here, I close up the opening. No more talk. No mortal will ever look on you again. You will perish miserably of hunger - in the darkness . Will the treasure of Carthage save you?”

“Oh, crumbs!” murmured Bunny.

“ Is it that I would trust you” sneered Latour. “ With the sheepskin in your hands, will you save us from this pit? Non ! I keep him, and if I perish here, at least your rascal eyes shall never see them!”

“Die, then !” answered and the Greek. “I will return, and descend to take the sheepskin from you’re body !”

There was a rustling sound from above. A mass of thorny bush fell across the opening, blotting out most of the light. The Greek was covering the opening ! If Bunny had not raised someone faint hope that the hidden cistern might be found by some explorer of the Punic Ruins, it was gone now.

Marizelos was leaving nothing to chance.

Bunny touched Gaston’s arm.

“If we could make terms with him—the sheepskin’s no good to has here, surely he would save us in return for it—”

“Head of pudding ! He would kill us all the more surely to keep the treasure for himself !” snapped Latour.

Bunny felt that it was only too true, and ha said no more. It was impossible to trust to the good faith of the rival treasure-seeker.

Another mass of bush fell over the opening above. Every vestige of the moonlight was blotted out now. The Greek was doing his work thoroughly. Masses of the scrub were stacked over the opening, and it was soon even more thoroughly hidden than it had been when Bunny tumbled into it.

Utter blackness surrounded them now. The covering of the opening shut them off from human knowledge. And Bunny shuddered to realise that they were in a tomb !

The Tunnel.

“ La mort !” muttered Gaston.

Bunny shivered, but he tried to pull himself and together.

He was hopeful by nature, and though there seemed little room for hope now, he was not the fellow to give in without a struggle.

“We’re not dead yet, sir !” said Bunny. “No good giving in !” and

Only a mumble answered him. All the Frenchman’s volatile spirits had left him, and he seemed to have abandoned himself to despair.

There was no sound from above. No doubt the Greek had gone—to return, has he had said, when he would have nothing to fear from a descent into the ancient cistern. He had left his victims in a tomb, to darkness and despair.

Bunny might be a bit of an ass in some respects, but there was nothing the matter with his courage or his nerve. He groped in the darkness and touched Latour’s arm.

“ Buck up !” said Bunny. “

‘Tout est perdu !” muttered Gaston and.

“Tooty be blowed “ said Bunny. “ How do you know there meant be some way out of this? You’ve got an electric torch in your pocket. Get it out! ”

“Head of a pudding, we are lost We lie here like rats in the dark ! It is better to finish——”

“Look here, don’t be a silly ass !” exclaimed Bunny. “There’s some grub in the bag. We can fish it up out of the water. It will last us a day at least.

While there’s life there’s hope. What’s the good of buckling under? Don’t be a funk !”

Gaston breathed hard,

“Head of pudding,” he said, “ You have a large cheek, as you say in English,

but you have reason. At least we will see where we are to die. We will look at the tomb.”

He groped in his pocket and produced the torch and flashed on the light. The bright beam glittered round the dank cistern as Gaston held the torch, above his head. The cistern was of great extent. The walls were far from them, out all sides thick with slime, and the light showed crawling things in the slime. Two thousand years ago the cistern had held pure water to supply the city. Now, after that lapse of time, it reeked with filth,

“There might be a way out,” said Bunny hopefully. “Let’s look, anyhow.” Gaston did not stir. He was plunged in despair, and seemed for the moment incapable of exertion. Bunny gave an impatient grunt. His practical mind did not understand this facile yielding to emotion. He took the torch from Gaston’s and waded through the water toward the nearest wall.

Gaston remained where he was. It was plain that he had not the slightest hope of Bunny and making any useful discovery. Bunny’s hope was slight. But so long as the Bunny had a kick left in him, he was going to kick. There was plenty of time for despair, in Bunny’s opinion, when every chance had been tried.

They could not keep on their feet many hours, and once they grew too chilled and weary to keep their footing it was death to sink the foul waters. Every minute was precious.

Bunny reached the wall of the stinking cistern. It was built of large blocks of stone, but covered with ooze and slime. Slowly Bunny passed along the wall, the water swishing round him as he moved. Up and down the wall he flashed the light, hoping against hope that there might be some opening. It had come into Bunny’s mind that it was quite possible that the system was connected with another. For it was certain that there must have been many such cisterns in the ancient city. Some, indeed, had been discovered and excavated, but probably there were many more still undiscovered.

He had made almost a complete circuit of the cistern— and immense circumference — when suddenly he stopped and uttered a shout that woke strange echoes in the dismal depths.

“Comment! You find something?” called Latour’s voice from the darkness.

“A tunnel !” shouted Bunny.

Gaston came splashing through the water towards the beam of light. He joined Bunny, gasping.

Bunny stood with the light gleaming on the oozy wall. Three feet above his head was a cavity in the wall of the cistern, and orifice about two feet wide and three high.

“Bon !” Gaston gasped. ‘ It is a chance ! Perhaps there is another cistern !’

“What-ho !” said Bunny brightly.

Gaston’s face was animated now.

And In the volatile manner of a Latin he jumped from the depths of despair to bounding hope.

“It is a way!” he said. “It is a way! It will be necessary to crawl on all the four, as you say in English.”

“On all fours !” grinned Bunny.

“Yes, yes! Give the light and I lead the way !”

“Hold on!”

“Name of a name !” exclaimed Gaston impatiently. “Is it that you desire to linger in this tomb? Allons !”

“But hold on! We’d better take . The bag.”

“I had forgotten. Head of pudding, you think of things that I forget. We will take the valise.”

‘They groped back to the middle of the tank, where the valise had fallen. Gaston kicked about with his feet till he found it, stirring up horrible smells from the water.

“It is here !” he said.

“Good ! How are we going to get it up?” asked Bunny. He was not willing, if he could help it, to stoop in the filthy water and grope for the bag. “Look here, and if we could get hold of the rope that’s tied to it—”

“You know not la savate?” Gaston laughed. “A Frenchman can use his feet as well as his hands,” said Gaston. “I am verree good at la savate. I can punch my enemy on the nose, with my foot. Voila!’

Standing on one leg, Gaston fished for the bag with the other. In a minute or two his foot rose to the surface, with the handle of the bag looped over the toe of his boot- The valise was fully packed and heavy, but Gaston lifted it easily to the surface with his foot.

Bunny was quick to grasp it and secure it. The rope was knotted to the handle. Gaston drew up the rope till v recovered the end, which v tied round his waist. Then they returned to the spot beneath the tunnel in the wall. The lower edge was beyond the reach of Gaston’s hands, and there was nothing on the smooth , slippery wall to assist a climber.

“Give me a bunk up,” said Bunny. “I’m lighter than you.”

“Bon!”

The Frenchman bunked Bunny up, and he grasped the edge of the cavity and pulled himself in. He flashed the light of the torch round and saw the low, narrow tunnel leading away into blackness.’

“There is a way?” called out the Frenchman anxiously.

“Yes. It leads somewhere.”

“Give me help, then.”

Bunny laid down the torch, and, resting his chest on the edge of the cavity, reached his hands down to Latour. Gaston scrambled actively up. It seemed to Bunny for the moment that his arms would be pulled out of their sockets. But the Frenchman was active and swift, and in a few seconds was sprawling beside Bunny in the tunnel.

He rose quickly to his feet and gave a howl as his head knocked on the roof of the tunnel.

“I crack me the head !” he gasped.

“We shall have to crawl,” said Bunny.

“Oni, oui, we go on all the four !”

Gaston pulled up the bag and, dragging it behind him by the rope tied to his waist, crawled along the tunnel, the electric torch in one hand. Bunny crawled after him.

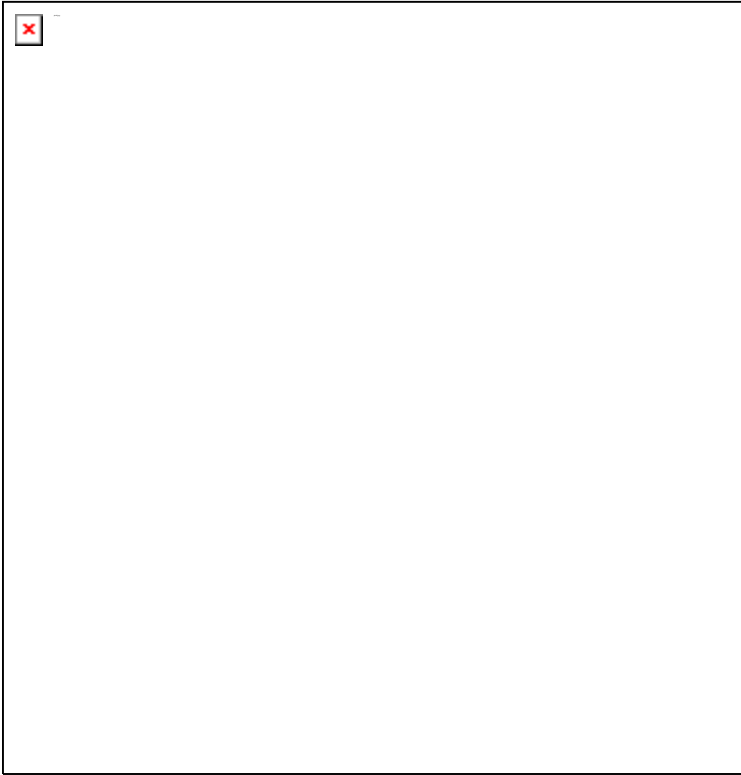
Too Late!

“COURAGE, mon ami.!” breathed Gaston.

Bunny grinned as he received that encouragement from the Frenchman, who was crawling ahead. It was not Bunny that had needed bucking up. But Gaston was now as exuberantly hopeful as he had before been despondent. Bunny hoped, but could not be sure, that the slimy tunnel was a way out to light and life and safety. But the Frenchman did not allow himself to doubt. Already, in his mind’s eye, he was a free man again, and carrying off the treasure of old Carthage.

It was not easy work crawling along the tunnel. The stone was slimy and dank and slippery, and the air noisome. They coughed and panted as they crawled on their way, which inclined continually upward, The tunnel seemed to wind endlessly. Bunny could not help feeling that there was danger of suffocation as they penetrated deeper and deeper into it. But that did not deter him. It was neck or nothing now, for there was no doubt that it was the only way out of the cistern. Foul and fouler the atmosphere grew as they advanced.

Gaston turned a disgusted face back to Bunny.



“He smell,” he said. “He is what you call in English niffy! Isn’t it? But we go to be free !“

“I hope so!” grunted Bunny, Morgan his perspiring brow.

Gaston stopped at last, so suddenly and that Bunny jammed his head on the Frenchman’s boot. Then Bunny stopped, too.

“What’s up?” he gasped.

The Frenchman held up the light, flashing it on a mass of stone and rubble that closed the way onward.

“Oh, crumbs!“ said Bunny, in dismay. The tunnel had come to a sudden end.

“Courage !“ repeated Gaston reassuringly.

“This is not one wall; this is one heap of rubbish that has fallen with itself some time. We shall force a way !“

“We’ll try !“ declared Bunny.

Gaston flashed the light over the obstacle. Obviously it was not a wall closing the tunnel. Stones of all sizes and shapes were mixed with loose sand and mud and rubble.

It looked like a crumbling mass that had fallen— such a rubbish heap as lay in scores round about the ruins of Carthage.

“We must be near the end !“ Bunny declared.

“Eh? Why you think?”

“ Because this rubbish can’t have fallen from the roof of the tunnel
The roof is of square stones fitted together –look ! This stuff must have
fallen in from the open end !”

“It is true ! Perhaps quite close to us is open air and the light of the moon !”
said Gaston “Now we go to work !” He opened the valise. In it were packed a
pick, trowel, and spade, in sections that fitted together. The tools were soon
made ready for use, and Gaston began to wield the pick.

It was difficult work, for he had to kneel to it, the tunnel here being know
we’re more than three feet high. The sweat poured down his Face.”

There was room for only one to work at a time, and Bunny, crouched
behind and held the light.

The rubble was loosely heaped, and the fragments rolled past from the blows
of the pick. Bunny helped to drag the, rubbish away as it was loosened. They
sweated and panted and choked in the dust, working for their lives. As
stones and charts and of masonry rolled loose, Bunny rolled them back along
the tunnel behind him to make room. Suddenly Gaston Latour dropped the
pick with a yell that rang reverberating along the narrow confines of the
tunnel.

“Sapristi ! The light !“

“ Wha-a –a-t?”

Give me the lamp !“ yelled Gaston. Bunny hurriedly passed him the electric
torch, the He wondered what the Frenchman had seen to startle him so.

Gaston flashed the light on an object that the lay among the loosened rubble.
It was the iron head of a pick. The handle had long since rotted away, though
a fragment of wood still adhered to the iron.

Gaston gazed at it with wild eyes. Bunny, for the moment, did not realise the
full import of that strange find.

Gaston groaned. Once more he fell from the height of buoyancy to the
depths of despair.

“But—what the thump —” gasped Bunny. “It’s only a bit of an old pickaxe.
What does it matter?”

“Head of pudding ! Is that a tool of the time of Mago of Carthage?” howled
Gaston. “Is that a Phoenician pick? Non! It is old —it is rusty—hut it is not
of the Carthaginians! Someone has been here before us !“

“Oh, good!” gasped Benny. “That shows it’s the way out !”

“But the treasure! Yelled Gaston.

“Oh, the treasure!” said Bunny. He had forgotten the treasure in his anxiety
to escape from a living tomb. What about the treasure?”

Gaston groaned again.

“I tell you. We are close to the treasure. It lies by the old cistern, for it is

marked on the sheepskin. Yes ! But if someone has been here, why for he come? He come for the treasure! This pick show that he dig. He leave the pick— he have finish to dig ! Helas! Is it not, because he has found the treasure?”

“Looks like; it,” said Bunny, “But blow the treasure—so long as we get out of this !“

“Head of a pudding !“ Gaston in the shock of that dismaying discovery, had forgotten the peril in which they lay. He picked up the fragment of iron and examined it. It was eaten deep with rust, and was evidently very old—more than a hundred years, in all probability. A century, perhaps, had passed since that hidden spot and had been visited. Obviously the tool had not been left by any modern explorer. The old pick had been handled there at the time when a pirate Dey reigned in Tunis. Gaston groaned dismally.

“Well, after all,” said Bunny, “if that sheepskin’s been through a lot of hands, a lot of people must have looked for the treasure, you know! Somebody was very likely to find it before us. Anyhow, let’s get on !” he urged. “I’m suffocating in this filthy dust! For goodness’ sake, get on!” ‘ .

As Gaston made no movement, Bunny started in with the spade, clearing away the rubble. Gaston sat leaning against the side of the tunnel, haggard despair in his sallow face. Bunny worked industriously.

He, at least , had no time to waste in vain regrets.

“But perhaps—perhaps that unknown one, he dig for the treasure, but find him not !“ said Gaston at last. “ Perhaps all is not lost! What you think?”

“I think we’re lost if we don’t get out of this fearful hole pretty quick!” gasped Bunny.

“Bah ! Head of a pudding !“

Clang! The spade, as Bunny wielded it, suddenly struck metal in the midst of the shifting rubble. A loud metallic clang answered the blow.

“What the thump—” ejaculated money.

Gaston flashed the light forward.

In the gleam of the electric ray there was a yellow glow. Gaston scrambled forward with a yell.

“Gold!”

“Oh crumbs !”

The Frenchman grabbed up the golden ingot. It weighed heavily in And his hands. He almost hugged it in his glee. Thpn the satisfaction faded out of his face as he realised what it meant. The’ treasure had been hidden at that spot. - It had been dug up, and that single Ingot had been overlooked when it was carried away; It could mean no

thing else!

“It is gone,” said Gaston dejectedly, “and this is all that remains ! But perhaps there is more! Make room for me! Give me some room for an elbow, as you say in English.”

He plied the pick with feverish energy. This rubble rolled from his blows; the dust filled the tunnel chokingly. Bunny laboured at dragging away the rubbish back along the tunnel. Deeper and deeper the freshmen excavated, but no further gleam of gold rewarded his sight.

“Oh crumbs !” spluttered Bunny, spitting out dust. - “Oh !” .

“It was here!” said Latour. He paused in his labour and pointed to a spot he had cleared, where it was evident that at some distant time a flagstone had been removed from the tunnel floor. “This was the place - yes. Here was buried the treasure of Mago, and here it was dug by some scoundrel who have come before us. Yes, yes! We come too late !”

“A hundred years or so too late,” grinned Bunny. “That johnny, whoever he was, had a long start of us.”

“It’s frightful !” groaned Gaston.

“After all this trouble, this danger, we have a piece of gold that is worth perhaps twenty thousand francs. And I think myself of hundred thousand francs—of million francs. I think of a great heap of spondulics

“Yes, but get on with it,” urged Bunny.

“All the spondulics gone !” moaned Gaston. “I am ruined !”

“You’ll soon be a goner, too, if you don’t get a move on “ said Bunny

brutally but practically. “We shall suffocate. Dig, mine and—dig

Gaston plied the pick again. There was no time to lose in repining, for the dust in the tunnel was thicker than ever, and it was difficult to breathe. But suddenly as the pick struck there was a rush of cool, sweet air.

Bunny gasped with relief. Sweeter than nectar came the fresh air. The pick had struck through the obstacle into the open at last! At that moment the suite, cool air seemed to Bunny worth all the treasures that had ever been piled up in the ancient city of the Phoenicians!

The Last of the Sheepskin.

“GLORIOUS !” gasped Bunny. He stood in the open air at last.

The tunnel ended on a sloping hillside, littered with fragments of ancient buildings. In ancient days the opening of the tunnel had been built over, and it was the falling structures that had choked the entrance.

It was glorious to stand in the open, breathing in great gulps of fresh air.

Bunny breathed hard and deep. The night was growing old. They had been many long hours underground. Already in the east was a faint, pale hint of dawn.

“Alors! We are still alive !” said Gaston. “It is something to be still alive, mon cher! ‘ That Greek, that Marizelos he think we are dead and buried in the cistern! But we live, though we find not the treasure.”

He peered at the golden ingot in the dim light. A deep sigh left his lips, what must the treasure have been if the lucky man who had unearthed it had carelessly left behind him an ingot worth a hundred pounds at least!

“That’s something, Mr. Latour,” said Bunny encouragingly. “Better than nothing, anyhow.”

“But I shall not return to Paris rich,” said Gaston. “They will not point me out in the Bois de Boulogne and say: ‘Voila Latour, millionaire ! I shall not roll in the spon dulics. To think that some unknown scoundrel he is before us a hundred years, perhaps two hundred years! Blow him, as you say in English !”

“ What about getting back to Tunis?” hinted Bunny.

Gaston nodded, with a sigh. It was not easy for him to recover from his disappointment, though v certainly derived com for from the possession of the ingot. He packed the cube of gold into the valise and locked it.

“Say nothing in Tunis,” he said. “It is little enough. ‘But there would be many fingers in this pie if he was known. Allons !”

They started down the slope of the hill, picking their way through thorny scrub, patches of wild olive, and half-buried chunks of masonry. The light of dawn, strengthening in the east, was sufficient to show them the way. Far off the waters of the Lake of Tunis caught the gleam of the rising sun, and the scarlet flamingoes woke and skimmed on the water. Bunny was thinking chiefly of getting back to Tunis and turning into bed for a long sleep. He grunted when Gaston caught him suddenly by the arm and stopped him.

“Taisez-vous ! Look !” he said.

“Oh, crumbs !” murmured Bunny, as he followed the direction of the Frenchman’s pointing finger.

Seated on a broken marble column, leaning back against a fragment of an old crumbling wall, was Marizelos, the Greek. He was fast asleep.

“That rotter !” murmured Bunny, his eyes gleaming.

‘ Gaston laughed softly.

“He sleep !” he said. “He do not go back to Tunis. He do not wish to go far from that sheepskin so valuable. If we remain in that cistern we die before morning, and he come back for the sheepskin. Sapristi! I give that sheepskin now to anybody. I chuck up, as you say in English. I chuck up one sponge.

But silence!"

Treading on tiptoe, Gaston broached the sleeping Greek. Bunny followed him as silently. In a few minutes they stood close to the unconscious man. Latour drew a revolver from his pocket.

Bunny caught his arm. For the moment he feared that the Frenchman was about to take a deadly vengeance on the man who had abandoned them to death in the buried cistern.

"Head of pudding!" muttered Gaston. He tapped the Greek lightly on the head with the barrel of the revolver, and Marizelos started into instant wakefulness.

He leaped to his feet, and as his startled eyes fell upon Latour and Bunny he gave a hoarse cry. For a second, perhaps, the startled man fancied that it was the ghosts of his victims that stood before him.

"Bonjour, monsieur!" said Gaston affably.

The Greek stared at him with starting eyes.

"No, it is not a ghost," said Gaston, grinning. "It is not two ghosts. We are alive and to kick, as in the they say in English."

"No. thanks to you, you rotter!" growled Bunny, with a glare at the Greek.

Marizelos stared at them in silence, the startled look on his dark face giving place to rage and fear. He eyed apprehensively the revolver in the Frenchman's hand.

"Non, I do not blow you out the brains!" said Gaston contemptuously.

You think we are lie in the cistern, monsieur. But there is one way out, and we find him. Comprenez?"

The Greek's eyes scanned the clothes of the two adventurers, caked with mud and slime and dust. He could see what they had been through. The rage in his glittering black eyes intensified.

"You have nothing to say?" grinned Latour. "You do not ask me for that so precious sheepskin?"

Marizelos gritted his teeth.

"I will have it yet!" he muttered, "You shall never touch the treasure of Carthage!"

Gaston shrugged his shoulders.

"That treasure!" he said. "I mock myself of it. I am what the English call fed-up! I have had enough! I gave an Arab a thousand francs for the sheepskin, and I shall sell him again in Tunis. And if you would dog the steps of the treasure-hunter, monsieur, it is the steps of someone else that you must dog. To the first that shall offer me five thousand francs I shall sell the sheepskin

He turned to Bunny.

“Come, mon garçon ! It is a long way to Tunis!”

“Stop !”

Marizelos started forward as the Frenchman was turning away. Gaston glanced back at him.

“You lie !” muttered the Greek. “You will not sell the sheepskin! If you will sell I will be the buyer. But you will not sell.”

“Mon ami, I sell that so priceless sheepskin to the first that offer me five thousand francs.” answered Gaston. “ I tell you I am fed-up. I have had enough of crawling underground. I shall be once more an officer on the Tunis railway. I crawl underground no more !”

“I will buy the sheepskin If you are in earnest,” the Greek said eagerly.

“Many have sought the treasure before and have lost heart. But I will buy the sheepskin. I will buy it gladly. If I had dreamed that you would be willing to sell I would have offered before. But you are jesting !”

His black eyes scanned Latour’s face eagerly.

For answer, Gaston drew the sheepskin from his pocket.

The Greek’s eyes blazed. Evidently he had seen the precious sheepskin before while spying on the treasure seekers, though he had not been able to see what was inscribed on it. It was clear that he knew the square of leather in Gaston’s hand. He stretched out an eager and towards it.

“You are in earnest” he muttered, his voice husky with eagerness. “You will sell?”

“I have said so!”

Marizelos drew a wallet from his pocket, and with fingers that trembled counted out five notes for a thousand francs each.

“There is the price !” he said huskily.

Gaston Latour took the notes and tossed the sheepskin to the Greek, Marizelos clutched it greedily.

“Allons; “ mon garçon !” said Latour. ‘But—I say.!’ stammered Bunny. But Gaston drew Bunny away.

They followed the track down the hill. Bunny, at a little distance, looked back. The Greek was standing with the sheepskin in his hands, scanning it in the light of the rising sun, his black eyes scintillating, his dark face irradiated with greedy triumph.

“Oh crumbs!” ,said Bunny.

Latour merely grinned. They pursued their way, and the Greek was left gloating over the treasure clue. When Bunny glanced back again he was lost to sight.

Gaston Latour hummed a song as he walked airily; and they struck into the

road to Tunis.

‘But -- but, I say,’ said Bunny at last, “that jolly old sheepskin is no use to him, Mr. Latour, when we know that the treasure’s already been lifted.”

“But Marizelos—he does not know that,” answered Latour,

“No, but we do. And——”

“Head of a pudding! Do you dream that I should sell him the sheepskin if there was still a treasure? But since there is no treasure, is he not welcome to the sheepskin? He is very welcome, and to me also five thousand francs is welcome. He would kill us in the cistern, parbleu! And now I do him in the eye, as you say in English. I go to make one fool of him.” And Gaston chuckled.

“Oh crumbs !” said Bunny. His tender conscience was a little troubled by the transaction, rascal as the Greek was. But Gaston whistled and hummed cheerily as they walked back to Tunis.

A few days later Gaston Latour had disposed of the Ingot. Bunny was given a thousand francs as his share. Gaston, returned to the post hei. given up on the Tunis railway when he became a treasure and_seeker. Of Marizelos Bunny saw no more. No doubt the eager Greek was hunting and searching in the ruins of Carthago, with the invaluable sheepskin as a guide, for the buried treasure of Mago. And Bunny wished him joy of the search! ,
THE END.